



# Woodham Walter Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 115123  
**LEA** ESSEX LEA  
**Inspection number** 279517  
**Inspection dates** 10 July 2006 to 11 July 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ms. Ruth Frith AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	The Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		CM9 6RF
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01245 223264
<b>Number on roll</b>	78	<b>Fax number</b>	01245 226810
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr.Mike Dodd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Madeleine Matthews

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 10 July 2006 - 11 July 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279517
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a smaller than average size primary school situated in the village of Woodham Walter. The school attracts pupils from the village and surrounding towns and villages. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Pupils' overall attainment on entry to school varies considerably from year to year. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. A few children are looked after by others than their immediate family. Children are mainly from White British backgrounds. Several pupils come from Traveller families. The headteacher started at the school in September 2005.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good school where the good care and support for each child lie at the heart of its work. As a quote from a parent indicates, 'Children always come first'. Pupils flourish within this friendly and supportive environment. They develop into interested learners and are well prepared for their next stage of schooling. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Pupils progress well and standards are improving. Teaching and learning are good and occasionally outstanding. However, sometimes the rate of pupils' learning slows when they work on their own and they rely too heavily on staff and other pupils. There is also a need to develop strategies for the more able pupils so that they achieve as well as they can. Some pupils do not find learning easy and it is a credit to the staff that they become well motivated and achieve well. The curriculum is stimulating, so pupils are keen to learn and behave well. Although pupils like school, attendance is below the national average as some families continue to take holidays in school time. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The headteacher has made a good start in the school and the enthusiasm and commitment of staff and governors, together with the headteacher's good leadership, indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve still further. Staff and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and identify appropriate priorities for improvement. The good self-evaluation procedures have helped the school to reflect on how well it is doing and judgements match closely the inspection's findings. The school provides good value for money. Parents are overwhelmingly pleased with what the school offers, as indicated by the following statement, 'I am captivated by this magical school'.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Continue to work with parents to ensure that all appreciate the importance of good attendance and bring their children regularly to school and on time. - Develop provision for the more able pupils and those that are gifted and talented to ensure they achieve as well as they can. - Widen pupils' learning styles so that that they work more confidently on their own and develop more independence.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

From a wide range of starting points, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Evidence indicates that standards are generally rising in response to recent new initiatives. Developments in the English and mathematics curricula and improvements to teaching are helping to make the rate of progress more consistent across the school. This is having a positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Children in the small Reception class receive good support across all areas of learning so that by the time they enter Year 1 they usually reach the goals set nationally for children of that age. Most pupils in the current Year 2 are working at the nationally expected levels in reading but standards in writing and mathematics

are slightly above those usually seen. Pupils in Year 6 are working at broadly average levels in mathematics but slightly above average levels in English and science. Typically, pupils meet the realistic targets set and in some cases achieve beyond them. However, staff do not always place sufficient focus on ensuring that the most able pupils achieve as well as they can. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported and make good progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The strong school ethos, together with support from families, governors and the local community, creates an environment where children feel happy and do well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Pupils learn what is expected of them through the consistent use of school procedures and their day-to-day interaction with staff. Relationships are exceptionally good. Pupils behave well and develop good attitudes to their work and school. Older pupils readily offer to look after those that are younger and enjoy doing so. Pupils develop a keen spiritual awareness through several areas of study, and relate particularly well to the school's physical surroundings. They are encouraged to think about others and their place within the world. These activities also support their cultural development well as they discover ways of life and beliefs different from their own. Pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They have good opportunities for physical exercise and are aware of the importance of a healthy diet. Pupils learn to keep safe and follow the school routines well. They make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. Members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously in representing the interest of others. There is a particularly high level of involvement with the local church, village and wider community. Pupils develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication skills that contribute positively to their future economic well-being. They are also very skilled at working with others. Attendance is satisfactory. The school has worked hard to encourage good attendance and punctuality but despite this some parents still do not ensure that their children arrive at school regularly and on time. The overall attendance rate is below the national average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and help pupils to make good progress. Occasionally, teaching is outstanding. Staff are effective at creating a relaxed but stimulating learning environment where pupils are expected to work hard and enjoy their learning. Most pupils quickly become confident learners and want to do well. Because there is a strong atmosphere of support, they are keen to ask for help when necessary. They also work very well with others. However, sometimes this leads them to rely too heavily on others, and the development of their independent learning skills is restricted. Teaching

assistants play an important part in the school's good provision because they know pupils very well and soon spot if a child is having difficulties or is unhappy. A key strength is the lesson planning, when teachers successfully take into account the different ages and capabilities in each class. The effective assessment and recording procedures ensure that work is usually well matched to the needs of individual pupils. This results in pupils generally working at their own level of capability and covering work appropriate for their age. However, teachers have not yet fully developed their work for more able pupils and those that are gifted and talented.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good because it meets the needs of all pupils and maintains their interest. Frequently, there is a buzz of excitement as pupils set about their work and play. Most pupils really enjoy what they are doing as can be seen when the whole school sings together. The youngest children take part in a good range of activities both in the classroom and outside. Throughout the school, the good use of cross-curricular activities ensures that pupils have opportunities to practise their skills as well as develop good levels of knowledge and understanding. Information and communication technology is used effectively wherever possible. Provision for the teaching of French is good. The curriculum is enriched with a good range of visitors and educational visits. These help pupils gain a good appreciation of the creative and performing arts, physical activity and local places of interest. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities for a school of this size. The school's grounds are used very well and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' academic and personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety and welfare are well established. Requirements for child protection are met. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are provided with good support so that they are fully included in all aspects of the school's work. Particularly good links have been established between the school and Traveller community. These ensure that these children are well integrated and make a positive contribution to the life of the school. Pupils say they feel safe and know what to do if an incident of bullying were to happen. They are very confident that if they have any worries, these will be dealt with by an adult. There are good systems for checking on pupils' academic progress and for setting targets. These are used effectively to make sure that pupils make good progress. Parents are kept well-informed about how well their children are doing and the school is approachable and helpful in resolving any difficulties.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management of the school are good. Leadership by the headteacher is particularly effective and she has quickly gained the confidence of staff, parents and governors. She gives clear direction and staff share her vision for the future development of the school. Staff morale is particularly high and teamwork strong. Senior managers support her well. Staff take on a variety of responsibilities successfully and subject leadership is good. This has helped to improve the curriculum and how it is taught. It is also helping to ensure that pupils make good progress. Systems for checking how well the school is doing and for identifying what it could do better are good. There is continuous discussion about how the school could develop and this reflects the school's drive for improvement. The views of all members of the school community are taken into consideration. Governance is good. The chair of governors has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and governors play an important role through their work in school and in committee. Financial management and planning are effective and decisions taken by senior managers and governors ensure that school developments are adequately financed. Overall, the school gives good value for money. The school has addressed the issues from the previous inspection successfully and because of the good work of the headteacher, staff and governors, and pupils' good progress, the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

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

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

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing to say how much I enjoyed visiting Woodham Walter Primary. Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for talking about your school and the work you have done. These are some of the best things about your school. - You do well in school. - You obviously enjoy school and are keen to do good work. - All the staff work very well together as a team. They enjoy teaching you and the teaching is good. - You behave well and work and play together well. - The activities you do and the things you study are interesting which helps to make lessons fun. - You do lots of good things in the community. - Staff look after you well and you feel safe in school. Mrs Matthews manages the school well and is especially good at leading the staff so that the school continues to improve and you receive a good education. The governors also work hard to support the school. We have agreed that things will get even better if the staff help you to learn more successfully on your own so that you do not rely too much on others. Also, they will develop the work for those of you who find learning quite easy. Most of you arrive at school regularly and on time but there are some pupils who miss lessons and consequently fall behind with their work. I hope that this improves so that everyone can make the most of what the school offers.