

Great Milton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123130
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	380602
Inspection dates	15–16 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Nina Bee

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Cunningham
Headteacher	Fiona Feeney
Date of previous school inspection	15 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 12 lessons taught by six teachers. Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, a small number of parents and carers, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including that related to safeguarding, academic performance data, evidence of internal and external monitoring, and teachers' planning. The inspectors analysed the responses to questionnaires from 83 parents and carers, 74 pupils and 20 members of staff.

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

- Pupils' progress, in particular whether all pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities and the small group of Travellers, make good progress as they move through the school.
- The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The work of leaders and managers, including the governing body, and how effectively they focus on self-evaluation and school improvement.

Information about the school

This is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds with the remainder coming from a few minority ethnic groups. There are a very small minority of Traveller learners of Irish heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average for those on 'school action' and below average for those on 'school action plus' or with statements of special educational needs. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one Reception class. On-site childcare provision, before and after school, is managed by the governing body. There has been a high turnover of staff since the previous inspection, including a change of headteacher.

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

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Relationships between staff and parents and carers are good and attendance is above average. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Effective procedures have been established to ensure that pupils are well looked after and cared for. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that if they have a concern an adult will sort it out. They have learned a lot about potential dangers they may come across and so can talk confidently about issues such as internet safety.

Since her appointment, just over a year ago, the headteacher has gained the confidence of the parents and carers, staff and pupils. A whole-school focus on developing and implementing procedures to improve behaviour and develop the system which tracks pupils' progress has been successful. As a result, older pupils speak of how behaviour has improved and that incidents of pupils being unkind towards each other have decreased. Pupils' individual progress is now checked more carefully and teachers have more ownership of the learning and progress that is taking place in their classes. Appropriate intervention strategies are enabling those pupils who find learning more difficult than others to reinforce and develop basic literacy and numeracy skills. Parents and carers are now better informed of the curriculum their children are following through additional newsletters and the school website; this is because the staff and governing body listen and respond to their suggestions and concerns. Staff engage well with parents and carers. These successes show that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Children make satisfactory progress in Reception. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. Teaching is satisfactory but there are pockets of good teaching in all key stages. Where teaching is good, all pupils, including Travellers and those identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, learn well. This is as a result of teachers knowing exactly where pupils are in their learning and matching activities accurately to their individual needs. This good practice is not reflected in all classes, especially in literacy and numeracy lessons. There is no consistent approach to setting individual targets linked to National Curriculum levels in literacy and numeracy and then sharing them with the pupils. Target setting is currently having little impact on learning and progress. Although there is evidence of good marking by teachers, which is supportive and informative, it is not consistently informing pupils what they need to do to improve. In addition, pupils, particularly those in Reception and Year 1, are not always effectively taught how to write letters and numbers correctly. Attainment is broadly average in Year 6.

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Self-evaluation is satisfactory but slightly overgenerous. There has been too little focus on the monitoring and evaluating role of the senior leaders and managers to have an impact on improving teaching, learning and achievement throughout the school. Although lesson observations have taken place and oral feedback has been given to teachers, too much teaching remains no better than satisfactory. Areas for improvement in teaching are not clearly identified and addressed. Despite being keen and eager to develop their roles, members of the governing body are not all as well informed as they should be about the work of the school, particularly regarding pupils' learning, progress and achievement and areas identified for improvement. Consequently, the governing body is not always in a good position to challenge and support the school effectively.

Up to 40% of the schools whose effectiveness is judged to be 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?

- Ensure that learning is at least good in the vast majority of lessons, by the end of the school year, by:
 - using assessment more effectively so that activities are more accurately matched to the needs of the wide range of abilities within the classes
 - focusing on identifying, and then sharing with pupils, literacy and numeracy targets which are clearly related to the National Curriculum levels pupils are working on in English and mathematics
 - improving teachers' marking of pupils' work so that it informs them what they need to do to improve and reach their targets
 - emphasising more effectively, particularly in Reception and Year 1, the correct way to form letters and numbers.

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated more effectively through observations and the scrutiny of pupils' written work so that teachers become clear about which elements of their teaching need to be improved
 - ensuring that the governing body becomes better informed about the work of the school, particularly in relation to pupils' learning and achievement, and the school's areas for development, so that it is in a better position to challenge and support the school more effectively.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and, in relation to their starting points, make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. As a result of appropriate support, Travellers, along with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make similar progress to their classmates. Weaknesses in lessons that are satisfactory

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rather than good, at times, negatively affect outcomes for pupils. Good learning was seen as pupils in Year 3 developed their handwriting because good planning showed activities were effectively matched to pupils’ abilities. Clear instructions were given as the teacher expertly modelled a cursive script. They responded positively to her high expectations regarding writing letters properly to enable them to join them up successfully. Much excitement was observed as the ‘Handwriting King and Queen’ were chosen for the week. At the beginning of Year 2, numeracy lesson learning was reinforced and developed effectively as pupils excitedly spoke about the numeracy homework they had recently completed. Pupils had good opportunities to articulate what they had done at home, as they spoke about using grams to measure ingredients to make cup cakes. Speaking and listening skills were promoted effectively. A few children brought in their cakes to share with their classmates.

Pupils show respect for each other and the adults who help them learn. They take on responsibilities in school and have good opportunities to learn more about the local community and the wider world because of the school’s good partnerships with others. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about working with visitors from Japan who showed them how to write their names with ink and special pens. Effective links have been established with other schools, locally and globally, which enable pupils to develop their awareness of life in other places such as Japan, Germany and France. Pupils speak knowledgeably about the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. They know which foods are good for them and that too much of certain foods can cause them harm. They also know about the importance of keeping their bodies fit and healthy, and particularly appreciate the extra sporting activities that are offered. Pupils are well prepared personally and socially, and soundly prepared academically, for when they move on to their next school.

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	2

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 of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

2

How effective is the provision?

In the large majority of lessons teaching and learning are satisfactory. Attitudes to learning are generally positive, as are relationships between adults and the pupils. As a result of teachers not always using assessment accurately when they plan activities, higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and lower-attaining pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, are given activities which are too difficult.

Curriculum documents show that information and communication technology (ICT) has been well thought out to link with different subjects. However, few pupils were seen using computers in their lessons. Good partnerships with people in the local community and beyond enable the staff to plan a wide range of educational visits, including a residential, which reinforce and develop learning, especially in the topics pupils focus on. These not only enrich the satisfactory curriculum well but also promote pupils’ personal and social skills.

The school’s strong commitment to providing good pastoral care for pupils results in them developing into sensible, mature young individuals. Pupils with specific needs are sensitively catered for. Individual needs are well known by staff and good partnerships with others, outside school, ensure that expert help is available when necessary. There are good arrangements for when pupils enter and leave the school, which result in smooth transition. Procedures for monitoring attendance are successful and ensure that all groups of pupils attend regularly. The breakfast and after-school club provide good quality provision for pupils each day. Pupils spoke very positively about how much they enjoy these sessions.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and her staff and governors are committed to improvement and are ambitious for the future of the school, especially regarding teaching and learning, so that all pupils can achieve well. However, since the last inspection, various issues have slowed down improvement. There has, for example, been a high turnover of staff, including the headteacher. Staffing changes have also meant that there has

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been a time when the school did not have a permanent headteacher. In addition, the governing body has had a number of new members who are relatively inexperienced. Self-evaluation and school development planning are satisfactory and identify appropriate areas for development. Monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet sufficiently rigorous and so the quality of teaching and learning is not improving fast enough.

The governing body is soundly involved in the work of the school. Currently, its members are not all as well informed as they should be in some areas such as how well pupils are performing and school development planning. As a result, they are not able to support and challenge the school as effectively as they might. Safeguarding arrangements were secure at the time of the inspection. There are good systems to ensure that all staff are vetted before working in the school but health and safety procedures are not always monitored rigorously by governors or staff. The school is a cohesive community and this is felt strongly as pupils from different backgrounds work and play amicably together. There are many opportunities for pupils to learn about different groups who live beyond the local community through visits out and visitors invited into school. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is well evidenced in relation to pupils' personal needs; however, variations in teaching lead to inconsistencies in pupils' progress, although there is no evidence of discrimination.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers are pleased with the provision their children receive. Children settle in quickly because of good transition procedures. Outcomes are satisfactory. Most children are on course to reach or exceed the expected levels by the end of the

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Early Years Foundation Stage, apart from in writing and linking sounds and letters. In relation to their starting points, this represents satisfactory achievement. There is an appropriate balance between indoor and outdoor learning, activities which are child initiated and those which are adult led. Satisfactory systems ensure that children play in a safe environment, outside and in. Planning focuses soundly on all areas of learning. Activities are satisfactorily resourced but are not always exciting and stimulating. Those related to developing basic writing skills are not always adjusted to meet the needs of all abilities. Most children are confident to pick up pens and crayons to have a go at writing. However, when they start to write letters and numbers, adults do not ensure that they learn how to write them properly. For example, too often, children are allowed to write their name with incorrect letter formation. Teaching is satisfactory overall and, at times, it is good. Relationships are good and children are keen to learn. Children confidently play together, in groups. When adults interact with individuals or groups, at times, they miss opportunities to extend learning. Good adult interaction and learning were seen as a small group of children built a home, for a pet, out of bricks. The teacher encouraged them to count the bricks and then modelled how to write the two digit numbers the children came up with. Children were enthusiastic and so remained on task. Behaviour is generally good because the adults have high expectations on how to behave. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. However, as in the rest of the school, monitoring of teaching and learning in Reception is not rigorous enough.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

All parents and carers who returned questionnaires feel that their children enjoy school and almost all think that the staff keep their children safe. A few parents and carers feel that their suggestions and concerns are not taken account of. Inspectors found that parents and carers are regularly invited to fill in questionnaires, to voice any suggestions or concerns, and staff are available most days at the start and end of each day.

Parents and carers are generally happy with the experience their children receive at this school and feel that their children are well prepared for their next school by the time they leave.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Milton Church of England 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 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 157 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	59	71	24	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	67	25	30	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	39	47	38	46	5	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	52	34	41	4	5	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	51	61	26	31	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	41	49	37	45	5	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	51	37	45	3	4	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)	30	36	46	55	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	41	49	38	46	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	39	40	48	7	8	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	39	37	45	13	16	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	53	38	46	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	53	64	26	31	4	5	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.

16 November 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Great Milton Church of England Primary School, Oxford OX44 7NT

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit you. We enjoyed coming into your lessons, talking with you and seeing your good behaviour. It was great to see you working well together and being polite towards each other and the adults who help you. You learn lots about people who live in different places in the world and you work hard to raise funds for others who are not as fortunate as yourselves. You go to a satisfactory school where some things are good and some things could be better.

These are the things we found out about your school:

- You really enjoy coming to school and your attendance is above average.
- The children in Reception get off to a satisfactory start.
- Progress is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 and, by the time you leave, you reach levels which are similar to those achieved by others of your age.
- The care you receive from adults is good.
- Teachers plan exciting visits out which link really well with your topics.
- You learn lots about eating healthy food and the importance of taking exercise.
- The way the school is led and managed is satisfactory.

We have asked the staff to do a few things to improve the education you receive:

- Increase the progress you make by checking that:
 - your work is not too easy or too hard
 - you are given targets in literacy and numeracy to help you learn faster
 - you are shown what you need to do to improve and reach your targets when teachers mark your written work
 - you are all shown how to write letters and numbers correctly.
- Improve the way the school works by:
 - helping staff to make sure that all lessons are as good as the very best
 - making sure the governors have more information about the school so it is easier for them to do the work they have to do.

All of you, too, can help by always doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Nina Bee
Lead inspector

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