

Offmore Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135052
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	381791
Inspection dates	28–29 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Mary Erwin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graeme Anderson
Headteacher	Kate Beer
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited every class, to gain an overview of the quality of teaching and learning, and then observed 17 lessons. Fourteen different teachers, including the headteacher, were observed teaching. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, members of staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, including the systems used to assess and monitor pupils' progress, teachers' planning and marking, pupils' work, school improvement planning, the school's policies and procedures and risk assessments. Inspectors took account of questionnaires completed by 79 parents and carers, 18 staff and 100 pupils.

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

- How consistent is the teaching and how effective is it in differentiating pupils' needs and enabling all pupils to do well?
- How effective is the day-to-day assessment of pupils' work and how well does it help them to understand what they need to improve?
- To what extent do pupils apply their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across the curriculum?
- To what extent have the changes in leadership and management become established and what impact are they having on raising pupils' achievement?

Information about the school

Despite having significantly fewer pupils on roll than at the time of the last inspection, Offmore Primary School remains larger than average. The very large majority of pupils are White British with around 5% who come from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. The Early Years Foundation Stage has Nursery provision in the morning and afternoon and two Reception classes. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 are taught in mixed-age classes. A new headteacher took up her post in September 2010. The school is currently housed in a series of temporary classrooms while it awaits the completion of new premises in April 2012. This has severely limited the school's playground and sports facilities.

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

The changes to leadership, staffing and the physical environment since the last inspection have presented many challenges to Offmore Primary School. These have been met with resilience and determination by the new headteacher. She has a good understanding of the school's strengths, has identified ways in which to raise attainment and is working closely with senior leaders and the governing body to achieve this aim. However, it is too early to see the full impact of the school's strategic plan. There is a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. Pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2 having reached nationally expected standards in both English and mathematics. Although pupils make good progress in some classes towards the end of Key Stage 2, progress is not consistent throughout the school and their overall achievement is satisfactory.

The headteacher has worked strenuously to eradicate inadequate teaching and all lessons seen during the inspection were either satisfactory or good. In the best lessons, pupils are challenged to justify their opinions through the use of open-ended questions that require deep levels of consideration. They are given opportunities to work collaboratively in pairs and groups to develop their understanding. As a result, pupils are engaged in their learning and are motivated to do well. However, not all lessons present an appropriate level of challenge to pupils, particularly for the older pupils in the mixed-age classes. Marking is inconsistent across the school so not all pupils are provided with the necessary advice that would help them to do better. The curriculum, though broad and balanced, lacks excitement. There are insufficient opportunities to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across the curriculum.

Pupils are happy and say they feel safe. They say that they always have someone to go to when they need to talk. They feel strongly that the adults in school care about their welfare. Behaviour within the school buildings and on the playground is generally good. Pupils feel that any misbehaviour is dealt with effectively by their teachers and does not prevent them from learning in lessons. The youngest pupils play well together and learn to share equipment. Pupils throughout the school are polite, show consideration for the feelings of others and know right from wrong.

The headteacher and governing body have worked hard to maintain good relationships with parents and carers. This is evident in the overwhelmingly positive response seen in returned questionnaires. Parents and carers generally feel that the school listens to them and cares well for their children. They are happy for them to

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be part of the community of Offmore Primary School and this is reflected in the improved attendance figures, which are above average. Although the current building works have meant that there is limited space available, the school has worked hard to ensure that pupils are provided with extra-curricular opportunities wherever possible. Pupils speak enthusiastically about attending clubs which include choir, street dance, drama and the school's newspaper 'The Daily Doughnut'.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall 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?

- Ensure pupils know how to improve their work by providing:
 - challenging verbal feedback and questioning in lessons
 - marking that shows pupils where they have made mistakes and highlights the next steps in their learning
 - opportunities for pupils to read and respond to the written comments and practise their skills.
- Provide pupils with work that matches their needs and abilities in order to ensure all pupils make good progress.
- Develop an exciting and engaging curriculum for all where skills can be practised across a range of subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils listen attentively in class and are keen to participate when given the opportunity. The good relationships they have with one another enable them to work collaboratively with a partner or as a member of a group. Behaviour is good and contributes to their learning by enabling all pupils to concentrate during lessons. When tasks are appropriately matched to the pupils' needs and abilities they make good progress. For example, Year 5 pupils, learning about Shakespeare, used the information they gained from a short biography to enhance their understanding of Tudor society. They then used their newly found knowledge to help interpret a video clip of the opening scene of Macbeth. However, not all activities are designed to challenge and do not sufficiently engage the learners, which results in satisfactory progress.

Robust assessment and tracking systems ensure that pupils experiencing difficulties in their learning are identified. Appropriate intervention programmes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities that focus on individual needs at an early age help these pupils to make satisfactory progress. Children with poor language skills are supported on entry to the school and progress well as a result.

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Pupils experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported through social and emotional aspects of the curriculum. The school has had noticeable success in re-integrating potentially disaffected pupils into its community.

In the past, attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage has been broadly in line with national expectations. More recently, children’s skills, knowledge and abilities on entry are declining and are generally below those expected for their age. Children make satisfactory progress against all areas of the early learning goals. Progress within Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4, while satisfactory, is inconsistent as work is not always tailored to meet individual learning needs. Mixed-age classes present the teachers with difficulties in ensuring that all pupils are appropriately challenged. The work sampled and lessons seen by inspectors show that good progress is made in Years 5 and 6.

Pupils speak of feeling safe and cared for when at school and are knowledgeable about internet safety. They understand the need for a balanced diet but are reliant on packed lunches provided from home until the move to the new building takes place. These do not always support a healthy diet. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils treat each other with respect and know the difference between right and wrong. However, their understanding of other cultures is less secure. This has been recognised by the headteacher who is establishing links with schools that have a broader range of ethnicity in order to develop pupils’ cultural awareness. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously and have been involved in visiting the new school site regularly and speaking to the architects. The pupils’ basic academic skills and good attitudes to work, along with above average attendance and punctuality, prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their life.

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	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will	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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contribute to their future economic well-being	
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

While teaching is satisfactory overall, there is some good teaching within each key stage. Lessons seen during the inspection in Year 6 were consistently good. Questioning was used effectively to challenge pupils, such as in the three ability groups for mathematics. Elsewhere in the school teaching is more variable, especially in matching the work to meet pupils' particular needs. There are examples of good marking where pupils are told what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. These next steps in learning are then acted upon by the pupil to practise the appropriate skills. In the classes where progress was satisfactory, there was evidence of written feedback that merely stated that the pupil had done well and pupils were not so clear about how to improve.

The school is taking steps to develop a more creative approach to learning through the curriculum. This has not yet become established and so there has yet to be a positive impact on attainment. Exciting and engaging opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and information and communication skills across a range of subjects are not fully developed. The school enlivens the curriculum with visits from theatre groups that enact plays linked to the theme being studied. Members of local interest groups, such as the bird sanctuary and hedgehog rescue, visit the school to speak to the pupils about environmental issues. The school ensures that pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable receive additional support and works closely with a range of agencies. Many such pupils make good progress and develop their levels of confidence and self-esteem by the time they leave school.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has undertaken a thorough evaluation of the school and has a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development. She has established a rigorous system of monitoring that tracks pupils' progress. Teachers' assessment has been highlighted as an area for improvement. Training has been given in conjunction

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with the local authority to develop a consistent understanding across the school and external moderation has been entered into. As a result, assessments are increasingly accurate, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 6. Meetings to discuss pupils’ progress are regularly held. This has led to effective intervention that has raised attainment. The headteacher is working closely with the newly formed leadership team. They observe lessons and provide supportive feedback to teachers. This has resulted in improved teaching though it is yet to be consistently good in all key stages.

The satisfactory governing body is also newly formed. Members are a visible presence in school and meet with coordinators to discuss progress in their subject areas. The governing body is beginning to play a more strategic role. Members of the governing body are in the process of undertaking training in the use of data in order to use their better knowledge and understanding to drive forward improvement. The governing body ensures that its good safeguarding arrangements exceed the latest government requirements. Child protection policies and procedures are in place, appropriate training is regularly provided for staff, adults working with children are properly vetted and the single central record is robust and meets requirements. The school engages well with parents and carers. The well-established parent teacher association supports the school by raising funds and providing opportunities for parents and carers to attend social activities. The school holds open days and workshops that help parents and carers to support their children’s learning.

The leadership team ensures that looked after pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are not discriminated against. The progress of all pupils is monitored carefully and pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are supported well. The school is working through its action plan to promote community cohesion. It is working well in its local community. Formal links with other schools in the United Kingdom and abroad are in the process of being made but are not yet fully established.

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

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money

3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although the limited outdoor area curtails some activities because of the building works, teachers ensure it is a stimulating environment that supports all six areas of learning. The children also have access to the forest outdoor learning classroom for further adult-led activities. During the inspection, children demonstrated their independence by successfully dressing themselves in appropriate outdoor clothing in preparation for a story in the forest. Safety was paramount and children were reminded of how to behave when crossing the car park. The forest environment acted as a natural and stimulating backdrop to a story about a windy winter’s day. The children were able to close their eyes and listen to the wind blowing through the trees. One child commented, ‘There’s been no rain so the leaves are crunchy,’ after shuffling through them to reach the wooden logs that act as seats. The school’s appropriate use of the outdoor classroom enhances children’s knowledge and understanding of the world and enriches their learning.

Behaviour is managed well at all times. Nursery children engaged in physical activity in the classroom, rhythmically swinging their arms and marching round the room, taking care not to bump into anyone. They then settled to a matching and sorting activity where mathematical language was developed. They spoke of shape, size, colour and pattern as they counted Christmas baubles and proudly hung them on a tree. They were happy to take turns and help each other as they learned.

The newly appointed Early Years Foundation Stage leader shows determination in providing the children with broad and balanced learning opportunities. She has worked diligently with the local authority to ensure assessment is accurate and transition into Key Stage 1 is smooth. Due to unavoidable staff absence, there has been some uncertainty over the past year. The leadership team has tried to minimise this and is working hard to develop a unified approach. Adults make written observations as children learn. However, these tend to be descriptive rather than evaluative and so do not always provide effective support in planning the next steps for the children’s individual learning.

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

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The responses of the below average proportion of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive in all respects. Written comments were supportive of the headteacher and approved of the changes she has made. One parental comment related to how the school has improved under her tenure. The inspection team spoke to parents and carers who told them that they find the headteacher both approachable and easily available. They are appreciative of the fact that she is visible at the gate in the morning. Some parents and carers expressed concern about the limited playground and sports facilities, though they understand the difficulties caused by the construction of the new school building on the premises. The inspection team felt that the school is working closely with the building firm and is dealing well with the inevitable disruption caused by this work. Every precaution is being taken by staff to safeguard pupils. The headteacher and governors have resolutely ensured that normal activities of the school are not curtailed during this challenging period.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Offmore 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 79 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 355 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	70	23	29	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	67	25	32	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	31	39	43	54	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	46	40	51	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	57	33	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	41	52	36	46	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	48	36	46	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)	29	37	45	57	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	38	48	39	49	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	39	40	51	3	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	41	42	53	3	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	48	61	28	35	3	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	49	62	27	34	2	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	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.



30 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Offmore Primary School, Kidderminster DY10 3HA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work and play and speaking to you on the playground, in meetings and in your classes. You told us how much you enjoy school, ways in which the staff help you to learn and how much you are looking forward to moving into your new building. We think Offmore Primary is a satisfactory school. These are some of the positive things that we found out about it.

- All adults look after you well and help you to feel safe in school.
- Your behaviour in class and around the school is good and you are polite and considerate towards each other.
- You enjoy coming to school and your attendance is good.
- You work well together with partners and groups and particularly enjoy practical activities where you are involved in the learning.
- Your headteacher is working very hard to make the school even better and she has the support of your parents and carers, the staff and the governing body.

We have asked your teachers to make sure that lessons are set at the right levels for you all to make better progress. We want you to know how to improve your work and be given the chance to think carefully and practise your skills. We would like the marking to be useful in helping you all to learn. You can all play your part by reading carefully the comments your teachers write and acting on them as soon as you can. We want your curriculum to be more engaging so that you are even more excited about learning than you already are and can be even more involved in your learning.

We hope you continue to enjoy your time at Offmore Primary and wish you the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Erwin
Lead inspector

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