



Whissendine CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120183
Local Authority RUTLAND
Inspection number 280754
Inspection dates 3–4 October 2006
Reporting inspector Patricia Cox

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Main Street
School category	Voluntary controlled		Whissendine, Whissendine
Age range of pupils	4–11		Oakham, Rutland LE15 7ET
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01664 474695
Number on roll (school)	135	Fax number	01664 474317
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Dr Andrew Dean
		Headteacher	Mr Robert Gooding
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2000		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 3–4 October 2006	Inspection number 280754
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school serves the local village but many pupils come from much further afield. Pupils come from a range of family backgrounds. Children's attainment on entry to Reception is above national expectations. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and all have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals or with learning difficulties is lower than the national average. Many pupils join or leave the school after the Reception class. The school has met national standards for ActiveMark, Investors in People and Healthy Schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This outstanding, and improving school, provides exceptional value for money and is deservedly popular. The headteacher, who has been in post less than a year, provides excellent leadership and management. He has built extremely well on the already effective provision, and initiatives have ensured that every school system supports excellence in all areas. Staff are developing their leadership skills well. Very effective methods for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school fully involve parents and pupils. Consequently, the headteacher and staff have a very clear understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. Rigorous action is taken to tackle the shortcomings and strategic planning is outstanding. However, the school's evaluation of itself as good is modest. Children make a good start in Reception, building well on their knowledge and understanding, so that standards are well above national expectations when they enter Year 1. Because pupils make excellent progress through the school, their achievement is outstanding. Standards are exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is because teaching is almost always good and often exemplary. Teachers have extremely high expectations and match the tasks very well to the pupils' age and ability. Pupils are supported and challenged to do their very best, often through very effective questioning techniques. They have many successful methods to assess their own learning. Very effective classroom teaching is supported by an innovative and rapidly developing curriculum which includes very good arrangements for their personal, social and health education. The curriculum is designed very well to build on the pupils' skills at the appropriate level in each subject. Provision for music and physical education is particularly good, with an outstanding range of activities outside the school day. There are exceptional methods to develop the pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills in all subjects in Reception and Years 1 and 2 but these opportunities are not given quite as fully for the older pupils. Pupils respond extremely well to the excellent relationships throughout the school; they are eager to take part and concentrate very well. They thoroughly enjoy their time in school and have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is outstanding; pupils are polite and thoughtful. Provision for their personal development is excellent and spirituality pervades the life of the school. Pupils have many opportunities to give their views and these are acted on. They learn from an early age to take responsibility and to use their initiative. They are therefore very well prepared for the next stage of education and for their lives in the future. However, although the school has very good methods for developing their understanding of British and different cultures, there are only adequate strategies to extend their understanding of life in a multicultural society. The school takes exemplary care of pupils' physical and emotional needs, ensuring that all child protection procedures are in place. There are excellent methods for providing academic guidance and support to pupils through the extensive and rigorous assessment system in most subjects, but not yet all. The pupils with learning difficulties receive very good support that enables them to achieve as well as other pupils. With the good progress made since the last inspection, very

good teamwork, excellent governance and enthusiastic subject leadership, the school has an outstanding capacity to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Offer the same opportunities, as are given to the younger ones, to the older pupils to develop their ICT skills in the few areas where this does not already happen. - Use the school's effective assessment systems in every subject. - Develop the pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society to the same level as other aspects of cultural development.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards in English, mathematics and science have been exceptionally high at the end of Years 2 and 6 for most years, and particularly for Year 2 in 2003 and Year 6 in 2004. While there are variations, the trend is broadly a rising one, and the results in 2006 were similarly high. The results and the school data demonstrate that all pupils make exceptional progress from entry to the school to the end of Year 2 and then to Year 6 in almost all subjects. A few pupils have been working well on Year 7 studies, at a higher level than the national tests can demonstrate. Very challenging targets are set for attainment and these are usually met. However, progress, while good, has not been as strong in writing in the juniors. The impact of the school's urgent action to tackle this is already evident.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent in almost all respects. When the children enter Reception, some have difficulty in listening to others and taking turns. The consistent application of the school's rules, in a calm and supportive atmosphere, helps them to develop their social skills rapidly as they move through the school. Consequently, pupils develop into particularly well-mannered, thoughtful and mature individuals, who work very well together and are taking increasing responsibility for their own learning. There have been no recent exclusions and pupils say that the few elements of bullying that existed previously have been eliminated. There is little need for the 'playground buddies', as pupils play very well together and no-one is left out. The school provides many opportunities for them to learn about, and contribute to, the local and wider community, particularly through the very close links with the local church. Pupils are involved and consulted extremely well, through the school council, class councils and questionnaires. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The children in Reception develop their independence very quickly, through well-developed opportunities to choose their own activities. Because relationships between pupils and with adults throughout the school are extremely good, lessons move smoothly and rapidly, with little time wasted. Teachers use interesting methods to stimulate the pupils' interest and to completely involve them totally in lessons. Classrooms are bright, stimulating places where pupils take part in lessons eagerly and concentrate on their work particularly well. However, tasks are, occasionally, not matched quite as well as they could be to the purpose of the lesson. Teachers work very well in collaboration with teaching assistants to ensure that all pupils make as much progress as they can.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is designed very carefully to meet the pupils' needs and to make their experience thoroughly enjoyable. Better links are being developed between subjects, using a very well thought-out an innovative topic approach. which encourages pupils to make choices about how they will study the topic. The Reception curriculum is planned very well to give a good balance of types of activity and the outside area is designed very well to promote learning. Personal, social and health education, and teaching pupils about how to keep themselves safe and fit, are very effective and there is very good provision for physical education. Therefore, pupils are active and make healthy choices in the food they eat. There is an outstanding range of activities before and after school and at lunchtimes and a very good range of visits and visitors. Expert tuition is provided in Spanish and French from Year 2 upwards. Pupils have the opportunity to learn a wide range of musical instruments and there is a thriving orchestra.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes exceptionally good care of its pupils' health, welfare and safety. Everything is done that is necessary to safeguard them and risk assessments are carried out regularly. There is always an adult they can confide in if they have problems. There are excellent strategies for assessing pupils' progress in most subjects. Target-setting is well-developed; pupils know their targets and how well they are moving towards them. Marking supports the process by letting pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. There are very good and developing systems for involving them in assessing their own progress in lessons and towards their targets. The school rapidly identifies where there is the possibility of underachievement and strategies for preventing this work very effectively. There are good procedures for

identifying and supporting pupils with learning difficulties. Their individual education plans are written extremely well, providing them with a clear understanding of their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher is focused particularly strongly and successfully on ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential are supported and enjoy their education. He has an extremely close working relationship with the deputy headteacher, who provides very good support, and there is very good teamwork throughout the school. Staff are enthusiastic about developing their skills and expertise and are supported and guided extremely well through rigorous systems to monitor and evaluate their work. They carry out their leadership and management roles well and are developing their expertise rapidly. The school sets challenging targets for each year group and progress towards these is checked using the very rigorous and thorough tracking systems. Parents are involved extremely well in the life of the school and are very positive about its work. Governors are particularly effective in carrying out their role, closely involved in strategic planning and checking progress thoroughly.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

5 October 2006 Dear Pupils Whissendine Primary School, Main Street, Whissendine, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 7ET Thank you very much for the help you gave me last week when I visited your school and it was a great pleasure to meet you all and watch you working. I enjoyed our conversations and wish I could have talked to more of you. I'm writing to tell you what I found about your school. I think you're very lucky to go to such a fantastic school. Your headteacher and his staff work very hard to make sure that you do as well as you possibly can and so your work is very good indeed. The older pupils are doing much better in writing because the school is helping you. I've asked your teachers to help the older pupils to do more ICT in other subjects like music. You told me that you really enjoy school and I could see why. Lessons are fun as well as helping you to learn a lot. Teachers are making this even better by linking work in a lot of subjects together really well. This obviously happens very well because I've never met children who said their favourite subject was geography before! You do a lot of work about other countries and religions but I think you could learn more about the good work that people from all the different ethnic groups do in our country. I like the way that teachers help you to see how well you're doing in most subjects, although I think they ought to do this in all subjects too. Your teachers are very nice to you and help you when you have problems, so you don't often get stuck for very long. You were right when you told me how well you all behave; I think you're very polite and helpful and the Year 6 pupils are extremely grown-up. You look after each other and help the younger ones to get used to school. The school looks after you really well, too, so that you're safe and there's always someone you can talk to if you're upset. Thank you again, and I'm sure you'll all do very well in future, because you get such a good start in your brilliant school. Best wishes Mrs Pat Cox Inspector