

Weobley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116746
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	358020
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Peter Kerr

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	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanne Newton
Headteacher	Caroline Lawson
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2007
School address	Burton Wood Hereford HR4 8ST
Telephone number	01544 318273
Fax number	01544 318896
Email address	headteacher@weobley-pri.hereford.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors saw all the teachers teaching, observed seven lessons and held meetings with parents, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at school policies and other documentation, records of pupils' progress and 59 parental questionnaires.

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

- The progress pupils are now making in lessons in each year group.
- How well lessons provide for pupils of all abilities.
- The pupils' awareness of diversity within the United Kingdom.

Information about the school

Weobley Primary School is a smaller than average primary school serving a rural area. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. About one third of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is a higher than average proportion. About three in ten pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is also an above average proportion. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2009 and the senior leadership team was re-structured in April 2010. The school has maintained its Gold Artsmark and Eco Green Flag and has recently achieved the intermediate level International 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning. All aspects of provision are good and the school is well led and managed. Previous inadequate progress has held back outcomes for older pupils over recent years but learning is now good across the school and progress is accelerating rapidly. Standards are broadly average across all year groups and rising quickly. Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well in lessons and cooperate well with each other. Their participation in sports and other active pursuits is particularly impressive. They greatly enrich the school and local community through their involvement in a range of activities but their understanding of the more diverse community within the United Kingdom is limited. Attendance is above average for most pupils. Persistent absence by a few pupils hinders their progress.

Teaching is consistently good with some outstanding use of imaginative role play and other creative activities to enliven lessons. For instance, a mock battle in the playground between invading Roman soldiers and defending Celts brought history vividly to life for Year 4 pupils. The impact of the stimulating curriculum is particularly positive on boys' writing, where progress had previously been slow. Year 6 boys, for instance, became engrossed in thinking about how to enliven a story because of the imaginative way the teacher had presented it. Pupils take some responsibility for their own learning, but this is not yet consistent across the school. Lesson planning is based on accurate assessments, but opportunities are occasionally missed to probe the pupils' understanding and increase the level of challenge where possible, particularly in mathematics lessons.

Good care, guidance and support enable all pupils to take full advantage of the curriculum. Pupils with mobility issues are particularly well-catered for, reflecting the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity. Specific interventions to support pupils experiencing the most significant barriers to learning are raising the pupils' self-esteem and speeding-up their progress.

The governing body acted decisively to change the leadership of the school when the decline in standards following the last inspection became apparent. The new headteacher has established a vibrant leadership team and quickly gained the confidence of parents. Self-evaluation is now accurate and shared fully with the governing body and the school's action plan addresses main priorities well. This strong sense of shared purpose, together with the significant improvements in provision, especially teaching, and the evident acceleration in progress over the past two terms, give the school a good capacity for sustained improvement. The school's provision for promoting community cohesion meets requirements, but is insufficiently focused on economic, ethnic and religious diversity to enable useful evaluation of the impact of actions taken.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further by:
 - ensuring that current good progress is sustained for all year groups so that attainment rises to above average at the end of Year 6
 - improving the way teachers interact with pupils during lessons to further accelerate progress, especially in mathematics
 - involving pupils more closely in setting the agenda for their own learning and monitoring their own progress
 - re-doubling efforts to ensure good attendance for all pupils.
- Improve the school's provision for community cohesion by:
 - focusing the school's planning more clearly on economic, ethnic and religious diversity within the United Kingdom as well as globally
 - evaluating the impact of initiatives on pupils' understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment is below average on entry to the school and current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach broadly average standards by the time they leave. Only the ground lost through past dips in progress has prevented their attainment reaching above average. Current learning in lessons is good. Pupils now enjoy their learning because they are often engrossed in practical activities such as measuring, role-play and making things. Key Stage 1 pupils enjoyed printing patterns as part of a mathematics lesson, for example, accurately labelling their pictures to reinforce their knowledge and understanding of shapes. Current progress is therefore good, and younger pupils are on track to reach above average standards by the time they leave the school. The pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes contribute significantly to their learning and progress. They collaborate well and can be trusted to undertake independent tasks responsibly. For example, Year 3 pupils sustained effort and concentration when undertaking measuring tasks in small groups without needing close supervision. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their participation in sports and music activities and are proud of having helped persuade the local council to erect speed warning signs outside the school. In an uplifting assembly by Year 4 pupils, many parents witnessed their children speaking confidently about the things they had been doing in school and enthusiastically performing a dance depicting a Roman invasion. The full participation of pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities in such activities shows how well the pupils appreciate the true worth of each individual. In discussions, the pupils demonstrate an interest in different beliefs and customs, but do not have a secure knowledge of the wide variety of ethnicity, religions and backgrounds of people living within the United Kingdom.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	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	3
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?

The key to the current good progress and increasingly positive outcomes for pupils is consistently good teaching. All the teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and use marking well to praise effort and success and to give pointers for improvement. In the best lessons, teachers interact purposefully with pupils as they work to identify those who could do more, and adjust the level of challenge accordingly. An outstanding lesson in Year 6 demonstrated all these strengths and kept the whole class enthusiastically engaged in developing their story-telling skills. In lessons that are not quite as effective, teachers focus too much on the completion of the set tasks and miss opportunities to accelerate learning. Good examples were seen of teachers capitalising on the pupils' interests to further their learning across the curriculum. For example, a discussion in Year 4 on how the pupils could improve the design of the shields they had made for their Roman role-play, contributed to their progress in English, mathematics, design and technology and history.

The curriculum provides a wide range of rich learning opportunities, including off-site visits and residential study trips. Music features prominently, with pupils benefitting from a range of instrumental lessons, including whole-class tuition on the tin whistle, and communal singing. The new coordinator for special educational needs and/or disabilities has established consistent procedures across the school and thorough tracking and support for all pupils. The individual tuition provided to aid progress in mathematics for

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pupils falling behind is proving successful in motivating them and enabling them to begin catching up.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher quickly identified and remedied the main weaknesses in provision that had caused the downward trend in standards. She has established an effective leadership team with properly devolved responsibility for pupils' outcomes. The key stage leaders set exemplary standards for teaching, have a clear view of progress and work closely together to ensure smooth progression through the school. Support was put in for teachers needing to improve their performance and effective new appointments made. The consistency of teaching that has been achieved is driving progress forward rapidly and contributes strongly to the school's good capacity to continue improving.

The governing body has an exceptionally clear overview of the school. Under the previous leadership it lacked the information on which to form a view so acted decisively to change the leadership. As well as providing the needed information to the governing body and other stake-holders, the new headteacher has introduced clear systems and procedures which have greatly improved the efficiency of administration, for example the regular review of all policies. Good use is made of a range of partnerships to broaden and enrich the curriculum and provide challenge beyond the school's own resources. Extra maths lessons for the more able pupils are provided at the high school, for example, and lessons in French and Chinese are taught within school by specialist teachers.

Seven parents commented on the improvements brought about by the new headteacher and almost all think the school is well led and managed. Policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils fully meet requirements and the school is very pro-active in ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils. Some parents whose children have particular needs or disabilities expressed their appreciation of this aspect of provision. The school's provision for promoting community cohesion meets requirements and has led to some useful links, for example with a school in China. However, planning is insufficiently focused on the economic, ethnic and religious composition of the school and its immediate community. This results in a lack of clarity in terms of the impact of actions on the pupils' appreciation of diversity in the wider world, particularly within the United Kingdom.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Attainment on entry to the Nursery is below that expected for children of this age, especially in the key areas of communication, language and literacy, and personal and social education. Progress is rapid in personal and social education as the children soon learn to be independent and to make friends. Progress in communication, language and literacy is slower as many of the children need time to develop key skills in talking and listening. Good progress is maintained through Reception so that children begin Year 1 with broadly average attainment in most areas of their learning, but with some ground to make up in communication, language and literacy. Activities are planned that enable the children to learn mostly through play. Adults interact with the children well to aid learning, and keep meticulous records of the children's progress through each of the six areas of their development. The children have regular free-flow access to a small secure outside area which extends their learning effectively through play with sand, soil and water. Their access to the larger outdoor area where they can play with balls, wheeled toys and larger equipment has to be more closely supervised, but this does not prevent its regular use to good effect. Teacher-directed activities are pitched at an appropriate level and are kept reasonably short. As children gain in confidence and knowledge, activities are made more challenging and formal. For example, children were encouraged to compare the length of sticks they found in the playground and were asked to find shorter or longer ones. Computers are part of the range of options the children have, and they develop confidence and skill in using them. The staff are suitably trained in all aspects of safeguarding and ensure that the setting is a secure as well as welcoming place to learn. The setting is well led and managed, and transition into Year 1 is smooth.

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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

Parents are generally very happy with their children's experience at the school and say that it is well led and managed. All agree that their children are kept safe. A number of parents expressed their appreciation of how much the school had improved under the new headteacher. As one parent put it: 'my child now skips to school, which is all I could ask for'. A small number of parents feel that their children's needs are not met and are not satisfied with the information they receive or guidance on how to help their children. The inspection found no evidence to support these views but brought them to the attention of the headteacher. A few parents expressed concern that unacceptable behaviour is not effectively dealt with. The inspection found that good procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour are in place and implemented.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Weobley 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 141 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	63	21	36	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	44	33	56	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	32	34	58	3	5	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	32	33	56	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	46	28	47	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	37	31	53	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	39	34	58	1	2	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)	24	41	30	51	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	36	33	56	4	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	24	36	61	3	5	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	41	30	51	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	46	30	51	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	46	30	51	2	3	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

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



14 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Weobley Primary School, Hereford, HR4 8ST

My colleague and I enjoyed the time we spent in your school and appreciated the warm welcome you gave us. Your school is a good school. You are making good progress now and are reaching the standards expected of you in each year-group. You enjoy your lessons because the work is interesting and practical and sometimes exciting. I really enjoyed watching your enactment of a Roman invasion! I also enjoyed seeing pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities joining in all the activities alongside everyone else.

Your teachers look after you well and make sure you are safe. They also help you to keep fit and stay healthy by giving you plenty of opportunities to do sports and encouraging you to eat healthily. I was impressed with your eco-council's work and the way you raise money for charities. I was also pleased to see that you have helped to persuade the council to put speed warning signs up near the school. Well done! Your headteacher manages the school well and has a good staff team. We have asked them to do just a few things to make your school even better. These are to:

- make sure you continue making good progress in each class so that you eventually reach above average standards
- give you extra challenge in lessons when you find work easy
- involve you more in deciding what it is you want to learn next
- make sure you all come to school as often as you can
- help you to understand more about all the different kinds of people that live in other parts of the United Kingdom.

You can help by continuing to work hard, thinking about what you would like to learn and making sure you come to school as often as you can. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Kerr

Lead inspector

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