

Witney Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123018
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	359345
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Kerry Rochester

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Manning
Headteacher	Jill Meyer
Date of previous school inspection	12 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, observed seven teachers and held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, teaching staff, governors and pupils. The inspection team observed the school's work, conducted a learning walk and looked at a range of evidence, including the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, the work that pupils had produced in their books, teachers' marking and the questionnaires completed by 46 parents and carers, 103 pupils and 10 members of staff.

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

- The rigour of systems that are in place to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- The current picture of learning and progress for different groups of pupils, particularly girls and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving writing.

Information about the school

Witney Community Primary School is smaller than the average primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage, and a very small number come from a range of minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found in most schools, although fewer pupils than average have a statement of special educational needs. Their needs include moderate learning difficulties and emotional or behavioural problems. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is marginally above the national average.

Since the last inspection, a deputy headteacher has been appointed and a high number of staff and governors are new to the school. The school has gained Healthy School status.

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

Witney Community Primary is a satisfactory school. It has several good features. For example, pupils make a considerable contribution to the life of their school and community and the pupils are very proud of winning the 'Witney in Bloom' competition last year. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy, which is recognised by the Healthy School award. Pupils are happy at school and they particularly enjoy taking on roles of responsibility. They show care and consideration for each other, and the warm relationships between adults and pupils are a strength of this friendly school. Pupils attend regularly and behave well in lessons. Pupils have a good understanding of cyber bullying and say that the school keeps them safe and are confident that there is always someone who will help them.

Achievement is satisfactory. Children join the school in the Reception class with skills and understanding that are below the levels expected for their age, particularly in language and communication. Children benefit from good provision in the Reception class so that by the time they enter Year 1, their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, and their attainment over the past three years has been broadly average. Attainment by the end of Year 6 over the past three years has also been broadly average, although standards in mathematics and writing were below average in the 2010 national tests. This year group were small in number and contained a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Nevertheless, the progress of this cohort of pupils was satisfactory. This reflects the current picture of progress across the school where, regardless of background or ability, the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points.

Progress is not yet good because there is a degree of inconsistency in the way that teachers use assessment to extend pupils' learning and some teachers miss opportunities to move pupils on quickly enough in lessons once they can do something. The large majority of teaching is satisfactory and, although pupils generally know their targets, the marking of their work does not always provide the clear steps needed to help them improve. The contribution that teaching assistants make to pupils' learning is not always maximised. The curriculum is satisfactory and pupils, as well as some parents, are enjoying learning about topics such as 'Chocolate'. As one parent stated, 'Great idea to have a school project on chocolate. I think the whole school has enjoyed this and I'm sure they will remember this for many years to come.' However, teachers do not yet provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length, or develop basic writing skills during creative curriculum lessons.

Senior leaders have a clear view of the school's effectiveness. There is a well-constructed school development plan which correctly identifies the need to accelerate progress in writing across Key Stage 2 as attainment in this aspect of English is currently below

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average in Years 4, 5 and 6. Governors are now better informed about pupils' outcomes and they have recently become more involved in checking the school's work. They are determined and ambitious and are working closely with the senior leadership team to improve the quality of provision. As a result, they are better placed to drive improvement and are feeling more confident to challenge the school. The headteacher and the governing body have a secure view of the school's effectiveness. This has led to satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. The weaker aspects, such as ensuring teachers give clear guidance to pupils about what they need to do to reach the next level of their learning, have been addressed and pupils' targets are now in place. The use of these targets to ensure that success criteria are sharply focused on learning is not yet fully developed. The school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve further. There are clear signs of continued improvement, but recent developments have not yet had a chance to be fully effective or to have a consistent impact on raising achievement across the school.

Up to 40% of the schools whose 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?

- Raise attainment in writing across Key Stage 2 by providing more high-quality opportunities for writing across the curriculum.
- Improve the rate of progress by:
 - ensuring that pupils' success criteria are sharply focused on the precise learning aims for each lesson, and that pupils are fully aware of them
 - embedding the use of assessment in lessons and improving the consistency of marking, so that pupils know exactly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Improve rapidly the quality of teaching so that the vast majority is good or better by:
 - monitoring and evaluating lessons, ensuring that it focuses primarily on the learning outcomes for pupils
 - regularly moderating the quality of teachers' assessments to ensure they are used effectively to provide additional challenge to all pupils
 - developing the role of teaching assistants so that they make a more effective contribution to learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

From the school's data, lesson observations and work seen in their books, pupils' academic progress and achievement are satisfactory. However, the school is aware that pupils in Key Stage 2 make better progress in their reading and mathematics than they do in their writing. The introduction of Big Write in Year 2 and Year 6 is helping to develop pupils' writing skills. Work in their books indicates that progress for these pupils is beginning to accelerate. As this initiative has only recently been introduced across the rest of the school, its full impact is not yet evident. All groups, including those who have special educational needs/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress.

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In lessons, pupils are eager to participate in class discussions and are given opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. They listen carefully to adults and to each other, and are keen to share their ideas with the whole class. Pupils make the best progress when they are allowed to rehearse their ideas by talking in pairs before reporting back to the class. Teachers generally use questioning well to probe their understanding. This was particularly evident in a Year 5 class where a teacher used questioning skills effectively with a higher ability pupil as he explained to the rest of the class his reasoning behind why he felt 1 out of 10 was equivalent to 10%. Pupils also worked well in teams to determine the relationship between fraction, percentage and decimal equivalents and approached the task with confidence and enthusiasm.

The school council takes its role seriously and its members say that their views are valued. Pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities enthusiastically, for example as play leaders for younger pupils. They enjoy raising money and annually collect large sums of money for different charities. The sound strides pupils make in developing their basic skills prepare them satisfactorily for their future economic well-being. Pupils have a good range of social skills and cooperate well with each other. As 'Playtime Buddies' they display respect for one another and their teachers and have a good sense of right and wrong. They have a good understanding of their own culture and are developing an increased understanding of other cultures, for instance through their study of foreign modern languages.

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	2
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	3

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

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How effective is the provision?

The school provides good care, guidance and support. There are effective transition arrangements for pupils moving through the school and these help them to settle quickly into their new classes. Through the introduction of coffee mornings, the school is providing clear and accessible communication channels for parents and carers. As a result, parents and carers are increasingly engaging with the school. The school has worked hard over the past three years to reduce the number of missed sessions by pupils and, as a result, attendance overall is average.

Pupils respond quickly to instructions and the consistent use of behaviour management strategies across the school support the pupils' good behaviour. The school has introduced new systems for helping teachers to assess pupils' progress on a regular basis. Staff currently have satisfactory assessment skills. These systems have not been in place long enough to be firmly established and further discussion, training and moderation for some staff are needed before the full potential of these systems can be realised. In lessons, the impact of teaching over time is satisfactory. This is because teachers make it clear to pupils what they are to learn. However, sometimes pupils are not sure what the teacher is looking for, so are unable to assess their own work successfully. Teaching assistants do not always support pupils' learning effectively enough and too many opportunities to reshape explanations and secure pupils' understanding are missed. The more effective teaching encourages pupils to work at a faster pace and to increase the amount of work they complete.

Pupils appreciate the good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities available and these are well supported. Planning to strengthen the curriculum is underway. However, the development of a more creative curriculum is at an early stage and opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their writing in other subjects across the curriculum are too limited as yet.

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?

With the appointment of many new staff and governors over the past two years, the headteacher has worked hard to develop a cohesive team focused on school improvement. School self-evaluation is satisfactory and there is now a clear drive to improve and raise the rates of progress for all pupils. The school rightly recognises that some inconsistency remains in its work, such as in the accuracy and use of assessments and the use of success criteria in lessons to support pupils' own assessment of their work.

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There are effective tracking systems in place to monitor pupils' progress and these are being used by senior leaders to analyse data and set improvement targets with staff. Satisfactory monitoring of the quality of lessons is regular and accurate. However, the school's systems for evaluating and recording lesson observations are focused too much on the actions of teaching rather than its impact on learning.

The governing body carries out its statutory responsibilities and takes an active part in the monitoring and evaluation of achievement. As a relatively new team, the governing body is beginning to provide effective challenge, which will help governors to hold the school to account more rigorously. Safeguarding procedures, including child protection procedures, are robust with all staff having received suitable training. As a result, pupils are safe and secure. The effectiveness with which the school promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination is satisfactory because the school routinely monitors the progress of a wide range of groups of pupils and there is little significant difference in the performance of most groups compared with their peers. School leaders have a clear understanding of the school's socio-economic, religious and ethnic context and there is an appropriate policy in place which promotes community cohesion. However, community cohesion beyond the local area has not yet been developed sufficiently. The level of pupils' achievement and the rates of their learning and progress indicate that the school currently provides satisfactory value for money.

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	3
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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have led to improvements in the quality of provision. The children enter the Reception class with skills below those expected in almost all areas of learning; they are well below those expected in communication and language. Good teaching helps children make good progress, and

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by the time they leave the Reception class most children meet the expected goals for learning in all areas. The high focus staff give to speaking and listening, through encouraging children to talk about stimulating objects daily as part of Big Talk, has enabled the children to make rapid progress in their communication and language skills.

Children learn and play well together which is demonstrated in their good behaviour, ensuring positive relationships between the children themselves and with adults. A good variety of activities led by adults or initiated by the children themselves are provided. Adults observe children's learning carefully and this information is used effectively to plan lessons that meet children's individual needs. Staff provide a well-planned and stimulating environment for the children. Children have good opportunities to make choices and effective use is made of the outside area as an extension to the classroom. Arrangements for starting school are good and take excellent account of parents' and carers' views.

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

Most of the parents are pleased with what the school has to offer and are happy with the overall experience their children are receiving. An overwhelming majority felt their children enjoyed school, were kept safe and taught how to lead a healthy lifestyle. A few parents felt the school did not deal effectively with behaviour. However, during the inspection there were no instances of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Witney Community 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 194 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	35	29	63	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	26	34	74	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	10	22	35	76	0	0	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	35	28	61	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	30	31	67	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	28	29	63	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	24	34	74	0	0	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)	14	30	30	65	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	24	31	67	3	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	26	25	54	7	15	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	20	34	74	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	28	29	63	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	46	23	50	0	0	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.



17 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Witney Community Primary School, Witney OX28 1HL

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors and helping us when we visited your school recently. The school gives you a satisfactory education and, as you told us, there are lots of good things about it. This is what we found about your school.

- It is a friendly and happy place for you to work and play.
- Your behaviour is good and you enjoy your lessons.
- You develop well and are well cared for.
- You are all making satisfactory progress because teaching is satisfactory.
- You show a good understanding of how to live healthily and stay safe.
- You benefit from, and enjoy, a wide range of after-school clubs.
- The youngest children get off to a good start to school in the Reception class.
- The headteacher and the staff have a clear picture of what the school needs to do to improve further.

We have asked those that lead and manage the school to do three things in order to make your school even better.

- Give you more opportunities to practise and develop your writing skills across the curriculum.
- Asked teachers to help you to learn better by marking your work more thoroughly and giving you clear feedback that helps you know what to do next to improve your work.
- Make sure that the teaching assistants help you more with your learning.

I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and do your best. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Kerry Rochester
Lead inspector

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