

West Witney Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123084
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	359361
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Rodney Braithwaite

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	297
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Craig Pullen
Headteacher	Judith Tinsley
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2008
School address	Edington Road Oxfordshire OX28 5FZ
Telephone number	01993706249
Fax number	01993 706251
Email address	Headteacher.2601@west-witney.oxon.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2011
Inspection number	359361

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 24 lessons and observed 11 different teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to the school's self-evaluation, the attainment and assessment of pupils' progress, school policies, the school development plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body and the provision for safeguarding. They analysed 148 from parents and carers and other written responses from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and how effectively provision and leaders and managers contribute to their improvement.
- The extent of improvement as a result of new school strategies in attainment and progress in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, and whether the falling trend in attainment in Years 1 and 2 has been turned around.
- The effectiveness of the school's monitoring of teaching and learning in the school.
- The development of the school's management structure, and how effectively leaders at all levels contribute to school improvement.

Information about the school

West Witney is larger than most primary schools. Children start school when three years old on a part-time basis in two mixed-age classes with children in the Reception year. Nursery children move to full-time education in the September following their fourth birthday. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and there are a small number of minority ethnic groups, the largest being of Polish heritage. A very small number of pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average, the largest group having moderate learning difficulties. The headteacher was new to the school last September. Recently there have been significant changes to staffing in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and a new leader was appointed in Key Stage 1. There is a daily 'Early Birds' breakfast club which was observed during the inspection. Several new members have been appointed to the governing body recently. A new Children's Centre is being constructed on the school site. The school has a number of awards including Eco-school and a Healthy School Award.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

West Witney is a satisfactory school which has had several significant changes in staffing recently after a long period of stability. The experienced, decisive and evaluative headteacher has led a number of new initiatives, which combined with other management changes in the lower end of the school has resulted in clear improvements and developing strengths in the school. The most important is the good overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children are making consistently good progress and have a good start to their education. In Years 1 and 2 also there is evidence of improving progress by pupils after recent falls in their attainment. There is still inconsistency in attainment and progress in Years 3 to 6, especially in mathematics, which has been a focus area of the school for some time. The main problem is a weakness in pupils' skills in mental mathematics. The school has maintained other strengths, such as the good quality of care, guidance and support. Pupils remain well behaved, enjoy their education and have enthusiastic attitudes to their learning. Their attendance is good and they and their parents and carers feel that they are safe in school. The school is reviewing its management structure so that there are quicker lines of communication between senior leaders, and more opportunities for middle leaders to take responsibilities. This balance of strengths and developing areas in an improving school indicates a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

Good relationships abound in this friendly and welcoming school, and pupils notably cooperate well with each other. They enjoy taking responsibilities in a vibrant school community and have a satisfactory involvement with the local community. National and international links are in the early stages of development. Nearly all parents and carers share their children's appreciation of the school, one commenting typically, 'Our children are making fantastic progress and we are very happy.' The school environment plays a big part in creating the positive school ethos. Many examples of colourful and interesting work by pupils are displayed throughout the school.

School self-evaluation is increasingly effective because the headteacher, staff and governors have an accurate and realistic understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governing body is determined to play a more active and challenging role in the management of the school. The introduction of rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher has led to improved teaching. However, senior and middle leaders are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring teaching. Teachers manage classes effectively and are well supported by teaching assistants. However, there is inconsistency in the pace of lessons, and as a result learning is sometimes too slow, and there is insufficient expectation of what pupils can achieve. Teachers' marking, target setting and guidance to pupils on how they can improve are also inconsistent. The use of assessment data is improving and being used accurately in planning. The school gains from good

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

partnerships and other links with service providers, which contribute strongly to their good spiritual, social, moral and cultural education.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the skills of pupils in mental mathematics by:
 - challenging all pupils at the levels of which they are capable
 - ensuring that pupils have the basic skills and knowledge to support their mental calculation skills.
- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching by:
 - improving teachers' marking and guidance to pupils on how to improve their learning
 - helping all pupils to know and understand clearly their learning targets
 - ensuring that teaching consistently moves learning at a good pace so that pupils remain fully involved in learning.
- Build upon the existing senior and middle management structure so that:
 - leaders have a better understanding of their roles in monitoring teaching, learning and progress
 - leaders have appropriate training to develop their monitoring skills
 - leaders in Years 3 to 6 are enabled to make quick decisions and take requisite actions when necessary.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The attainment of pupils in the last three years has been inconsistent in Years 3 to 6 and falling in Years 1 and 2. This inspection indicates that the school is taking effective steps to remedy these problems. In Years 1 and 2, the steadily falling trend in attainment to average levels has been halted. There is clear evidence that the attainment of pupils is now rising and a significant number are now reaching above- average levels, especially in writing and reading. In Year 6 in 2010, attainment in English was above average, and slightly above average in mathematics. However, the number of pupils reaching higher levels was better in English than in mathematics, where some more able pupils are not reaching their potential. This is because there remains a weakness in pupils' skills in mental mathematics. Present evidence suggests that writing and reading skills are showing improvement, particularly in Years 3 to 5. The great majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress, which is leading to satisfactory achievement. This also applies to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and to the steadily increasing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Learning is helped by the very positive attitudes of pupils. Year 2 pupils, for example, were seen to be totally absorbed in their research activities into animals when using laptops and books. One girl explained clearly and accurately to her group the meaning of the word 'predator'. Pupils respect their teachers, whom they describe as 'friendly', and say about their school, 'There

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

is a really nice atmosphere.' They do report some incidents of bullying, but feel that the adults deal with these fairly and quickly. Their consistently good attendance demonstrates their enjoyment of school. Pupils enjoy looking after younger children, but think that they could have more responsibilities. They are pleased that the school council is operating on a more regular basis, and are offering many ideas for it to consider. They are involved satisfactorily in the wider community, and are developing their knowledge of social and environmental issues. They are steadily improving their basic skills and personal qualities in preparation for their future. Pupils are fascinated in learning about themselves, especially how to keep healthy, understand the consequences of their actions and cooperate well with each other. These skills contribute strongly to their good spiritual, moral and social development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

Although the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, an increasing proportion is good. This is because senior leaders, especially the headteacher, are monitoring rigorously and offering significant support and guidance on the development of teaching skills. Relationships between pupils and adults are good and teachers manage pupils effectively, ensuring that the great majority of them are motivated and engaged in their lessons. Resources are used well and teachers' subject knowledge is secure. This was observed effectively in a lesson in Year 3 and 4 when pupils were encouraged to use their previous

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

learning about the Egyptians to compose complex sentences using interesting connective words. Teaching assistants are usually well deployed and offer effective support and guidance to pupils. However, pupils do not receive sufficient guidance on how to improve their work, especially through teachers' marking. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of their learning targets are as a result inconsistent across the school. Too many lessons lack pace and not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of the learning potential of their pupils. This is particularly apparent in mental mathematics at the beginning of some lessons.

The curriculum is being reviewed closely by leaders and has begun to offer a range of stimulating project-based activities. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are also now able to offer their suggestions on what is taught based on their interests. The curriculum is enhanced by extra-curricular activities such as the choir, good provision for information and communication technology, and residential visits for all years from 1 to 6. A few more-able pupils visit the local high school for 'mathematics master classes'. Much of this helps the development of pupils' spiritual, moral and social education, but there are fewer opportunities for the planned development of pupils' cultural education. Opportunities for developing English and mathematics are given regularly across the curriculum and are beginning to have a stronger impact on the priority of raising pupils' basic skills.

Good arrangements for the care and support of pupils are strongly promoting their personal development. The school ensures that it provides a welcoming and supportive environment for pupils, which is reflected by their enjoyment of school. Pupils in potentially vulnerable circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are receiving effective targeted support. The school has good systems in place to promote transition to Year 1, and to secondary education from Year 6, which helps pupils to make well-informed choices about their future. The provision of the well-attended 'Early Birds' breakfast club contributes positively to the needs of pupils; as one parent commented, 'The club is a particularly good facility ensuring children are focused and engaged by lesson time.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The aspirational headteacher has made a good start to building a management team who share her ambitions for continued improvement. Priorities are well focused on the learning and personal development of pupils. The senior staff are developing into a more rigorous management team, and other staff, including teaching assistants, are responding positively and enthusiastically to their leadership. However, although there is more

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

devolved responsibility to leaders, the school realises that the structure of management in Key Stage 2 is over complicated and will be reviewed. Additionally, middle managers are still in the early stages of developing their subjects. The monitoring of teaching and learning at present is increasingly effective but rests mainly on the shoulders of the headteacher. The school is now planning steps to ensure that senior leaders are trained and more confidently involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning. Challenging targets for pupils are realistic, and the school is reflective in its self-evaluation. The governing body, led by a thoughtful and knowledgeable chair, is becoming more proactive and challenging to leaders than in the past. It has made sure that safeguarding procedures are rigorous and effective, and that pupils are supported in understanding how to keep safe. Its reviews of various school policies, however, are sometimes delayed too long.

The school is making satisfactory progress in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling any discrimination by tackling some underachievement. This has been successful in part, but has not yet had sufficient effect on the attainment of more-able pupils in mathematics. The school has built a good range of partnerships, especially with the local high school, the Witney Partnership for schools, and a number of sporting and family support groups. There is good engagement with parents and carers, as shown by the turnout during the inspection for a presentation of the Oxford Infant Learning Platform. The contribution to community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily by the school. It is beginning to improve through the planned development of links with schools in Barnet and South Africa. Provision for improving the knowledge and awareness of pupils of the cultural diversities of different communities is a priority of the school and is developing steadily.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress from broadly average starting points to reach levels of skill which are increasingly above expectations for their age by the time they join Year 1. This improving picture owes much to the quality of relationships between children and adults. Children are happy and settled and feel safe and secure in their surroundings. They are provided with a good range of learning activities both in the classroom and outside which are often especially imaginative and well promoted. One boy, for example, when using scales was astounded to discover that the items he had chosen balanced each other, and rapidly called his friends to show them. The outdoor area has recently been redeveloped although as yet all the planned improvements are incomplete, and some parts are uninviting.

There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities, and adults support children well through skilful questioning and promotion of new vocabulary. Role-play areas are generally exciting, although boys do not have enough opportunities in these areas for purposeful writing. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good, and leaders skilfully assess and track children's progress. Information gathered is used effectively in teachers' planning. All statutory requirements for safeguarding are fully met. There are close working relationships with parents and carers. Children value their 'special books' which they can share with parents and carers and show their achievements with pride.

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

Over half of all parents and carers responded to the questionnaires. A large majority of those who replied are very positive about the school. They feel that the school keeps their children safe, that teaching and the leadership of the school are good, and that their children enjoy school. A typical comment stated, 'The teaching and support we have experienced are exceptional and our child is blossoming.' Inspectors agree with the many positive comments made. A few parents and carers have concerns about the progress their children are making and how the school helps them to support their children's learning. The inspection found that pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their learning, and that the school has a number of strategies to help parents and carers to support their children's learning, including opportunities to easily contact staff when necessary.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Witney 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 148 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 297 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	82	55	62	42	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	74	50	72	49	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	49	33	92	62	7	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	49	33	87	59	11	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	68	46	78	53	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	52	35	88	59	8	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	34	92	62	4	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)	53	36	84	57	5	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	30	97	66	6	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	24	87	59	5	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	20	102	69	5	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	48	32	93	63	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	62	42	80	54	3	2	0	0

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 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



24 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Witney Primary School, Witney OX28 5FZ

Thank you all for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We were so pleased that you told us how much you enjoyed school, especially all your residential trips. It was also good to hear how you like taking responsibilities, particularly you older ones who like looking after younger children. You go to a satisfactory school where you are well looked after by all the adults, and by the time you leave in Year 6 your attainment is usually about what it should be for your age. We are especially pleased that when you are in the Nursery/Reception classes you get a really good start to your education.

We think that you are polite and friendly and get on very well with your teachers and their assistants. You know how to keep safe and healthy and know that you can always turn to an adult if you have a problem. We think that your headteacher has made a very good start since she came to the school and that the school is trying to improve all the time. We are very pleased that your parents and carers like the school as well.

We have suggested ways in which we think the school can continue to improve. Firstly, we have asked the school leaders to improve your mental mathematics, which we believe will help you to achieve as well in your mathematics as in your writing and reading. Secondly, we have asked that teachers give you more help with your learning by making sure their marking of your work tells you how to improve. We would also like them to make sure you understand and know your learning targets, and speed up some of your lessons. Finally, we have suggested that all of the school leaders can play a bigger part in managing the school and your learning.

We are sure that you can help by telling your teachers when you need help or do not understand how to improve your work. We believe that you will continue to improve, and hope that you will have a good spring in your lovely school grounds.

Yours sincerely

Rod Braithwaite

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.