

# Whitegrove Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	131145
<b>Local authority</b>	Bracknell Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	395530
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Rob Crompton

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	448
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rachael Cox
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Reilly
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Westmorland Drive Warfield Bracknell RG42 3QS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01344 861 020
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	24–25 May 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	395530



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Rob Crompton

Additional inspector

Jennie Cutler

Additional inspector

Janet Maul

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 25 lessons or part-lessons led by 20 teachers over 16 hours. Six lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and four with the deputy headteacher. Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and school leaders and talked with pupils. They took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from 347 parents and carers, as well as those from staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

Whitegrove is larger than the average primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, some of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very low. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs (supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs) is below average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes which share the indoor and outdoor areas. From Year 2 onwards, pupils are taught in ability sets for mathematics within each year. The school has received national awards, including the Healthy Schools Status and the Activemark. The headteacher took up his post in September 2010.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because the quality of teaching is not consistently high enough to lift pupils' overall achievement above good.
- Pupils achieve well, reaching above average levels of attainment. They make rapid progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 because the teaching is outstanding. They quickly acquire very good skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 2, although the quality of teaching is more variable. It is very effective in Years 5 and 6, with some inconsistencies in Years 3 and 4.
- In the most effective lessons, pupils learn at a brisk pace because skilled questioning, brief introductions and challenging tasks sustain their active involvement. The teaching is less successful when the balance of activities limits opportunities for independent learning and for pupils to benefit from the support of skilled teaching assistants.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The school is a harmonious community where relationships between adults and pupils are warm, friendly and mutually respectful. Pupils concentrate in lessons and try hard. They feel safe and look out for one another. They make excellent contributions to the positive atmosphere throughout the school, with older pupils taking a lead as play leaders, peer mediators and leaders of the daily 'kick start' exercise programme.
- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. He has the confidence and support of pupils, parents and carers and staff, all of whom have been involved in developing a renewed vision for school improvement. Leaders at different levels have a clear sense of direction. Rigorous systems for monitoring teaching and the management of performance are effectively securing improvements. Self-evaluation is well established, although the impact of the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is not thoroughly reviewed.

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

- Iron out inconsistencies in pupils' progress in Years 3 and 4 by improving the quality of teaching in these year groups so that, by December 2012, it is consistently good through:
  - ensuring lesson introductions are not too long so that pupils are engaged in independent tasks as soon as possible
  - deploying teaching assistants more effectively at the beginning of lessons
  - ensuring the more able pupils are sufficiently challenged.
- Review the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in order to ensure that the school is able to identify the most successful support strategies for these pupils and plan accordingly.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are a little above those expected at their age. They build very well on this positive start so that, by the end of their Reception Year, their personal development, language and number skills are above average. Children's enthusiasm for learning was evident as they chose from a wide range of activities. After modifying an 'obstacle course' set up by staff, one showed initiative and independence when she remarked, 'We could have a bowling competition with the skittles at the end.' Children converse confidently with their classmates and adults. They make a very good start in learning letters and sounds (phonics) and this is reflected in their early reading and writing skills. One boy, for example, re-wrote the story of Old Mother Hubbard with a remarkable degree of accuracy, including spelling and punctuation. Children gain insights into the natural world, for example through exploring the 'bug hotel' in the school's excellent nature area. Almost all exceed the expected levels in physical and creative development.

Pupils' learning moves on apace through Years 1 and 2. Attainment in reading is well above average by the end of Year 2. Pupils read with increasing fluency and use the type of language they come across in their reading when writing. For example, one pupil showed her confidence in using adverbial phrases and accurate punctuation, writing: 'Listen', whispered Lucy as she looked behind her, 'there's a shark and it's coming after us!' Pupils gain a good grounding in number facts and are keen to demonstrate them. 'I know double 99', said one, 'it's 198!' When weighing objects to ensure 'Katie Morag's boat' wouldn't sink, pupils demonstrated good problem-solving skills as they avoided exceeding a certain total.

Pupils' progress through Years 3 and 4 is inconsistent. Although they are making at least satisfactory progress, they are not always adept in applying their developing skills. They sometimes take the easy option when the criteria for success are not made clear or when tasks do not offer sufficient challenge. However, the school's most up-

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to-date data show that the progress of pupils in Year 4 is improving strongly.

As pupils move through Years 5 and 6, the pace of learning accelerates as they rise to the challenge of demanding tasks, develop independent learning skills and take more responsibility for their own learning. Pupils have a keen interest in reading and writing, and reach above average levels of attainment by Year 6. They were keen to discuss the authors they liked and made insightful comments to support their preferences. Their written work includes many sophisticated literary devices, for example to develop tranquillity:

'Crouching sleepily under the horizon, the scarlet sun painted the warm sea an aquamarine colour. Rippling gently in the cool breeze the majestic waves danced with the wind...'

or tension:

'Creeping forward, Jess stopped dead in her tracks. Emily sucked in her breath, "Oh my Lord, there's someone under there, they were the sounds that we heard earlier". Emily's face had pure terror written all over it.'

Good progress in mathematics was evident as Year 5 pupils quickly used coordinates to reflect and transform shapes on a grid which included negative numbers. Pupils also showed a good understanding of number and the properties of shapes as they studied the architecture of ancient Greece.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as all other groups of pupils in all year groups. They engage in learning well in daily lessons and benefit from additional support.

### Quality of teaching

Teachers interpret the project-based curriculum imaginatively and pupils usually rise to the high expectations they set. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers returning the questionnaires<sup>1</sup> expressed the view that their children are well taught.

Lessons in the Reception Year classes strike an excellent balance of providing activities led by adults and those chosen or initiated by the children. Teachers successfully encourage children's independence, at the same time ensuring that lessons build on their prior learning. There is a buzz of purposeful activity in both the indoor and outdoor areas. For example, during one session, activities included writing, painting, planting seeds in the 'potting shed', mixing sand and water in a cement mixer on the 'building site', and building a castle under the shade of the willow canopy. Adults took every opportunity to establish a dialogue with children and move their learning forward.

Language development is promoted very well. Reading sessions in Years 1 and 2 are highly effective and pupils benefit from the help of well-briefed and effective teaching assistants. Across the school, classroom displays include a good balance of prompts for effective writing, such as collections of sentence openers and adjectives, plus displays

<sup>1</sup> The proportion of questionnaires returned (77%) was well above average.

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of pupils' work as exemplars. Teachers usually use a good variety of questioning strategies to sustain pupils' engagement. Quick-fire questions at the beginning of mathematics lessons help pupils to hone their number skills and quickly recall number bonds and tables, which in turn means they gain confidence in solving mathematical problems. Opportunities are sometimes missed, particularly in Years 3 and 4, to provide a variety of tasks in lessons to ensure all pupils are sufficiently challenged. Occasionally, in these year groups, lesson introductions are overlong. This means that the skills of teaching assistants are not fully used and pupils do not have enough time to work independently.

Teachers use the flexibility of the project-based curriculum to promote pupils' thinking on a range of issues, such as the morality of the unequal distribution of resources across the world. The self-esteem pupils gain from applying their skills, researching information and choosing how to present it is evident from their imaginatively designed project folders.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' outstanding behaviour and consistently high attendance make a very strong contribution to their good achievement. Parents and carers understandably are highly positive about the behaviour and safety of their children and believe that any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. All the pupils spoken to were confident that any unkind behaviour is dealt with promptly and felt that behaviour is always very good. Pupils also say that they feel very safe in school and believe that any incidents of bullying, including physical and emotional bullying, are very rare. They are able to describe how to keep themselves safe both in and out of school and know how to use the internet safely.

Pupils have high expectations of what they can achieve and display excellent attitudes to learning. This is evident in their support of one another. They listen attentively to their teachers, respond very well to each other and settle quickly to work, meaning that lessons proceed without disruption. Pupils respond very well to the consistent and positive management of behaviour. They take on extra responsibilities enthusiastically and carry them out diligently. Classrooms and other areas of the school are calm and orderly. Pupils arrive punctually at school and lessons start on time.

### **Leadership and management**

Senior leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, have a clear and ambitious vision for the school, which is shared by all staff. The school is well placed to improve and build on its recent rapid improvement. Performance management is very well organised and used effectively to identify teachers' professional development requirements. Rigorous monitoring of teaching, linked to pupils' progress, accurately identifies strengths and any training needs. Senior leaders meticulously track pupils' progress to identify where action needs to be taken to ensure improvement. Subject leaders monitor and review the impact of any new initiatives, such as recent changes to the way writing is taught. However, the

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evaluation of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is not so well established. Despite the fact that these pupils make good progress, this means that the school is not able to identify the most successful support strategies and plan accordingly.

Parents and carers are very positive about recent curriculum innovations. The purpose-built outdoor classroom provides a splendid addition to the learning environment. Similarly, the large, extremely productive fruit and vegetable plot, together with the excellent nature zone, wild area and pond, provide a valuable practical dimension to pupils' studies across the curriculum. Learning is enhanced by visits, visitors and an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. Sport, art and the performing arts feature strongly and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Discrimination is not tolerated and all pupils have equal opportunity to be included in all activities. Safeguarding arrangements fully meet all statutory requirements.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



28 May 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Whitegrove Primary School, Bracknell, RG42 3QS**

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and finding out about how well you are doing. Thank you especially to those of you who chatted with us, met with us, read to us or answered our questionnaire. You told us that you enjoy school and feel safe when you are there. Your high level of attendance also shows this. We could see why Whitegrove Primary is a good school.

You do well at school and make good progress because the quality of teaching is good. Your behaviour is outstanding and you have really good attitudes to learning. We were impressed by how you contribute to and take part so enthusiastically in all the exciting additional activities, such 'Kick Start' and 'Jog and Jaw'.

Your headteacher and others responsible for running your school are doing a good job at making things even better for you. To help them with this, we have asked them to do some important things.

- Make teaching even better by always making sure that lessons move along at a brisk pace and that teachers always give you enough time to work on your own or with the help of an adult if you need it.
- Find out what works best in helping those of you who need extra support to help them to continue to make the same progress as all other pupils.

You can all help by taking every advantage of the wide range of things the school does to help you learn and develop as well-rounded young people.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton  
Lead inspector

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