

Wexham Court Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109943
Local Authority	Slough
Inspection number	337404
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Jill Bavin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	528
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandy Belcher
Headteacher	Angela S Hermon
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, who saw 17 teachers in 26 lessons and made a further eight visits to lessons to focus on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and provision for science. Inspectors also observed a small group of pupils who speak English as an additional language and an individual session for a pupil with complex learning needs. Inspectors met with staff, governors and pupils. They scrutinised a variety of documentation, including policies and documents related to safeguarding, data for checking pupils' progress and plans for school improvement. Inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires from 114 parents and 42 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the consistency of challenge for more able pupils in science and English at Key Stage 2
- whether all groups of pupils make expected gains in English, mathematics and science
- school action to improve attainment and progress for all pupils in science
- how comprehensively and independently pupils contribute to healthy lifestyles, school improvement and social tolerance

Information about the school

Wexham Court is a larger-than-average primary school which is expanding from two-form to three-form entry. Almost half of the staff team in the Early Years Foundation Stage are new. Since the previous inspection, the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language has increased significantly to 58%. This exceeds the national average. Almost three quarters of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and 20 languages are spoken in the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the school is just below the national average, but in some year groups it is high. The majority of these pupils have difficulties related to language, communication and social skills. Far more pupils join or leave the school between Reception and Year 6 than is typical nationally. Last year, around one third of pupils in Year 6 had joined the school during Key Stage 2.

The school has achieved Healthy School status. In 2010 it received the Gold Standard for Investors in People in recognition of its work in professional development for staff.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is an extremely harmonious school, providing well for all pupils. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly effectively. The school's strong commitment to valuing every individual is embraced by pupils, who are extremely respectful of each other and tolerant of diversity. Meticulous records and procedures contribute to outstanding safeguarding. Pupils feel extremely safe. They behave remarkably well and are enthusiastic promoters of health and emotional well-being.

Most children join the nursery, or the school, with far fewer skills than is expected for their age. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because staff promote each child's key skills effectively. Good teaching throughout the school combines with an effective curriculum to promote good learning for all groups of pupils and most pupils leave the school with broadly average attainment overall. Interesting links between subjects contribute positively to pupils' learning and enjoyment but there is more to be done in extending these to give pupils even more opportunities to apply key skills in a greater variety of situations. While pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, expectations of all pupils are not always consistently high. There are examples of outstanding teaching throughout the school, but there are missed opportunities to share the best practice routinely.

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and priorities for development. The latter are addressed systematically and effectively, resulting in good improvement since the previous inspection. While attendance rates are average, the school has significantly reduced persistent absence over this period. Systems to monitor pupils' progress are used more rigorously and frequently than previously by every class teacher. This has increased staff accountability and contributed to improved teaching and assessment. The impact is beginning to be felt in pupils' improved attainment and progress, which is most established in mathematics. Success in improving the quality of pupils' writing is evident in lessons and pupils' work this year. These systems also account for the school successfully narrowing the gap in achievement between different groups of pupils. The school has made a good start to improving provision for science, and has correctly identified that the next step is to ensure that activities are always planned with a clear focus on pupils' skills to ensure consistent progress from year to year. This record of improvement demonstrates the school's good capacity for further development.

Staff morale in the school is high, reflecting the school's focus on professional development, as well as effective communication between staff. Governance is good because governors are fully involved in decisions to drive school improvement. Governors and staff share an ambition for their pupils and are fully committed to continuing development. Adults and pupils contribute to a reflective school that

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considers issues, such as combating discrimination, seriously, and as a result work together effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
 - providing more opportunities to share the features of the strongest teaching evident in the school
 - ensuring that all staff hold equally high expectations of pupils
- Improve the curriculum further by implementing plans to:
 - ensure that scientific skills are developed incrementally as pupils move through the school
 - make greater links between subjects so that pupils have more opportunities to apply key skills to a wider range of activities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

School data indicate that this year pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have made more than expected progress in all year groups in all areas. That said, the rate of progress in science, while good, is not as strong as in other areas. This is supported by inspection evidence from lesson observations and looking at work in pupils' books. While good learning was seen in pupils' science books, in both lessons observed learning was satisfactory because expectations of pupils' independent learning were not high enough to accelerate pupils' progress.

Boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds made good progress overall in the lessons observed. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 who find writing relatively easy made outstanding progress in planning a persuasive letter, as did pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in a different lesson. In both lessons, learning was significantly accelerated because an extremely well-pitched level of challenge met pupils' needs faultlessly. Similarly, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils of all abilities made outstanding progress in calculating with money because tasks were finely adjusted to meet their different needs. Pupils receiving very specific literacy help thoroughly enjoy their sessions and often make outstanding progress in a short space of time.

Pupils accept responsibilities readily and many make a very positive contribution to their school community. Links with the local community, such as singing to local elderly people, are good. Pupils have a mature understanding of how to ensure their own and others' well-being. They enthusiastically design and display posters about healthy eating, and initiate energetic clubs to promote healthy lifestyles. A strong focus on being a 'Rights Respecting School' contributes to pupils' remarkably mature and considered approach towards each other and the environment. This is evidenced in the sensitivity with which newcomers are welcomed into school; the work of 'eco-warriors'; the acceptance of pupils with very individual learning and social needs; and pupils' appreciation of historic champions of equality. One pupil in Year 5 wrote of Martin

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Luther King that 'He is heart to a nation, he is a Van Gogh masterpiece...'

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Pupils and staff enjoy positive relationships which underpin pupils' highly positive attitudes to learning. Teachers usually make good use of information about pupils' individual needs to adjust tasks and expectations that suit the varying needs within their class or 'ability set'. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution, especially for those pupils who find learning difficult. In the vast majority of lessons, adults make good use of visual resources, often through the interactive whiteboards, to supplement their explanations and help pupils who speak English as an additional language. They use questions skilfully to challenge understanding and extend pupils' spoken English skills. When teaching is outstanding, expectations and challenge levels are extremely high throughout the lesson.

The curriculum is serving all groups of pupils well and is contributing to improved attainment. Pupils enjoy the increased opportunities for practical science work and refer to the science display that every class has about the current science topic. This

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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concerted whole-school effort is contributing to pupils' improved progress in the subject. Special programmes for those who find learning difficult or need a boost to develop spoken English skills are provided promptly. A key strength of the curriculum lies in its successful promotion of personal and social development, which is often seamlessly woven into lessons. Learning was outstanding for pupils in Year 4 when they empathised with monks anticipating a Viking attack. Pupils make good progress in using computer technology, for example by producing presentations about the Second World War.

In this school, all pupils are highly valued as individuals. The school 'goes the extra mile' for pupils with the most complex learning or emotional needs. Parents have extremely high levels of confidence in the school's leadership and in the school's success in keeping their child safe and healthy. Senior leaders and staff work extremely effectively with families and other professionals to benefit pupils. As a result, previous gaps between the rates of progress of different groups have been significantly diminished.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff at Wexham share an energy, commitment and ambition for effective school improvement. It is to the credit of the headteacher and deputy that morale is so high while teachers are being held increasingly closely to account. Governors, team and subject leaders all play an effective part in contributing to school improvement and there are good opportunities for them to contribute to development planning. Written plans follow dialogue, so priorities are clearly understood by all. The school's unified and concerted efforts are already benefiting pupils and reinforce the school's good capacity for sustained improvement. Excellent safeguarding arises from high-quality, effective systems and procedures that are understood by all, underpinned by a school ethos of empowering pupils to take charge of their own safety and well-being. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 share their plans to avoid potential hazards associated with attending high school by gathering a good group of reliable friends around them.

Governors have initiated a thorough analysis of the school's religious, ethnic and socio-economic context. They and staff share a very good understanding of the school community and their success in ensuring that it is cohesive is a real strength. Pupils' awareness of other parts of the world is raised through the curriculum and charity projects. An understanding of differences within the United Kingdom is growing through

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links with a school in a rural part of the country. The school has yet to evaluate rigorously its work in all elements of community cohesion.

Procedures to check how well each pupil is doing are comprehensive, and senior staff and class teachers now meet fortnightly to discuss pupils' progress. The wealth of information generated is used increasingly effectively to set both realistic and challenging targets for pupils. This has already significantly reduced disparities between achievements for different groups, but it is still too soon for the full impact to be felt. While the school shares a strong commitment to equal opportunities and to combating discrimination, the variation in the quality of teaching means that currently its effectiveness is good overall.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have contributed to the new team quickly working well together. Children receive consistent messages about what is expected of them and so quickly become ready to learn. Staff share a good understanding of how children at this age learn best, so they provide suitable resources and activities, and when they lead an activity they promote good learning in key skills. Occasionally, when adults lead a session the learning is outstanding. A group of children who find reading and writing relatively easy for their age made very good gains in using their knowledge of letters and sounds to read and write a simple sentence. This session was very well planned to meet pupils' individual needs and provide a sensitive but high level of challenge, while children had fun.

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The team has made a good start to incorporating children's interests into planning. Children have plenty of opportunities to select resources and activities that appeal to them, both inside and outside, although not all resources are equally stimulating. Staff have made a good start to recording children's achievements and, in some cases the 'next steps' to aim for. During the inspection, two different groups of boys made good gains while working independently. While they cooperatively moved 'big' and 'heavy' equipment to build a den or to create a story about pirates, they made good use of mathematical vocabulary and ideas. However, opportunities to extend children's learning while they are working independently are missed because there is not always an adult circulating to comment on, or ask questions about, the children's learning activities.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Fewer parents and carers returned questionnaires than is typical in primary schools. Most of those who did are happy overall with their child's experience of school. The vast majority are particularly confident about how well their child is kept safe. Few parents expressed concerns, but those who did were mostly concerned about the management of pupil behaviour and the school taking account of parents' suggestions. Inspectors found behaviour to be managed extremely effectively, and pupils told us this was typical of their experience. Inspectors also found communication with parents to be good, which was substantiated by most parents' responses.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wexham Court Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 114 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 528 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	51	49	43	3	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	59	52	52	46	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	37	66	58	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	34	68	60	6	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	55	48	53	46	3	3	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	38	63	55	4	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	37	69	61	3	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	30	26	74	65	3	3	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	27	75	66	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	32	64	56	8	7	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	29	70	61	8	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	38	33	71	62	4	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	43	58	51	5	4	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



28 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wexham Court Primary School, Wexham, Slough SL3 6LU

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school recently. We agree with you and your parents and carers that you go to a good school, and that some things are quite special. We were particularly impressed by how extremely well you behave, the respect you show each other and how seriously you think about important issues, such as combating discrimination. We were really pleased to discover how strongly you try to help others become more healthy and safe. We agree with you and your families that the school works extremely successfully to keep you safe. Teaching is good all through your school because teachers usually give you just the right amount of challenge. This, and your very good behaviour, is why you are making good progress in English, mathematics and science. Sometimes you make outstanding progress in a lesson because the teaching is excellent. Activities are interesting because teachers make good use of technology and there are interesting links between subjects. The governors and all the adults in your school are ambitious for you and enthusiastic about making the school even better.

We have suggested that the most important priorities now are:

- to make all the teaching as good as the best by teachers sharing their best ideas more often and making sure they always expect you to do as well as you can
- to carry on with their plans to make sure you develop new scientific skills more reliably as you move through the school
- to give you more opportunities to use your key skills more often in a wider variety of activities by planning for greater links between subjects.

You can help by continuing your excellent behaviour, and by telling your teacher if you think you could do harder work. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jill Bavin

Lead inspector

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