



Great Budworth CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111248
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278634
Inspection dates 14 June 2006 to 15 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Paul Bamber CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Great Budworth
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Northwich, Cheshire CW9 6HQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01606 891383
Number on roll	56	Fax number	01606 891171
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr A Taig
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr T Gray

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small village school whose pupils are predominantly of White British backgrounds. There is a lower than average proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and none speak any language other than English. There are mixed-age classes throughout the school and there is a temporary newly qualified teacher in the Reception class. Pupils have access to before-and after-school care and clubs. The school has Investors in People status and has very recently earned a Basic Skills Award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school rightly judges its overall effectiveness to be satisfactory with some good features. Pupils achieve satisfactorily because of competent teaching, some of which is good. However, in some lessons, a small minority do not listen well which restricts learning. Some weaknesses in pupils' writing, particularly of boys, limit their achievement in English. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, but restricted outside space limits their curriculum. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall and relationships are good, a strength highlighted by pupils and parents. There is a very positive, Christian ethos that reflects the school's denominational nature. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well, enabling them to acquire effective basic skills and to experience many enriching activities. Parents rightly attest to the high quality of the care and support their pupils receive, especially those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A strength in the overall satisfactory leadership and management of the school is the positive 'hands on' leadership of the headteacher. He has a considerable teaching commitment that somewhat limits his opportunities to check on the quality of teaching and learning. Subject leaders and governors are supportive but have had too little impact on raising pupils' standards and achievement. The school has improved well since the last inspection and has the capacity to improve further. The school is generally accurate in its self-evaluation but rather underestimates the effectiveness of the curriculum and overestimates the quality of pupils' behaviour in class. It offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils' handwriting, spelling and presentation improves in order to raise standards in English, particularly those of boys.
- Improve the attitudes and listening skills of a small number of pupils who sometimes interrupt learning in lessons.
- Ensure that children in the Reception class have continuous access to a dedicated outside area.
- Involve subject leaders and governors more fully in driving up pupils' standards and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and pupils attain broadly average standards. Children enter the Reception class with average standards and make satisfactory progress, with many entering Year 1 having reached the nationally set targets in all areas of their learning. Their achievements are limited, especially in their creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, because they do not have continuous access to a dedicated outside area.

Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, with the best achievement in mathematics and the least in boys' writing. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils make the best progress in science because of effective specialist teaching. Their progress in writing is less good. Although many write imaginatively, the school is not rigorous enough in ensuring that pupils present their work as well as they should, have secure spelling or sufficiently improve their handwriting. Boys have consistently achieved less well than girls over a number of years in writing in the Year 6 national tests. Because there are so few pupils in each year group, comparisons with national data are spurious, but the school generally meets the quite challenging targets it sets for pupils' performance in national tests. Pupils who are from minority ethnic groups or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or are vulnerable are effectively supported to achieve as well as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The school asserts this to be a strong aspect of its work. Whilst there are many strengths, the sometimes less than positive attitudes and poor listening skills of a small number of pupils mean that this aspect is only satisfactory. Despite this weakness, which does at times impact negatively on pupils' learning, relationships are good and there is a very positive ethos in and around the school. This is particularly evident when pupils are hurt or distressed and their friends provide much support and comfort. Pupils comment that this is a very friendly school and that 'we all get on really well together'. This is especially evident at break and lunchtime when different age groups play happily together. The school council, all pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, are active and proud of their contribution to the school community. However, younger pupils have no voice. Pupils are keenly aware of the need to stay safe and healthy. They comment sensibly on the merits of school lunches and take advantage of every opportunity to take exercise. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. They attend school well and are punctual. Together with their satisfactory basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), these attributes prepare them satisfactorily for their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Strengths in teaching throughout the school include good relationships, the creative use of resources, effective support for pupils who find learning difficult and the good use of ICT to plan lessons and to enhance learning. Not all teachers manage to get pupils to listen attentively and not to interrupt the flow of lessons. As a result, pupils do not always achieve as well as they might. A relative weakness in learning in English is that pupils do not sufficiently use their knowledge of correct spelling and punctuation, nor their best handwriting when they write. They can be careless in copying words from displays

around the classroom or which have already been written on the board. In contrast, the best learning takes place when they discuss in pairs or groups to produce ideas or to solve problems. Although teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning overall, they are sometimes under-utilised for the first 15 to 20 minutes of lessons. Overall, the quality of teachers' marking is helpful in pointing out how pupils can improve their work. Specialist teaching in science, mathematics, French and games adds good value to pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and better than the school thinks it is. Despite some limitations in the Foundation Stage, the curriculum meets the needs of the pupils well. It provides them with secure basic skills, many opportunities for healthy pursuits and considerable enrichment. This is because of specialist teaching, interesting visits and visitors and a wide range of well attended clubs. All of these contribute well to pupils' good spiritual, social and cultural development. The provision for vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, enabling them to take a full part in all the school offers. The provision of French teaching throughout the school, specialist coaching in games and effective links with a local high school, all contribute well to pupils' achievements and experiences. Music and art play a strong part in pupils' creative curriculum. Since the last inspection, ICT has become a much stronger element in the curriculum and has made a significant contribution to pupils' ability to research independently.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Overall, this aspect is good. Parents and pupils testify to the family atmosphere in the school. Parents say how well their children are looked after and how safe they feel and are. Child protection procedures are in place and the school carries out rigorous risk assessments and health and safety checks. The most vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very well and there is good liaison with external agencies. Effective arrangements are made to introduce pupils into the school and for transfer to secondary education. There are secure procedures to ensure good attendance and punctuality. The policy to ensure good behaviour is mostly effective but not all teachers are rigorous enough in applying it fully in classrooms. Satisfactory systems to track pupils' academic progress enable appropriate support to be provided for those who fall behind or need more help. The school ensures that very able pupils are given special opportunities to thrive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher provides positive and energetic leadership, providing a good role model as a teacher.

Parents have great confidence in the school and rightly highlight how inclusive it is for all pupils. The headteacher's quite large teaching commitment means that he has had less time to check on the performance of staff and pupils. This means that some relative weaknesses in teaching and learning and in the attainment of some pupils have not been fully recognised or analysed. In the same way, the pressures of leading several subjects and a full teaching commitment mean that subject leaders have had limited time, until very recently, to effectively monitor standards and achievement in their subjects. Strong partnerships with the local authority, the wider local community and loose federations with other schools have contributed positively to pupils' learning and to improved administration. Governors have been effective in managing a declining budget and carefully preparing to take difficult decisions. They are supportive in many ways, including working voluntarily in the school to help pupils. However, they are insufficiently involved in directly holding the school to account for its standards or for pupils' achievements. Overall, the school's systems to evaluate its performance are satisfactory and action plans are focused well on the most urgent areas for improvement. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making me so welcome during the days I spent in your school. I appreciated the open way in which you chatted to me and let me know so many interesting things about your school. I would like to share with you those things I thought were really good about your school and the things I felt it could do better.

What I liked most about your school:

- you all seem to get on so well together
- you are safe and well looked after in school
- teachers use lots of different ways to make lessons interesting
- all your parents are pleased for you to be at the school
- you attend well and are on time for school
- there are lots of interesting visits, visitors and activities for you to do.

But I think there are a few things that the school could do to make it better.

- It should help all of you, but especially boys, to become better at writing. You need to improve your spelling, handwriting and the presentation of your work.
- It should help some of you to listen to each other and to your teachers more carefully and to take more pride in your work.
- The younger ones in Reception class should have an outside area that is especially for them where they can learn and play.
- Some of the adults responsible for the school should be more involved in making sure that you do as well as you can in your work.

Thank you for helping me with the inspection of your school. I hope that you continue to really enjoy school and do very well with your work and carry on trying really hard.