

Great Rissington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115525
Local Authority	Gloucester
Inspection number	379092
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Mary Davis

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	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Campbell
Headteacher	Liz Bannister
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons and all five teachers. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff, and groups of parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at: policies; development planning; data related to the tracking of pupils' progress; senior leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning; safeguarding documents; the governing body minutes; pupils' work; and 85 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with those 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.

- How effectively do pupils in current classes learn, particularly in mathematics, and pupils of higher ability making sufficient progress?
- How well do teachers plan to meet pupils' individual needs and, in particular, to challenge pupils of higher ability?
- How effective is the school in ensuring pupils have first-hand experience of children in other United Kingdom and international contexts?
- How effectively do leaders track the progress of pupils and address under-achievement?

Information about the school

Great Rissington Primary is a smaller-than-average rural village primary school. Most pupils are White British, and very few are of minority ethnic heritage. None speaks English as an additional language. Although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average, the proportion otherwise identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above that of most schools. There are very few pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has three mixed-age classes. It has National Healthy Schools status, the Activemark award, the International School award and the Eco-Schools Green Flag 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Great Rissington Primary is an outstanding school. Parents and carers, the governing body and members of the community express pride in their village school. 'I think we are all lucky and privileged to be a part of this dynamic school' and 'There is a strong sense of community, fun and academic challenge. We are lucky to have found such a great caring... environment where our children can flourish.' These were typical of the comments made by parents and carers, many of whom spoke of the place the school has at the heart of the community. Pupils are keen to play their part and make an outstanding contribution to both their school and the local communities.

Attainment is consistently high, particularly in English, where all pupils achieve expected standards and most attain at the highest levels. Attainment in mathematics has been slightly lower, but the school's leaders have rigorously and effectively addressed this. Pupils are confident, articulate and enthusiastic about their learning. They have developed a high degree of independence and enjoy taking leadership roles when working in groups. They have a very good understanding of how to stay safe and ensure everyone behaves in a safe manner. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to stay healthy, and enjoy the wide variety of sporting activities provided for them and the regular 'wake and shake' sessions that are led by pupils themselves. This commitment to healthy lifestyles is reflected in the school's national awards. Attendance rates are consistently high. This, together with their high level of basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology, and their mature and confident personal skills, are outstanding preparation for their future economic well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are respectful of others' views and beliefs, get on well together and have an excellent understanding of right and wrong. However, their understanding of their place in their national community, gained through first-hand experience, is, currently, limited.

An impressive feature of the school's work is the expert way in which most teachers motivate the large mixed-age-group classes. They skilfully plan lessons that provide appropriate challenge and support for all ability groups and have extremely high expectations of both their pupils' abilities and their behaviour and concentration. In a very few lessons observed, the pace of learning slowed for those of highest ability because they were insufficiently challenged or teachers failed to move on quickly enough once pupils showed that they understood something. Relationships are warm and supportive throughout the school and teachers manage large numbers firmly

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and with humour. This contributes to an atmosphere of great enjoyment in lessons. The outstanding curriculum is focused on providing real-life activities relevant to pupils' experience to inspire learning. For example, during the inspection, pupils were undertaking a variety of tasks in response to an archaeological dig at the secondary school. They wrote descriptions of artefacts found, to be displayed in a museum, and contributed to an information booklet on the area of a Roman villa. Each pupil is well known and cared for as an individual. Pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, and their families, receive outstanding care and support, enabling them to thrive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive individually planned support enabling them to achieve as well as their peers.

Parents and carers speak highly of the 'inspirational' headteacher. A strong team supports her and, together, they have established clear plans to develop the provision, based on thorough self-evaluation. All staff and pupils understand these 'making a difference' (MAD) plans. Leaders have worked successfully to raise pupils' achievement, levels of attendance and aspects of leadership and management since the previous inspection, and have sustained many other areas of outstanding practice. Consequently, the school displays an outstanding capacity to sustain these improvements. The members of the governing body involve themselves fully in the life of the school, including contributing their expertise in the delivery of the curriculum. The school takes a leading role in establishing outstanding partnerships with other local schools, enhancing learning through the curriculum, contributing to pupils' well-being and to staff professional development. The school is a cohesive community with exceptional links with the local community. Although links have been established with a French school, contributing to the school's International School award, leaders recognise that links with other communities in the United Kingdom are underdeveloped. Leaders work consistently to improve the accommodation and facilities of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teaching is, consistently, of outstanding quality by:
 - ensuring that pupils of higher ability are always fully challenged in lessons
 - sharing existing good practice in the planning of lessons to provide that challenge.

- Develop pupils' understanding of their place in their own national community by:
 - providing opportunities for them to obtain first-hand experience of schools in other contexts.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Children enter the Reception class with skills above those expected in all areas of learning. All groups of pupils, including those few from minority ethnic heritages, make good progress throughout the school and by the end of Year 6 have reached

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high standards in English. Standards in mathematics, although above average, declined slightly in 2011. However, leaders’ successful strategies to address this and their current tracking of progress indicate, accurately, that most of the pupils currently in Year 6 are already working at a high level. Pupils enjoy their learning and being challenged to do something difficult. They have an excellent understanding of English grammar and can explain how a sentence should be constructed using complex vocabulary. They take responsibility for their own learning and think carefully about the task they are tackling. For example, pupils were observed working independently on a mathematics task where they were having impassioned discussions with each other about how to calculate the perimeter of a specific shape, demonstrating how they arrived at their answer. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, as a result of well-planned tasks that meet their individual needs and the very effective support of teachers and teaching assistants.

All pupils say that the school keeps them very safe. They say there is no bullying, and that adults are very supportive and will listen if they are troubled by anything. Pupils themselves have just established a ‘buddy bench’ to enable others to signal when they need the support of friends. They have a very good understanding of e-safety and encourage each other to act in a safe manner around the school. Behaviour is good and pupils respond quickly to adults’ instructions. Pupils are confident to take responsible roles within the school and community. The school council see their role as helping others around the school and the eco-committee undertakes a wide variety of tasks, including ensuring the churchyard is eco-friendly; this work is reflected in the eco-school and Green Flag awards. The committee also undertook research into the most ecologically acceptable form of heating to be installed in the school, and influenced school planning. Pupils help raise funds for a variety of charities, including helping to provide mosquito nets and clean water for children in Uganda. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the world of work – not least through regular visits from parents and carers and members of the governing body, who discuss with them the careers they follow.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	1
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	1
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1

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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The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most teaching observed during the inspection was good, and much was outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and inspire and challenge pupils to be curious and imaginative. Teachers are skilled at employing a variety of learning styles to ensure that all pupils are fully involved in their learning, despite the large class sizes. Most teachers use questioning well to probe and assess pupils' understanding, and are quick to identify and address any gaps in learning. In the best lessons, teachers ensure that pupils provide detailed answers and examples to show their understanding. For example, in one lesson, pupils were able to define a subordinate clause in response to the teacher's question, and could also construct a variety of sentences to illustrate how these grammatical forms would be used. Pupils have a good understanding of their targets and what they need to do to achieve them. However, very occasionally, pupils of high ability had to wait before the teacher realised the task set was too easy for them.

A wide variety of exciting topics provide memorable experiences to inspire pupils' interest in learning and opportunities for purposeful literacy and numeracy tasks. Leaders ensure that all curriculum areas are covered within a topic with an appropriate level of challenge to raise achievement. Topics often have a dramatic introduction, for example a day of shipwreck; this is followed by the pupils identifying for themselves what they should learn from it. Learning is enriched with a range of visits, such as to the 'SS Great Britain'. Leaders are quick to involve visitors and partners in the delivery of the curriculum. For example, sports partnerships provide multi-sport and local community facilities, such as the local rugby club, to be open to the pupils. Pupils say how much they enjoy the wide variety of extra-curricular activities, including piano lessons, choir, sport and sewing; they are looking forward to establishing a debating society.

The school ensures that children settle quickly in Reception by close liaison with nurseries and other settings prior to entry to the school. Parents and carers of new arrivals to the school expressed their delight at the welcome their children received, enabling them to settle quickly. Similarly, close partnership with the secondary school ensures smooth transition, through a series of visits from Year 5 onwards. External agencies and the parent support advisor are used to provide very effective, individually focused support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for families facing challenging circumstances. Teachers rigorously monitor the progress of these pupils and carefully evaluate the support provided, to

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ensure that individual needs are fully met.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's very well-defined and well-informed vision of continuous improvement is shared by the whole-school community. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching rigorously and hold teachers to account for pupils' progress. Some opportunities are currently missed to share the outstanding practice in teaching that exists, to ensure that all practice fully meets pupils' individual needs. The governing body uses its expertise to question and challenge the school on its performance. Members make an outstanding contribution to school life, including visiting lessons and reporting back, and delivering sports and other activities as volunteers. They have a very clear understanding of the quality of education provided and the challenge faced, for example the lack of space – for which they have strategic plans. Leaders' rigorous tracking of pupils' progress led to early identification of a relative underperformance in mathematics and an additional class has been formed in the subject in response. Pupils now say how much they enjoy the subject and all are on track to meet their challenging targets. Leaders ensure that all pupils' achievement is outstanding. There is no discrimination. Robust action ensures that boys perform equally with girls; topics challenge all pupils. Safeguarding procedures are extremely robust and are at the heart of all the school's work. All staff and members of the governing body are trained in child protection procedures, and the safety of the school site is regularly reviewed. Safeguarding issues are very well integrated into the curriculum and pupils, parents and carers are regularly briefed on key issues, such as e-safety. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of what constitutes an unsafe situation, and parents and carers are fully convinced their children are safe at school. The school fully engages parents and carers in activities. It provides mathematics workshops, enables parents and carers to support their children's learning and encourages them to use their expertise to enrich learning. The governing body actively welcomes parents and carers to the school, regularly canvasses their views and responds to concerns. Leaders recognise that the school is a cohesive and harmonious community, and a vital part of the local community. However, they recognise that pupils have less understanding of their role as national citizens and of communities different from their own.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers express their delight that their children are happy and safe in school. Communications between home and school are established early on so that parents and carers can contribute to their children’s individual learning journals. As children enter the school with above-average skills, particularly in language and communication, they are able to settle to the formal setting provided where they are taught alongside Year 1 pupils. They make good progress through the Reception Year and most exceed expected levels in all areas of learning. Children benefit from the support staff, who lead small-group tasks and help record children’s progress. Children show great excitement about the range of activities provided for them that are designed to stimulate the imagination and enable them to explore all their senses. For example, during the inspection, they were exploring different types of bread through sight, taste and smell, and showing a good understanding of the importance of washing their hands before handling food. Most activities are teacher-led, with strong emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills, but there are some opportunities for children to initiate their own learning. For example, they enjoy choosing what they are going to do from the ‘jobs board’. Children also showed great excitement at their own achievement during a letters and sounds (phonics) lesson where the teaching enabled them to make rapid progress and show confidence in the recognition of a large variety of sounds. The teacher and support staff have warm relationships with the children and good teamwork between adults is evident. The outside area has been improved recently with a covered section to enable use in all weathers, but leaders accept that this is an area for development to make it more attractive and stimulating to support children’s learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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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

The response to the questionnaire was considerably above that in most schools. Most parents and carers responded and were overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school, making comments about the high-quality teaching, care and leadership. A few parents and carers expressed concern about the mixed-age classes and, in particular, Year 4 pupils being divided between two classes. During the inspection, inspectors found that teachers manage this situation well and that the individual needs of all pupils are well met.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Rissington Primary 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 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 91 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	82	14	16	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	72	85	13	15	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	56	66	29	34	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	72	22	26	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	73	86	11	13	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	59	69	25	29	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	52	61	32	38	1	1	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)	54	64	26	31	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	60	71	24	28	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	64	29	34	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	61	32	38	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	69	81	15	18	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	69	81	15	18	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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 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"> ■ 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.



10 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Rissington Primary School, Great Rissington GL54 2LP

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school for its recent inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing all that you do. We particularly enjoyed hearing about the work of the eco-committee.

Our inspection has judged that you go to an outstanding school. The excellent care that the school provides ensures that you feel very safe and are well known to staff. Your understanding of how to stay safe and the way in which you help each other to act safely, impressed us. The standards that you reach are high, particularly in English. You make good progress and are developing a high level of independence, because you know your targets and what you need to do to reach them. You behave well, understand how to stay healthy and your attendance rates are excellent. You concentrate well, and very much enjoy your lessons and all the activities and visits that are provided for you. You make an outstanding contribution to your school and local community, and enjoy taking responsibility. You get on very well with each other, and we were particularly impressed by the respectful way in which you responded during the Remembrance Day service.

Your teachers provide lessons that are usually interesting and fun, and you told us how well they support you. We have asked your school to ensure that good teaching becomes even better, by ensuring that teachers always plan lessons that challenge all of you, especially those who learn quickly. We have also asked your school to give you opportunities to gain first-hand experience of people living in other parts of the United Kingdom to improve your cultural understanding.

Your school's outstanding leaders are working hard to make sure you learn successfully and develop as responsible young people. All of you can help by continuing to 'Be Happy, Be proud, Be Safe and Work Hard'. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Davis
Lead inspector

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