

Wellow School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115959
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312123
Inspection dates	26–27 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	204
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Louise Sampson
Headteacher	Mrs Tina Daniel
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Romsey Road West Wellow Romsey SO51 6BG
Telephone number	01794 322201
Fax number	01794 323819

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This primary school is smaller than average. The vast majority of pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but these pupils are not evenly distributed throughout the school. These difficulties lie mainly in the areas of moderate learning and hearing. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. There is Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision for children in Reception.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of Wellow School is satisfactory. There are good aspects to its work. Children in the EYFS get off to a good start and make good progress. In the rest of the school, pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory. Across the school, effective care and the positive school atmosphere lead to good personal development and well-being for pupils.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their keen participation in activities and their above-average attendance. They are very friendly, courteous and hospitable. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They adopt healthy lifestyles and show an excellent understanding of healthy diets and the importance of regular exercise. Pupils thrive on the additional responsibilities given. They make good contributions to the school and to the wider community.

Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 fluctuate because of variations in the numbers of pupils in each year group who need additional support. National test results show that standards by the end of Year 6 in 2007 were above average overall. Provisional 2008 results indicate standards that are above average in mathematics and broadly average in English and science. Pupils make good progress in reading because of the school's effective reading strategies. They also make good progress in mathematics. However, not enough pupils attained the higher levels in writing and science by Year 6 in 2008. Positive action is being taken to improve writing. In science there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out investigations and lessons do not always provide well enough for the more able.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There are examples of good and even outstanding practice but teaching is inconsistent. Teachers establish good relationships with their class. Pupils respond well to their teachers' clear instructions and explanations. Assessment information is not always used well enough to match tasks to pupils' abilities and needs. As a result, pupils are not always sufficiently challenged, particularly the more able. Not all lessons proceed at a good pace and learning time can be lost. The school has developed a good curriculum with interesting links between subjects. It is enriched by a wide range of additional activities, such as clubs, residential trips and visits.

Most parents are pleased with the care and education provided for their children. Approachability, the school's atmosphere and the additional activities receive particular praise. A typical parent comment was, 'The headteacher and teachers are very approachable.' A few parents expressed concerns about inconsistencies in teaching and that more able pupils are not being stretched. The inspection team agree with the parents.

Leadership and management successfully promote effective care, guidance and support and good personal development and well-being for pupils. The headteacher and her staff have successfully created a positive school ethos. Leadership has effectively developed the school's curriculum. The impact of leadership and management on pupils' achievement and on teaching is satisfactory. The school has a sound view of its performance. Good systems have been introduced to monitor and track each pupil's attainment and progress. Key subject leaders are new to their posts and their role is developing. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are aware of the need to focus on monitoring and developing teaching to raise achievement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's attainment on entry to the school can vary from year to year but is usually just above the levels of knowledge and skills expected for their age. Children settle quickly into routines and enjoy their learning. Good leadership, effective teaching, good welfare and an interesting range of activities enable all children to make good progress. Their personal and social skills develop well. Learning resources and outdoor areas are used imaginatively to motivate and stimulate children. There are plans to further develop the outdoor learning activities. By the end of Reception, children possess knowledge and skills that are comfortably above expectations for their age in all areas of learning. Writing has been a weaker area in the past but this is being effectively tackled. Children now have good opportunities to acquire and practice early writing skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in writing and science, particularly for the more able.
- Improve the quality of teaching ensuring that all lessons are suitably challenging with tasks well matched to individual needs, and that learning maintains a brisk pace.
- Establish effective strategies to monitor and develop teaching.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The variation in abilities of different year groups is a contributory factor to the fluctuation in standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards by the end of Year 2 were broadly average in 2007. Assessments in 2008 indicate well above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6 standards are usually above average. National data and the school's assessments show that pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing and science is satisfactory and not enough pupils attain the higher Level 5 in these areas. Effective action is being taken to raise achievement and standards in writing. Writing opportunities are being extended and there are positive signs that the school's action is having an impact. In science, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to acquire and apply investigative skills. Furthermore, the more able are not always extended. Pupils who need extra help, particularly with literacy and numeracy, receive appropriate support and make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are enthusiastic about school and have positive attitudes to learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and are extremely well aware of the importance of healthy diets and taking regular exercise. They participate with energy and enthusiasm in traditional sports and some unusual physical activities. Pupils participated well in 'street surfing' and 'rocket ball' during the inspection. Those on the school council take their responsibilities seriously and have contributed well to the development of the outdoor play facilities. Pupils make a strong contribution to the wider community by raising

funds for national and international charities. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education. By the time they leave the school, they have well-developed personal and social skills. They make good progress in reading and numeracy and satisfactory progress in writing.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory as shown by its satisfactory impact on pupils' progress. Although there are examples of good and even outstanding practice, there is insufficient high-quality teaching across the school. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour but their expectations of learning are inconsistent. Teachers establish good relationships with their pupils and manage them well. Pupils are attentive and respond well to their teachers' clear instructions and explanations. In the best lessons, pupils are motivated and challenged by teachers' enthusiasm, good demonstrations and illustrations. Skilful questioning is used to develop pupils' thinking and check their understanding. For example, a group of pupils worked collaboratively to present high-quality videos and interviews of a film premier, applying their previous knowledge and their speaking and listening skills exceptionally well. In too many lessons, however, pupils tackle the same task regardless of their ability and need. Lessons and pupils' learning do not always proceed at a brisk pace. There are overlong introductions and periods when pupils are waiting passively even though they are eager to tackle the task. Valuable learning time is lost and teachers do not always capitalise on pupils' strong prior knowledge and their enthusiasm for learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has developed an interesting curriculum with good links between subjects, which add meaning and relevance to pupils' learning. The school's focus on reading has had a positive impact on pupils' progress. Several strategies are being adopted to develop pupils' writing skills. Pupils are being given opportunities to write for different purposes and in a variety of subject areas. Recent assessments indicate that the drive to improve writing is having a positive effect. The school is aware of the need to increase the frequency and quality of investigative work in science. A good range of additional activities is offered. Popular clubs include athletics, gymnastics, football, French and netball. There are also good opportunities for all pupils to learn a musical instrument. Successful residential visits such as the Year 6 trip to the Isle of Wight provide an exciting variety of activities and contribute well to pupils' social and team-working skills. Health education is promoted very effectively throughout the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's pastoral care system is strong and the headteacher and staff have successfully created a positive school climate which underpins pupils' good personal development. A parent commented, 'The school is a caring and stimulating environment.' Procedures to ensure that pupils are protected, safe and secure at school are good. As a result, pupils feel very well cared for and safe at school. They are confident that there is always an adult they can turn to if they are upset or in need of support. Effective systems to assess and track pupils' attainment have been established. Most pupils have clear individual learning targets to guide the next steps in

their learning in literacy and numeracy. However, pupils do not have learning targets to support their progress in science.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. There are numerous strengths in the leadership such as the attention to pupils' personal development and well-being, the EYFS provision and the development of the curriculum.

Self-evaluation is satisfactory and the school has a sound understanding of what it does well and what is needed to bring about improvement. The monitoring and development of teaching by senior staff is not leading to consistently good practice in the classrooms. The School has recently revised its teaching and learning policy. This provides guidance on expected practice and criteria or indicators for teachers to review their practice. This is not yet consistently implemented.

The absence of senior staff recently through maternity leave has imposed additional workload for the headteacher. The subject leaders of English, mathematics and science are new to their posts. Their roles and responsibilities are developing satisfactorily. The school has a satisfactory capacity for improvement.

Community cohesion is promoted well, as demonstrated by the positive atmosphere that pervades the school. There are good partnerships with parents and external agencies. Through an interesting curriculum, pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of global issues and different cultures.

Governors are very supportive of the school and take a keen interest in pupils' progress and in the development of the curriculum. However, they are aware that their questioning about the quality of teaching has not been sufficiently challenging.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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 learners' needs?	3
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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wellow School, Romsey, SO51 6BG

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found. Yours is a satisfactory school and it has some good features.

These are the main strengths of the school.

- Children in Reception get off to a good start.
- You really enjoy school and attendance is good.
- The school is a very friendly and pleasant place to be.
- Most of you are making good progress in reading and mathematics.
- The curriculum provides good learning activities for you.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Your understanding of how to keep healthy is excellent.
- The teachers and other grown-ups take good care of you.
- You make good contributions to the school and wider community.
- There is a good range of additional activities, such as clubs and visits.

These are the things the school should do to improve.

- Some of you, particularly the more able, could make more progress and reach higher standards in writing and science.
- Teachers should make sure that all lessons provide you with the right amount of challenge and move your learning on at a good pace.
- Senior staff should find ways of checking and developing teaching so that all your lessons are good or better.

You can help the school by continuing to behave well and working hard, particularly in science and writing. Finally, thank you once again for all your help.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Derek Watts

Lead Inspector