

Whitgreave Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124082
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	380797
Inspection dates	28–29 February 2012
Lead inspector	Charalambos Loizou HMI

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Dunn
Headteacher	Caroline Jobling
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Charalambos Loizou

Her Majesty's Inspector

Michael Appleby

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, which included learning walks to inspect intervention groups and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and observed 10 teachers and all teaching assistants. Inspectors heard pupils read and scrutinised their workbooks. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and pupils, and inspectors spoke to some parents and carers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Questionnaire responses from 92 parents and carers were analysed, together with 95 responses from pupils in Key Stage 2 and 23 from staff. Inspectors scrutinised the arrangements and records kept by the school to safeguard pupils. They also looked at the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation, as well as assessment data that teachers use to monitor pupils' progress.

Information about the school

The school is an average-sized primary school with an Early Years Foundation Stage comprising a Nursery class for three-year-olds who all attend part time, and a Reception class for four-year-olds. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. Other pupils come from range of minority ethnic backgrounds and none are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The main areas of additional need include moderate or specific learning difficulties, such as speech, language or communication difficulties.

Pupils' attainment meets the current government floor standards for primary schools, which set the minimum expectations for their attainment and progress. The school has a number of national awards, including National Healthy Schools status and the Active Mark and has achieved national recognition as a Dyslexia Friendly school. The school accommodates a privately managed before- and after-school club and is also attached to Featherstone Children's Centre. Both provisions are inspected separately.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- The school has improved and is now a good school. Standards are rising well across the school because teaching is mainly good. The leadership team is sharing best practice, although there is still more to do now to ensure that all lessons are at least of good quality. This is why the school is not yet outstanding.
- Pupils achieve well. Their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is securely in line with the national average. An increasing proportion of pupils in all year groups reach levels in English and mathematics that are one or two years ahead of age-related levels. Target-setting is ambitious and is driving improvement so that attainment gaps between different groups are closing rapidly.
- Teachers accurately assess pupils' progress. Skilled and well-qualified teaching assistants and the outstanding teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) are highly effective in improving pupils' reading and writing skills. This builds on the strong foundations laid in the Nursery and Reception class as children rapidly improve their language, communication and mathematics skills, as well as their personal, social and emotional development. In some lessons, teachers' questioning and planned activities do not always extend pupils' learning. Some lessons miss opportunities to extend further the learning of pupils who are particularly able or gifted. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to respond to teacher's marking or to self-correct their work in lessons.
- Pupils are well behaved and very considerate. The school is a safe, calm and orderly community that fosters a positive climate for learning. The vast majority of parents and carers who returned inspection questionnaires hold positive views about behaviour and their children's safety.
- Leadership is determined and ambitious. The headteacher's strong leadership of a committed staff team and the progress made to eradicate all

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underachievement and improve the performance of teachers and support staff demonstrate good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on improvements and strengthen further the quality of teaching to sustain the rise in standards so that all lessons are securely of good or outstanding quality by:
 - sharing and replicating the best practice that exists across the school through effective professional development and training
 - increasing the pace of learning in those lessons where the teaching is only satisfactory by providing more precise and ambitious learning targets for pupils of all abilities
 - ensuring that all lessons incorporate activities for more-able pupils that aim towards suitably challenging outcomes and extend their learning towards higher levels.

- Improve the effectiveness of teachers' questioning in lessons and the consistency of their marking and ensure that:
 - pupils have time to reflect and respond to their learning in lessons
 - pupils have more opportunities to correct their work to consolidate their understanding.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is rising very well and is now securely in line with national averages by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The majority of children join the Nursery or Reception class with abilities that are well below those expected for their age. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress which continues from Year 1 through to Year 6. The unevenness that was evident in pupils' progress at the time of the last inspection has been eliminated. More consistent and mainly good teaching has eradicated all underachievement. The gaps in the attainment between different groups, such as those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils with disabilities or who have special educational needs, and more-able pupils are closing rapidly as all are making good progress and achieving well.

Teaching has improved very well and there is greater consistency in the expectations and targets set for pupils to achieve. In Year 1, pupils made excellent progress applying their vocabulary and improved knowledge of describing words in sentences using a traditional story after posing questions to 'Queen Isabella'. The teacher skilfully set up a 'hot-seating' role play where an adult played the part of the 'queen'. The lesson led to pupils improving their reading and writing by choosing key words that could be used in sentences to describe the features of the character in the story

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of 'Sleeping Beauty'. The pupils collaborated and worked hard, showing maturity as they listened to other points of view. Like other work seen across the school, pupils' writing books showed that they are making accelerated progress.

The school's accurate assessments and tracking data show that attainment is rising in all year groups. An increasing proportion of pupils achieve standards in English and mathematics that are ahead of age-related levels. Nearly all the parents and carers who spoke with inspectors or returned inspection questionnaires are very pleased with their children's progress. The excellent interventions planned to teach phonics or to boost pupils' learning if they fall short of their targets, accelerate the pace of learning for all groups and individuals. This is enabling pupils to increase their confidence and ability to read and write accurately and independently, as well as helping them to apply core skills in mathematics across a range of other subjects.

Quality of teaching

Nearly all parental responses paid tribute to what they believe to be good teaching and inspection findings agree. Most of the teaching is good or outstanding and makes a significant contribution to pupils' academic, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is some satisfactory teaching but none that is inadequate, reflecting the very good improvements made since the last inspection. Good use is made of the school's highly skilled teaching assistants. In all lessons, adults are used very well to meet the specific needs of pupils who require additional support. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, pupils are grouped each morning by ability during specialised phonics sessions which are having an enormous impact on raising attainment in reading and writing. These sessions are skilfully taught by teachers and teaching assistants and there is consistency across groups in their productivity and effect on pupils' spelling, writing and reading.

Lessons are planned well with suitably challenging targets and outcomes for different groups across the ability range. The most effective teaching incorporates carefully considered activities that engage pupils from the very start. Pupils in Year 5 for example, made excellent progress during an outstanding mathematics lesson because the teacher regularly checked their progress and understanding and gave insightful explanations to help them improve their knowledge of ratio. In some lessons, however, the pace of learning is not consistent for all groups because the teacher does not adapt to the needs of all pupils. Teachers ask questions that are often sharp and focus well on the learning outcomes, although some question-and-answer sessions delay the pace of learning or do not probe further to deepen pupils' understanding.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage staff are very effective in helping children to talk with, and listen to, other children and adults. Role play and outdoor exploration are used very effectively to stimulate curiosity, as when digging for worms and exploring animal habitats, broadening children's knowledge and understanding of the world and improving their confidence in language and communication.

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Although teachers typically plan work for more-able pupils, in some lessons the pupils do not always move on to the most challenging objectives. Sometimes, teachers plan too many activities leaving less scope for pupils to consolidate new learning or correct their work. Teachers use assessment information well to plan suitable objectives for the pupils, but improvement points noted in their marking are not always followed up. The most effective teachers intervene and adapt tasks to encourage pupils to meet their individualised learning targets. The planned curriculum is broad and stimulating because it provides good opportunities for pupils to be practically engaged and to apply core skills.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to school. This is reflected in their above-average attendance and lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour. Nursery and Reception children thoroughly enjoy learning during stimulating activities and games in the safe indoor and outdoor areas. They quickly develop the necessary social skills to cooperate with other children and share resources, for example, when using building blocks while role playing the part of construction workers outdoors. In a few lessons where class discussions lack focus, pupils become more passive and less engaged in their learning.

Around the school and at break and lunchtimes, pupils are exceptionally well behaved, polite and respectful to others. They say that bullying is very rare and that the staff are very good at dealing with this if it occurs. Pupils have a good understanding of how to manage risks when playing outdoors and when using the internet. Inspection findings and records of incidents support the positive views of parents, carers, pupils and staff, who believe that pupils are looked after very well. The staff are very keen to listen to pupils' views and involve the school council in activities such as staff appointments.

Pupils are aspirational and keen to learn and do well in school as a result of the high expectations and consistent behaviour management systems set by all the staff.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and governing body have strengthened leadership at all levels over the last four years and have steered the school's recovery from a previously weak position. The school has addressed very well serious shortcomings in a short period of time. This has increased the confidence, expectations and morale of everyone in the school community. School improvement planning and monitoring include a range of checks and accurate evaluations of pupil's attainment and progress. Subject action plans include clear priorities, although the success criteria from which to judge teachers' performance are sometimes too broad and lack measurable outcomes. This limits the extent to which areas for development in the teaching can be identified for relevant training. The teaching has been strengthened through systematic monitoring, well-chosen appointments of key staff and professional development that is led by the most skilled and effective practitioners. This has resulted in much

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improved standards and outcomes for pupils that demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further. Senior and middle leaders share best practice and the staff are effective in closing attainment gaps between different groups, reflecting the school's strong commitment to providing equal opportunities for all.

The school's creative curriculum widens pupils' horizons and experiences. It incorporates good opportunities for pupils to apply their core skills in reading, writing, mathematics, information and communication technology and science to a range of stimulating topics and subjects. Older pupils are learning to speak and read French and music provision has improved. Special projects and home learning have broadened pupils' experiences and stimulate further research. The staff are successful in encouraging pupils to experience and respect different faiths, cultures and customs and the school is very effective in discouraging all forms of discrimination.

The school has effective strategies to engage with parents and carers. There are also strong links with the privately run before- and after-school club and the neighbouring children's centre. The extensive range of extra-curricular clubs, educational visits and events are successful in promoting pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The governing body holds the school to account and individual members bring a range of expertise and rigour to the process of school improvement. They fully understand their responsibilities and are vigilant in setting high expectations and clear priorities in the school improvement plan. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet current requirements and ensure that pupils feel safe.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



1 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whitgreave Primary School, Wolverhampton WV10 7AS

Thank you for being so polite and welcoming when the inspectors visited your school. All of you are a credit to the school and are a real success story. Many thanks also to those of you who completed the questionnaires. The inspectors enjoyed meeting and talking to you, as well as observing some of your lessons. Inspectors have judged that you go to a good school. We found you to be very well behaved in lessons and at other times. You are making good progress in English, mathematics and other subjects because your teachers and support staff provide you with mainly good lessons. Many of you told us that your work is fun because of the opportunities you have to organise your own special projects at home and share these with your friends in school. You also have good opportunities to undertake good-quality writing and mathematics work as well as beautifully displayed art and design work about interesting topics such as the Incas or 'exploding volcanoes'. The Nursery and Reception children are having fun and are learning lots too. I particularly enjoyed watching the children play and explore outdoors, especially when looking for wiggly worms with their magnifying glasses. The headteacher, staff and governing body are continually improving the school and have successfully made improvements since the last time your school was inspected.

Your reading, writing and mathematics work is improving well, but inspectors have judged that, after teachers mark your work, they should give you more time to improve it or correct your mistakes. Inspectors have also asked that all lessons are of the same good or outstanding quality seen most of the time. We noticed that sometimes in lessons you need time to think, especially if there are lots of different activities, because some of you need to understand and practise what you are learning. We have asked your teachers to make sure that they always give you enough challenging work to improve your skills, but also time to practise and reinforce what you have learned.

You can all help too by keeping up your good attendance and behaviour. I wish you, your parents, carers, staff and governors the very best.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou
Her Majesty's Inspector

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