

Wilburton CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110804
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE LA
Inspection number	310423
Inspection dates	30–31 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Joy Richardson

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jim Mullin
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Almond
Date of previous school inspection	31 March 2003
School address	Carpond Lane Wilburton Ely Cambridgeshire CB6 3RJ
Telephone number	01353 740269
Fax number	

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school draws pupils from Wilburton and the surrounding area. Children's attainment on entry broadly matches expectations for this age, but there is wide variation in the level of their skills. Pupils come from a diversity of backgrounds. Most are of White British heritage but around 15% come from a range of minority ethnic heritages. No pupils speak English as an additional language. About 13% of pupils come from traveller families. The percentage of pupils identified as having learning difficulties is above average, but no child has a statement of special educational need.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wilburton Primary gives pupils a good all-round education, and this confirms the school's evaluation of itself. It gives pupils a strong sense of community and helps them to be confident, caring and cooperative. Pupils enjoy school, and the breadth of activities it provides.

Pupils achieve well, making good progress whatever their starting point. Able pupils are encouraged to aim high, and those who find difficulties in learning are helped to succeed. The school tracks the progress of each individual with great care, in order to take action where this is needed.

Pupils generally reach standards above the national average by the time they leave. The school sets challenging targets for achievement in the national curriculum tests and usually reaches these. Pupils do particularly well in reading and the school is focusing, with some success, on bringing standards in writing up to a similar level. Work is also in hand to improve attainment in science, where recent results in the Year 6 tests showed some areas of weakness.

Teaching is good. Pupils are well-grounded in basic skills and make good progress throughout the school. Classes are managed well, and pupils are motivated by knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching. They behave well and apply themselves to their work. Pupils readily contribute in lessons and they work sensibly in groups. They know the targets that they are working towards. However, they are not always challenged enough to explain their thinking, to share their ideas and to consider how well they understand.

Everyone knows each other well, and pupils understand that they have a part to play in making the school good for everyone. Pupils relish responsibility when this is given. The school council, made up of all the Year 6 pupils, is very effective in planning events and looking after younger pupils. Lunchtimes and playtimes are happy and sociable occasions.

The school provides a well-rounded curriculum and a rich diet of extra activities and special events. Drama features strongly. Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT), for example, in supporting and keeping in touch with pupils from showmen families when they are travelling.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has a clear overview of how each child is progressing. She gives clear direction in evaluating the school's performance and planning for improvement. Staff work together well as a team, but are not fully involved in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning across the school as a whole. Governors are supportive and fulfil their responsibilities well. The school has continued to improve since the previous inspection and has a good capacity to go on doing so.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are taught well and enjoy interesting and purposeful activities in all the areas of learning. These build their skills and provide good foundations for later learning. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals set nationally for the end of Reception, and some children exceed them. Children develop well socially and benefit from careful attention to their individual needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards by challenging pupils to explain their ideas and to evaluate their own learning.
- Extend the involvement of all staff in monitoring the effectiveness of learning throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children achieve well, reaching standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 that are above the national average. A dip in results in the Year 6 tests in 2007 was magnified by the small size of the year group and by absences, but most pupils made good progress in building on their prior attainment. The school identified weaknesses in pupils' learning in science. These are now being remedied by more emphasis on practical investigative work and on scientific vocabulary. Reading is a strength of the school and writing is becoming more so, as shown in award-winning writing in the older years. Writing skills are supported by good standards in spelling and handwriting. The school assesses pupils' progress regularly and thoroughly, and quickly identifies those who are falling behind or are capable of doing better. This contributes to good progress by pupils of all abilities. Children from traveller families make good progress because they are well supported in school and while they are away.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils develop well, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. They feel safe and happy at school. Adults and pupils respect and trust each other. Pupils behave sensibly and responsibly as a result, and enjoy their work. Year 6 pupils make up the school council and develop skills, for example in planning and organising sponsored events to raise funds for the school. Pupils are friendly and confident. They show a mature concern for others, accepting differences and welcoming newcomers. Pupils understand the need for healthy diet and exercise and they have many opportunities to be physically active at school. They are alert to issues of safety, carrying out their own risk assessments. Pupils contribute to the local community, for example in amateur theatre productions. In many of their activities, they develop skills that equip them well for later life. Attendance is good and the school works hard to minimise the effects of absences by children in traveller families.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils achieve well as a result. Teachers take account of different ages and abilities in their classes and plan well to ensure that all pupils make progress. Teachers and pupils enjoy each other's company. Lively teaching interests and engages pupils, enlarging knowledge and building skills. Teachers link learning, often with humour, to experiences out of school. Teachers mark work and assess pupils' learning well. However, discussion and questioning in lessons do not always explore the extent of pupils' understanding and how this can be extended. A start is being made on helping pupils to evaluate

how successful they are in their own learning. Teaching assistants work well with individuals and groups, reinforcing pupils' learning and helping them to keep up.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum that leads to good learning. Everyone learns French, which is taught by a specialist teacher. Good provision is made for ICT and for physical education. Pupils swim daily during the summer. The curriculum develops pupils' creative skills well, for example, in art. There are many opportunities for drama, and many pupils learn to play a musical instrument. The curriculum is enriched through clubs, such as cooking and engineering, and sports including football and netball. Pupils have many opportunities to represent the school in teams. Visitors and visits, including a residential trip for older pupils offering adventurous activities, add to pupils' learning and experience. The school is now seeking to develop more thematic learning, to extend links between subjects and to encourage the application of skills in context.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares well for each child as an individual. Adults provide good role models, and pupils know that they can always turn to them for help. Support staff work well a part of the team, providing good support for pupils who are falling behind. The school is the base school for children from a number of showmen families who travel for part of each year. It supports these children extremely well, with the help of a specialist teacher, providing work for their periods away and keeping in touch by email. Friendships are maintained, and the whole school takes an interest in their travels. The school makes suitable arrangements for safeguarding pupils, promoting health and safety and reviewing risks. It sets challenging targets and helps pupils to reach them. The school works well with parents and keeps them informed about their child's progress. Although communication is generally good, the school recognises that it could improve this further by developing the use of newsletters and a website.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has a clear overview of the school's performance and how each pupil is progressing. She has led the school's self-evaluation, which is thorough and accurate in identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. The staff are effective in implementing changes to the curriculum and taking action to improve standards, for example in writing and science. However, there are few opportunities to observe each other teaching and to share in evaluating what works and what could be better. Governors support the school well and are developing their role in reviewing its performance. The school provides an attractive environment for learning. It makes good use of space and resources and gives good value for money. Links with the community are strong, including support for the pre-school on site, and for breakfast and after-school clubs. The school enjoys a deservedly good reputation and most parents are well satisfied with the quality of education and care it provides.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

1 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wilburton CE Primary School, Wilburton, Ely CB6 3RJ

I enjoyed visiting your school this week. Thank you for welcoming me and for telling me about what you do. You told me that the school is really friendly and that the teachers are lovely. I am glad that you all get on so well together, and I was pleased to see how well you behave.

The Year 6 pupils on the school council are very good at discussing and organising, and helping to look after people. I hope that the sponsored event you are planning is a great success.

The school gives you a lot of help in learning to read and to enjoy books. You are good at handwriting and spelling too, and the Highwayman writing I saw shows how skilled you become at working with words. I am not surprised that you have won some writing competitions, and I'm sure your drama productions are wonderful too.

The school keeps a very careful eye on the progress you are making, so that the staff can give you extra help where you need it. All your teachers want you to do as well as possible. They will be thinking together about the ways that help you to learn best. They want to help you to share your ideas, and to think for yourself about what you do or do not understand.

I hope you go on enjoying school and trying your very best.

Yours sincerely,

Joy Richardson

Lead inspector