

# The British School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115739
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	363837
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Carrington

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	160
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carl Jenner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Hiatt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Wortley Road Wotton-under-Edge GL12 7JU
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons led by seven teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school planning, assessment data, pupils' work, the school's checks on the quality of teaching, and a number of policy documents. The team received 62 questionnaires from parents and carers and also evaluated those from pupils and the school staff.

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

- How far achievement in mathematics has been improved to match that in English.
- The consistency and effectiveness of the use of assessment to help pupils improve their work.
- Whether there is enough evidence to support the school's judgement that it has an outstanding capacity to improve. Whether there is enough evidence to support the school's judgement that it has an outstanding capacity to improve.

## Information about the school

The British School is smaller than most primary schools. Most pupils come from White British families and nearly all speak English as their main language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication needs or some form of learning difficulty. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals. More pupils than is usually found move in or out of the school part way through their primary education. The school is organised into a Reception class and a total of six mixed-age classes in Key Stage 1 and 2.

The school has been awarded Healthy School, Eco-school and International 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?****2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

## Main findings

The British School is a good school. It has sustained the strengths reported at the previous inspection in 2008 and has made good improvements to a number of key aspects of its work. All leaders, staff and the governing body share the same high expectations, ambition and the resolute drive for improvement. School self-evaluation is thorough and accurate; improvement priorities are well chosen and are pursued with vigour. There are good robust structures in place to ensure a smooth transition with the changes in leadership planned for the autumn.

There are several outstanding features of the school. Pupils' behaviour is first class, which enables them to settle to productive and purposeful work and make good progress. As a result, the above-average attainment levels are rising steadily, especially in mathematics. The achievement of higher attainers is noticeably good. Pupils' awareness of safety and health matters is second to none. Their attendance is high, which is reflected in the great enjoyment of school witnessed by visitors. Parents and carers hold extremely positive views of the school and work very closely with the staff to improve their children's education and good prospects for the future.

Given the impending changes in key personnel, it is an appropriate time for the school to review the structure of leadership and management. At present, middle leaders do not have full responsibility for the performance of their subject, for example through close analysis of pupils' progress data. They carry out their existing duties very conscientiously and thoroughly, and have the expertise to take on additional roles and accountability. The governing body is probing in its approach to school improvement. Members of the governing body are supportive and are frequent visitors to school. They ensure all statutory duties are upheld.

Lessons are well taught, as shown by lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' books. There are some outstanding quality lessons, which are marked by a very brisk pace, warm rapport between pupils and the adults, and work that is carefully and accurately tailored to meet the needs of different ability groups. Additionally, good use is made of assessment information when sharing ideas with pupils about how to improve their work. In these highly successful lessons, the pupils have many opportunities to manage their own learning and use their initiative in the approach to problem solving and investigation. In a few lessons, the teacher tends to control the learning too much and sometimes does most of the thinking for the pupils, suggesting a sequence of steps to complete the work, rather than first enquiring whether the pupils have any useful ideas.

The curriculum has considerable richness and provides pupils with some very good opportunities to participate in local community events, enjoy residential visits and educational excursions, and to join a wealth of out-of-school activities. The school has an excellent sporting tradition which supports its Healthy School status very effectively. The

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pupils have some well-thought-out ideas for the further improvement of the curriculum. School leaders are keen to incorporate these where possible.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that pupils have ample opportunities to manage their own learning by identifying ways to solve problems and plan investigations.
- Strengthen the system of middle leadership and management so it ensures those involved have a significant role and responsibility for pupils' best possible progress.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

The school has maintained the trend of above-average attainment well. This has been especially successful because this year, the starting point of many children was clearly below the expected level of skills and knowledge. Across the school, pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and/or difficulties, because the work is planned thoroughly to help them take the essential next step in learning. Similarly, those pupils who do not complete all of their primary education at the school make good progress during their stay. The school's robust system of tracking progress ensures any potential underachievement is arrested quickly. Thus, pupils known to be entitled to free school meals and those born in the summer that previously did not do as well as might be expected are now achieving as briskly as the other pupils in school.

During recent years, attainment and progress in mathematics has not always kept pace with the English results. The school has addressed this well, with the result that the outcomes in mathematics are now as good as those in English. This was observed in an outstanding lesson for the mixed Years 3 and 4 class where the pupils showed great skill in multiplying small amounts then extending the approach to larger and larger values. They also combined the numbers in every possible way, which showed them very clearly how division is the inverse of multiplication. They did not allow the teacher to omit any permutation when writing the combinations on the board. All the pupils were enthused; consequently, excellent achievement was reached in this lesson.

The school community is harmonious, friendly and welcoming to all. The pupils support each other well and show responsibility and sensitivity in helping others to succeed. They are also very proud of their own and others' achievements. They are adamant that behaviour is beyond reproach, a view shared by their parents and carers. Bullying is said to be virtually non-existent. There is great trust and respect for the staff and visitors. The pupils know that any worries or concerns will be answered quickly and positively.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

There is a base line of consistently good teaching in every classroom. Teachers are keen to improve their own work and welcome constructive advice to assist this. They are a strong team who strive to adopt new initiatives consistently but also to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning. This approach has led to good-quality lesson planning, the provision of some exciting learning themes and a well-developed system of evaluating achievement and sharing it with the pupils. As a result, pupils know what they have to do in lessons to improve their work. They also know what expectations are held of their work and behaviour, and respond enthusiastically to the challenges provided. Occasionally, the very positive personal qualities of the pupils are a little overlooked when the teacher explains everything in too much detail rather than giving the class scope to formulate its own approach to the work. However, it was evident from talking to the staff that they recognise this and are keen to change approach in order to maximise learning quality and, hence, progress.

The curriculum is designed to promote pupils' creativity well. It also raises their inquisitiveness. Often, pupils continue their researches outside lesson time because they want to know more. One group of pupils suggested to the inspectors that the curriculum could be improved if their ideas were incorporated in the choice of themes. Senior leaders are willing to use such initiative in the enhancement of provision.

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The quality of care, guidance and support is very well regarded by parents, carers and the local community. It is almost a trade mark of the school. Vulnerable pupils are counselled well to help them succeed. Those with any form of barrier to learning are encouraged and supported consistently well so they too can settle to effective learning. The teaching assistants take a particularly valuable role in ensuring all pupils can do well in school. They have great expertise and the confidence to lead learning in supporting individual pupils in a sensitive and kindly way. Partnerships are strong and very effective with outside agencies and other groups in the care, guidance and support of pupils. The volunteers who assist in school provide very successful support to learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school has been very well led and guided by the headteacher. He holds high expectations, sets challenging targets for the pupils and staff, and is staunch in his work to improve the school. This has been infectious because other leaders, staff and the governing body alike have joined the spirit of hard work, careful evaluation of performance and resolve to improve. The quality of teaching and learning has been consolidated and then extended very successfully. There is no complacency in school, so even the outstanding features identified in school self- evaluation are subject to a questing approach for further improvement.

The governing body plays its part well in the evaluation of school performance, the meeting of statutory responsibilities and the identification of priorities for improvement. It ensures the safeguarding of pupils is effective. Staff are watchful and alert, documentary support covers all the necessary areas, and guidance about procedures is taken seriously. Similarly, the promotion of community cohesion is pursued well by the governing body and staff. There are some very strong links with the local community and those overseas. Partnerships with other communities in the United Kingdom are established, and currently subject to further development with well- advanced plans to broaden their scope. The governing body understands that in order to become outstanding its next step is to evaluate school performance by balancing the views of others with its own assessment of success.

The school ensures that the equality of opportunity is good. Pupils achieve well, whatever their background or needs. There is very effective promotion of pupils' personal and social equality because of the strength of partnerships with parents, carers and groups outside school.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has ensured that the strengths of provision outlined in the previous inspection report have been maintained and that further improvement has occurred. The effective use of the outside areas and of information and communication technology is the key to improvements since 2008. The children make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage of their education because provision is good. They reach the expected levels of skill and knowledge by the end of their Reception Year.

The leader of the phase continues the work to improve assessment and its use. The children's progress is tracked carefully and their work adjusted to ensure there is sufficient challenge so that they can learn effectively. Currently, children's personal, social and emotional development is not as strong as other aspects of their work. The staff realise that this has to be taken into account in the planning of both the adult-led and child-chosen activities.

The partnership between teaching staff and the teaching assistants has much merit. All the adults work well to provide motivating and interesting learning. This was observed in the session where about two thirds of the children were developing their writing skills. They were enthused to write a sentence using the 'en' sound in words. They particularly enjoyed writing this along the back of 'Slinky the dachshund' and, depending on the success in this, wagging his tail to show how well the sentence had been written. The higher attainers went a step further when they extended the original sentence using their own ideas. The whole group enjoyed listening to the amended line. The other third of the children were meanwhile engaged with the teaching assistants and volunteers in exploring how to make flapjacks, painting their animal models and using the computer to draw and write. Much fun was evident in the learning.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	2
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 and carers hold very positive views of the school. Many wrote comments that identified how well school staff take account of all of their child's needs and provided a well-rounded education for them. The school's warm, welcoming ethos was also praised. These very supportive views are matched by those from this inspection. The very few concerns expressed all concerned individual views which stood in contrast with the judgements of the vast majority, and there was no trend in them.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The British 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 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 160 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	65	22	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	68	20	32	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	30	48	30	48	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	55	27	44	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	41	66	19	31	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	45	33	53	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	58	26	42	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)	37	60	24	39	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	58	23	37	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	45	31	50	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	31	40	65	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	63	22	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	66	19	31	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of The British School, Wotton under Edge GL12 7JU**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and were impressed with your ideas about how to make the school even better. We judge that you go to a good school and one that has many strengths. These are the main ones we have written about.

- You make good progress and do better than most pupils in other primary schools.
- Children in Reception thoroughly enjoy their time in school and they learn well.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you take great care of each other.
- You are well taught, work hard and complete a lot of work in lessons.
- All the adults in school look after you very carefully.
- Your school is well led and managed. All the adults want you to do your best.

We have also included two main improvements for the future in our report.

- Your teachers could use your ideas for ways to solve problems or plan investigations more than they do already.
- Because some adults are leaving, we have asked the school to make sure that next year all the teachers are included in checking that you are making the best possible progress.

We know you will help your teachers make these improvements. You could start by making a list of things you would change in school to make it even better. Talk to your parents, carers and teachers about why you would do these things and what you would include to make sure the ideas are successful.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington

Lead inspector

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