

School Improvement Partner Visit 2024-2025

Report of findings



School	Wiveliscombe Primary
Address	North Street, Wiveliscombe, Taunton, Somerset TA4 2L
Headteacher	Lucy Crowe
Headteacher's email	Lucy.Crowe@wiveliscombepimary.com
Assistant Headteacher	Rachel Hill
Chair of governors	Rosie Austin
School improvement partner (SIP)	Derek Watts
Date of visit	24 October 2024 (half a day).
Purpose of visit	LA annual SIP visit.
Activities undertaken and evidence gathered	• Discussions with the Headteacher • A learning walk with the Headteacher. • Discussions with leaders of mathematics and science. • Discussions with the SENCo. • Discussions with pupils about attitudes, behaviour, safety and personal development. • Discussions with pupils about their learning in geography, history and science. • Looking at pupils' work in geography, history and science. • Viewing the school's website. • Viewing curriculum planning. • Feedback to the Headteacher, Chair and one other governor. • Report of findings.

Information about this school

	School	National
Number of pupils on roll	210	265
SEN support	7%	13.5%
SEN Educational Health and Care Plan	2.6%	2.5%
English as an additional language	7%	22%
Free school meals/pupil premium	20%	26%

- Wiveliscombe is a smaller than average sized primary school when compared to primary schools nationally. In recent years, pupil numbers have grown from 179 to over 200.

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- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Since Spring 2022, the school has welcomed families from Ukraine.
- The proportion of pupils with SEN support is below average. A below average proportion of pupils have a SEN Education Health and Care Plan.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- A just below average proportion of pupils are supported by pupil premium.
- The school is part of the Tone Valley Partnership (TVP), a group of local schools.
- The nearby Paddocks Nursery/Pre-school is managed by the school and provides for children from 0 to four-year olds. Paddocks has a separate URN (unique reference number). It was inspected by Ofsted in June 2024. All aspects were good except behaviour and attitudes which were outstanding.
- The Headteacher took up the post at Wiveliscombe in September 2020. She was the interim Executive Headteacher from March 2020. The Headteacher previously led Kingfisher Primary, Yeovil. Kingfisher was judged outstanding in all aspects after a full Section 5 inspection in May 2019.

School performance data:

Please note some data is currently unvalidated.

GLD 2024	
National	68%
Somerset	69%
School (26)	81%

Year 1 Phonics 2024	
National	80%
Somerset	80%
School (31)	87%

Year 6 results 2024	RWM combined		Reading		Writing		Maths		GPS	
	Expected standard +	Higher standard	Expected standard +	Higher standard	Expected standard +	Greater depth	Expected standard +	Higher standard	Expected standard +	Higher standard
National	61%	8%	74%	29%	72%	13%	73%	24%	72%	32%
Somerset	56%	7%	72%	25%	69%	13%	68%	19%	67%	25%
School (29)	79%	17%	79%	35%	83%	38%	86%	31%	76%	45%

Previous Ofsted inspection:

Inspection type	Graded (Section 8) inspection
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Dates of inspection	7 and 8 March 2023
Inspection outcomes	Overall effectiveness Good • The quality of education: Good • Behaviour and attitudes: Good • Personal development: Good • Leadership and management: Good • Early years provision: Good
Unfortunately, the brief Ofsted inspection report in Spring 2023 does not fully acknowledge the school's considerable improvements since March 2020. Furthermore, the inspection would only have had school performance data for 2019 and 2022. It could be argued that the school's improvements had not been sustained over time for outstanding judgements to be considered. Leaders have made further improvements since the inspection and outcomes for pupils in 2023 and 2024 were very positive.	

Areas for improvement from the last Ofsted inspection

Area for improvement	RAG rating	Evaluation of progress
• In a few subjects, teachers do not make links between previous and current learning. This means that pupils sometimes struggle to remember what they have learned. Leaders should ensure that links between prior and new learning are made explicit so that pupils can recall what they have previously learned and build new knowledge.		• This issue has been tackled well. Curriculum planning is well sequenced and shows how current learning builds on previous learning. • Lessons have a clear learning objective. Pupils know and understand the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn. Teachers effectively recap on previous learning before moving pupils on to the new learning.
• Some support staff do not have the depth of subject knowledge they need. They lack the expertise to pick up on pupils' misconceptions. As a result, these misconceptions go unnoticed. Leaders need to		• Leaders ensure that support staff are well trained and supported. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

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ensure that all staff have the subject knowledge they need to support pupils to learn what is intended.		
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Quality of education (intent, implementation and impact, an emphasis on reading and SEND):

The current *Education Inspection Framework* (Ofsted January 2019a, updated July 2023) and the *School Inspection Handbook* (Ofsted September 2019, updated April 2024) puts the curriculum at the heart of the quality of education and at the heart of inspection. Schools are expected to provide a well-planned and coherent curriculum which is carefully sequenced towards the development of **knowledge** and skills. Emphasis is on knowledge, and it is essential that leaders identify the key knowledge to be taught and when.

There is much importance on pupils acquiring a deep knowledge and remembering knowledge over the long term. Terms such as ‘powerful knowledge’ and ‘sticky knowledge’ are often used. ‘Sticky knowledge’ stays with us forever. Ofsted see pupil progress as, ‘knowing more and remembering more of the curriculum.’

The framework places considerable emphasis on reading. Furthermore, all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged and SEND, should have full access to the curriculum so they achieve well in a range of subjects as well as English and mathematics. Ofsted see the quality of education (the curriculum) as three Is:

Intent: What is taught. Curriculum design and planning.

Implementation: How the curriculum is taught.

Impact: The outcomes for pupils.

Areas of strength

Intent

- The Headteacher and other leaders at Wiveliscombe have designed an ambitious, balanced, broad and rich curriculum to meet the needs of all groups of pupils. The curriculum is carefully sequenced towards the development of pupils’ knowledge and skills.

‘Leaders have ambition for everyone. They have carefully crafted a curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers make links between subjects, such as reading and writing, to help pupils deepen what they have learned.’

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- All National Curriculum subjects plus PSHE and RE are taught and given appropriate attention. Strong emphasis is given to the teaching of reading. *Bug Club Phonics* is the school's phonics programme. This is one of the DfE's validated systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programmes (DfE, March 2023).
- The mathematics curriculum is based on materials from the *National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics* (NCETM). The mathematics leader works well with the *Jurassic Maths Hub* to further enhance the mathematics curriculum.
- Leaders have created high quality planning for the wider curriculum which takes full account of National Curriculum requirements. Detailed medium term plans for each unit of work are impressive. For example, a Year 2, science medium term plan on plants includes the following:
 - the specific knowledge to be taught
 - the skills to be acquired and applied (working scientifically)
 - scientists linked to the unit
- The plan then sets out a sequence of six lessons. For each lesson, clear learning objectives and key questions to be explored and answered are identified. Suggested learning activities and resources are also set out.

Implementation

- The school's well-planned curriculum is successfully implemented by high quality teaching. Teachers and support staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. Their enthusiasm and subject expertise inspire and motivate the pupils.
- Lessons are focused and purposeful. Teachers effectively share the learning objective with the class. As a result, pupils know and understand what they are expected to learning.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils make good progress and attain securely above average standards by the end of Year 1.
- Teaching and learning in writing are a clear strength at Wiveliscombe. Pupils in key stage 1 are developing a fluent and joined hand. Across the school, pupils write for a range of audiences and for different purposes. The high quality extended pieces of writing show that pupils apply considerable effort and are productive. A Year 5 pupil wrote an expanded noun phrases poem on the *Red Squirrel*. A pupil in Year 6 wrote a detailed non chronological report on obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).
- The teaching of mathematics is also strong. The mathematics leader and staff have benefited from a productive partnership with the *Jurassic Maths Hub*. Year 2 pupils made good progress in solving problems involving addition. Pupils in Year 3 gained a clear understanding of converting between metres, centimetres and millimetres.

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Year 2 pupils' art work in the style of Georgia O'Keeffe.

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Year 2 pupils inspired by Georgia O'Keefe.

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- Teaching and pupil support are well adapted to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils have full access to the school's curriculum and they receive high quality teaching. Teaching assistants are well deployed and they make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, especially those with SEND.
- Teachers' feedback and marking are effective and support pupils' learning well. Pupils receive praise for good learning and clear guidance on how to improve.

Impact

- The school's well planned curriculum is successfully implemented by high quality teaching. These factors result in very positive outcomes for pupils. Pupils make good and better progress in acquiring expected knowledge and skills in a range of subjects.
- Outcomes in the statutory assessments and tests are much higher than they were before the pandemic. By the of Year 1 in 2024, a securely above average proportion of pupils attained the expected standard in the phonics screening check.
- Pupil outcomes by the end of Year 6 in 2024 were above average at the expected standard in reading, writing, mathematics, GP&S and reading, writing, mathematics combined.
- Leaders and staff have recently focused on challenging and extending higher attainers. This drive has been successful because the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standard or working at greater depth by the end of Year 6 was above average in all areas.
- The Year 6 outcomes in 2024 were impressive. The outcomes were even more remarkable given that this cohort of 29 had nine pupils supported by the pupil premium grant, six SEND and three late arrivals.

Areas for development

- The science leader is extending pupils' opportunities for scientific enquiry. The school is also working towards gaining the *Primary Science Quality Mark*.

Agreed actions		Date
• Continue to extend opportunities in science for scientific enquiry. Meet the requirements for the <i>Primary Science Quality Mark</i>.		During 2024-2025
Does the school have the ability to meet these actions without external support?	Yes	

Behaviour and attitudes:

Areas of strength

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- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes at Wiveliscombe are looking outstanding. Leaders and staff set very high expectations of pupils' behaviour, learning and conduct. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond very well to the high expectations.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school. Their comments included, '*Teachers make learning fun*', '*We learn something new every day*', '*I really like school*' and '*I like science projects*'.
- Pupils know the importance of being able to read well. They read widely at school and read on a regular basis at home.
- During visits to lessons with the Headteacher, pupils in all classes showed high levels of concentration and total engagement. They responded extremely well to their teachers' clear explanations, instructions and questioning.
- Pupils take care and pride in their presentation of work. They can work collaboratively and independently. Pupils are productive and work at a good pace.
- According to the pupils, behaviour in is mostly good. A few pupils stated that behaviour was outstanding. During the visits to lessons, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour were often exemplary. Relationships are a real strength.
- All pupils feel safe at school and extremely well looked after by the staff. When using computer devices, pupils know how to keep themselves safe online.
- Pupils demonstrated a very clear understanding of bullying. They know that bullying is unkind and unpleasant behaviour which is continuous. Pupils reported that bullying does not happen in their school.

Areas for development

- Overall attendance for the 2023-2024 academic year was below average at 93.8 percent (National 94.7 percent).

Agreed actions

- Continue to monitor and promote attendance so that figures are at least in line with the national average.

Date

2024-2025

Does the school have the ability to meet these actions without external support?

Yes

Personal development:

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Areas of strength

- The well-planned curriculum and the very positive school ethos successfully promote pupils' personal development. Personal development is looking outstanding.
- The learning environment is a strength at Wiveliscombe. There are attractive and stimulating displays in classrooms and corridors. The displays reflect pupils' current areas of study. The outdoor learning environment is a real strength (See ariel photographs on the school's website). *Forest School* is a key feature of the curriculum.
- Leaders and staff strive to develop pupils' learning and personal qualities such as curiosity, collaboration, creativity, engagement, independence, respect and resilience.
- The school has adopted SCARF (Safety, Caring, Achievement, Resilience, Friendship) for RSHE. This meets the statutory requirements for relationships education for primary pupils (DfE, September 2021).

'Leaders have thoughtfully created an effective personal development programme. Pupils know extensively about the fundamental British values, such as individual liberty. They know not to treat people differently because of their race or gender. Pupils have a firm understanding of what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like.'

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- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of additional activities such as clubs, educational visits and visitors. All teachers in the school run a club. Visiting artists, specialist music teachers and historians further enrich pupils' learning. During the visit individual pupils enjoyed first rate tuition from a visiting drum teacher.
- *Careers Week, World Book Day* and *Science Days* are popular events that enhanced pupils' learning and broadened their ambitions and horizons.
- Pupils have good opportunities to take on additional responsibilities to help the running of the school. Pupils are elected to be members of the School Parliament (two from each class). Other pupils are play leaders or on the Eco-School committee.

Areas of development

- During this visit, pupils in discussion with the SIP were less confident in demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of British values.

Agreed actions

- Ensure that pupils across the school acquire a clear knowledge and understanding of fundamental British values.

Date

During
2024-2025

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Does the school have the ability to meet these actions without external support?	Yes	
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Leadership and management:

Areas of strength
• The Headteacher is an exceptional educational leader with high expectations. Her ambition, vision and ability to create a culture of high standards and continuous improvement have been the key to the school's success. Since her arrival in March 2020, rapid improvements have been made in all aspects of the school. • As a Somerset Education Partner (SEP), I first visited Wiveliscombe in October 2019. At this time, the school was giving cause for concern. Outcomes by the end of Year 6 in 2019 were significantly below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress measures in these areas were poor. There were considerable weaknesses in the planning and implementation of the wider curriculum. In Autumn 2019, the school did not have subject leaders for art and design, design and technology, geography or history. There was limited coverage in these subjects and pupils' work lacked detail and depth. Teachers were often over reliant on pupils completing undemanding worksheets. Their presentation of work varied. The school's response to the expectations and requirements of the then new <i>Education Inspection Framework</i> (Ofsted 2019) for September 2019 had been poor. • A parental survey in November 2019, initiated and analysed by the SEP, revealed that parents had significant concerns about the school. Parents did not believe their concerns were dealt with, SEND pupils were not sufficiently supported and the school was not promoting good behaviour. • The current Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and other leaders are fully focused on providing a high quality of education for all pupils, including disadvantaged and those with SEND. • The Assistant Headteacher has brought a wealth of experience to the school. She is a highly effective mathematics leader and her teaching is a model of exceptional practice. Recently, she played a leading role in: <i>Start Small; Dream Big</i>, a career related learning programme. • The leadership of early years, different subjects and SEND has been effectively distributed among the teaching force. The development of leaders is a clear strength in this school. Subject leaders have a clear knowledge and understanding of their role and responsibilities. Leaders are effective in monitoring, evaluating and improving their area of responsibility. • Leaders place high emphasis on developing teaching. Teaching is effectively monitored by senior leaders. Continuous professional development (CPD) is used to strengthen the knowledge skills of teachers and teaching assistants. For example, In developing the teaching of mathematics, a lesson study approach has been used to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. This practice originated from East Asian and Japan. Lesson studies are a teacher-led approach like action research. Two or three teachers identify areas of teaching and learning to examine. Teachers plan and teach a number

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of lessons. Afterwards, the teachers discuss the lessons, reflect on practice and make necessary improvements.

- School self-evaluation is accurate, rigorous and systematic. As a result, senior leaders, other leaders and governors have a clear overview of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The findings of self-evaluation inform the priorities for a well-focused school improvement plan.
- The Headteacher keeps governors well informed about the school's performance. Governors are supportive and offer appropriate challenge in order to hold the school to account. Members of the governing body fully recognise the school's rapid improvements and the current high performance.

Areas for development

- During 2024-2025 there will be some key staffing changes. The Assistant Headteacher is taking maternity leave in April. The school will be appointing a teacher to for the maternity leave and appointing a new Forest School leader.

Agreed actions

Date

- Ensure that new staff and new leaders are successfully inducted, supported and trained so they become effective members of the school team as quickly as possible.

2024-2025

Does the school have the ability to meet these actions without external support?

Yes

Early years

Areas of strength

- Children enter Reception with knowledge and skills broadly typical for their age. Children are provided with a broad range of exciting indoor and outdoor learning activities. All areas of learning and development are given appropriate attention.
- The outdoor learning environment has been much improved. Children enjoy the range of outdoor learning opportunities.
- The teaching of communication, language and early reading and writing skills are given strong emphasis. Children thoroughly enjoy their learning
- By the end of Reception in 2024, eighty one percent of children achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) and this was well above average.

Areas for development

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No significant areas identified during this visit.		
Agreed actions		Date
NA		
Does the school have the ability to meet these actions without external support?	NA	

Summary
Under the highly effective leadership of the Headteacher, Wiveliscombe Primary has made remarkable improvements since March 2020. The Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and other leaders are firmly focused on providing a high quality of education for all. Leaders have designed an ambitious, broad and rich curriculum which is well sequenced towards the development of key knowledge and skills. The curriculum is extremely well implemented by high quality teaching. As a result, outcomes for pupils are securely above average by the end of Reception, in Year 1 phonics and by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing, mathematics and GP&S. The quality of education is looking outstanding. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are looking outstanding. They have very positive attitudes to learning and behaviour is often exemplary. Personal development is also a very strong aspect of the school. Highly effective leadership is the key to the school's success. This school is a model for rapid improvement. Leaders and staff from other schools would benefit from a visit to Wiveliscombe.

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