



Walford Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116743
LEA Herefordshire
Inspection number 279886
Inspection dates 6 December 2005 to 7 December 2005
Reporting inspector David Driscoll RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Walford
School category	Community		Ross-on-Wye
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Herefordshire HR9 5SA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01989 562209
Number on roll	183	Fax number	01989 762898
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Gerald Smith
Date of previous inspection	2 November 2000	Headteacher	Mr Steven Roberts

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Walford is a small, rural primary school serving a relatively affluent area around Ross-on-Wye. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic groups and all are fluent in English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is about the national average. The school has had a large turnover of staff in the last two years, and also a high turnover of pupils. Less than half the pupils who left Year 6 in 2005 started their education at the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Walford Primary school is a happy community that provides a satisfactory education for its pupils, with some significant strengths, particularly in the way it encourages pupils' good attitudes and behaviour. Parents are very supportive of the school and, locally, it has a good reputation. The school is particularly good at ensuring that pupils are well cared for and that all are treated equally. Teaching is satisfactory, and pupils leave Year 6 with above average standards, having made satisfactory progress throughout the school.

Most teachers are relatively new to the school; several are new to teaching. Lessons are consistently well planned, but the amount that pupils learn is not as good because of small errors that slow the pace of lessons.

The quality of provision in the Reception class is good. Attainment on entry varies but is usually above average in communication and personal skills. Children make good progress due to the good teaching and the good range of interesting activities provided. By the end of Reception, standards are above average.

The school's view of its performance is slightly too generous because managers are not paying enough attention to what the data tells them about achievement, teaching and leadership. In other respects, the school's evaluation of its work is accurate and matches that of the inspectors. Managers have satisfactorily demonstrated that they can improve the school's performance. They have had a good impact on improving aspects such as attendance. Improvement in achievement has been only satisfactory, because the school uses data to explain what has happened, rather than using it to raise standards in the future. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Analyse data on pupils' performance in greater depth and use the findings to raise standards.
- Carry out more rigorous evaluation of lessons to identify and rectify the simple errors that turn potentially good lessons into satisfactory ones.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children make good progress in the Reception class and join Year 1 with above average standards. From this time on, they make satisfactory progress and usually leave the school with above average standards, as shown by test results in Year 6. In 2005, the situation was a little different. Results were only average because so many pupils joined the school relatively late in their primary school education. Standards in English are usually slightly higher than other subjects in the school, although in 2005, pupils in Year 2 gained exceptionally high results in their writing.

The school's good emphasis on ensuring all pupils are treated equally ensures that there are no differences in the rate of progress made by different groups of pupils. Those that join late are helped to settle in very quickly so they do not lose ground.

Pupils reach the targets set for them by the school's managers, which are appropriately challenging given pupils' standards on joining the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning because they feel part of a happy community to which they contribute well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Celebration assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to share in each other's successes. In lessons, pupils work well in pairs and small groups and benefit from mixing happily and purposefully together. They learn to respect the views and beliefs of each other. Pupils behave very well in lessons and at break-times. They say that there is very little bullying or bad behaviour in the school and what little occurs is dealt with very quickly by teachers. Attendance levels are above the national average and improving, with no unauthorised absences.

Pupils feel safe because they know that adults will help them if they have a problem. They know their views are taken seriously through their elected class members on the school council. For example, their requests to have a better range of play equipment have been met. Year 6 pupils support children in the Reception class throughout their first year through a 'Buddy' system and this helps the very young to settle in well. Pupils also contribute to the local community through helping senior citizens and raising money for charities locally and further afield. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles through the good opportunities for exercise and sport. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 and Reception enjoy the fresh fruit they are given every day to encourage healthy eating habits. Pupils' basic skills prepare them well for life when they leave school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy their lessons because they find the work interesting. Topics such as 'What is condensation?' are planned with activities that capture the pupils' imagination; for example finding out if the condensation from water coloured blue is also blue.

Planning is carried out in great detail, which often leads to good teaching in all years. However, on other occasions, the pace of lessons is slowed by errors in teaching that would be easy to correct. Examples such as not providing a big enough piece of paper to write an answer or not spotting printing errors on worksheets lead to pupils making satisfactory rather than good progress.

Throughout the school, teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and levels of concentration. As a result, pupils are prepared to work hard and complete their tasks.

Teachers have a good understanding of the standards that pupils should be reaching and ensure that they achieve them. However, the push to take pupils even further is not consistently applied in all lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum covers all required subjects and topics. There is good emphasis placed on the key skills of English and mathematics. Following recent initiatives in information and communication technology (ICT), better links are being established with other subjects as pupils make good use of lap-top computers. French is taught in Years 3 and 5 and German is taught in Years 4 and 6. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. These include many sports, music, dance, art and ICT. Pupils visit museums and places of worship for different religions and Year 5 pupils enjoy a residential visit involving outdoor and adventurous activities. There are many visitors to the school. These well planned activities and visits enrich pupils' learning greatly and help prepare them for later life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which all pupils feel happy and safe. Pupils know that teachers will listen to any concerns they might have. Regular health and safety checks are carried out and improvements in provision and the accommodation have been made accordingly. Child protection arrangements are clear and understood by all adults. New procedures for tracking pupils' achievement are starting to work well in ensuring that teachers know their pupils' capabilities. Teachers and learning assistants provide regular support to ensure that all pupils make the progress that they should. Pupils have individual targets to work towards and are aware of these, although few are pushed to exceed their targets. The school works well with families. Parents whose children moved into the school after the start of a new term indicate that they are very pleased with the support provided to help their children settle quickly and maintain their progress with few, if any, setbacks.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has led the school's pastoral work very well. Parents are full of praise for the way the school instils good discipline and manners. Parents are also very pleased with the way their children are made to feel happy at the school. 'My child really looks forward to Monday when she can go back to school' was one comment, echoed by many others.

The comments from parents have been used well by the school's managers to come to an accurate view of aspects such as care, behaviour and curriculum. The extra activities are now much better, because the school responded to parents' requests. The school identifies areas where it can improve the quality of care, such as better

supervision at playtimes, which has reduced the number of minor accidents. However, managers, including governors, have too rosy a view of the school's academic performance because not enough attention is paid to analysing long-term trends. Whilst the school can explain with great confidence a previous year's results, managers are not yet using the data in enough detail to target pupils currently in the school so as to improve their achievement above the ordinary. This aspect of the school's leadership and management is the most significant factor in the school making satisfactory, rather than good, progress since the previous inspection and the managers' satisfactory capacity to improve.

New teachers, who are responsible for a high proportion of the teaching, are very well supported in their work. They already have the same expectations of good attitudes and behaviour that are common throughout the school. However, the evaluation of their work is sometimes a little too generous and is not identifying those crucial aspects of a lesson that can make the difference between pupils making good, rather than satisfactory progress.

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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	2	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	2	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	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	3	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

Walford Primary School Walford Ross-on-Wye Herefordshire HR9 5SA

7 December 2005

Dear Children

As you know, some inspectors visited your school recently to check on how well it was doing.

Thank you very much for your welcome, and a special thank you to all those who told us about their life at school. We think you are very polite to grown-ups and well behaved. You are doing as well as we would expect you to in lessons.

You told us how much you liked being at school, and we can see why. Your teachers take good care of you and make sure your lessons are fun. What the teachers and other grown-ups are really good at is helping you to get on well with other children and grown-ups. You are lucky to go on more trips than we usually see, and have more people visiting the school to help you learn about what happens in real life outside school.

We have made some suggestions to help the school get even better. We have asked the headteacher to look for more patterns in the numbers (just like Year 5 were doing!) coming from the test results and to use this information to raise standards, and also to check what teachers do more carefully to help them to help you.

Thank you again for helping us with our work.

Yours faithfully

Mr Driscoll (Lead inspector)