



Grimley and Holt CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116815
Local Authority Worcestershire
Inspection number 290643
Inspection date 30 January 2007
Reporting inspector Alison Grainger

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Grimley
School category	Voluntary controlled		Worcester
Age range of pupils	4-11		WR2 6LU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01905 640325
Number on roll (school)	56	Fax number	01905 640325
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mick Jukes
		Teacher in charge	Richard Keiran
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small primary school with three mixed-age classes serves the villages of Grimley and Holt. All pupils are of White British heritage. No pupil is known to be eligible for free school meals. On entry to the Reception Year, most children's attainment is broadly at the level expected for their age.

The school has experienced an unsettled time in recent years, with a particularly high turnover of staff. Most of the staff joined the school in September 2005. Since November 2005, there have been three acting headteachers. The present acting head took over responsibility for the school in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that is getting better. It has put its unsettled past behind it and is moving forward. As one parent observed, 'It is not looking back.' Parents really appreciate the teamwork of staff and the strong direction for improvement provided by the acting headteacher. They value the school's 'positive atmosphere', see many developments taking place, and say that their children's enjoyment of school is increasing. The pupils too speak positively about the recent changes. They are enthusiastic, for example, about additions to the range of clubs and say that the acting headteacher 'likes us to laugh'.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. Children in the Reception Year get off to a reasonable start and most reach the standards expected. This start is built on steadily in Years 1 to 6. Pupils' progress is satisfactory because teaching and the curriculum are also satisfactory. The school is determined to improve teaching and the range of learning opportunities so that pupils' progress accelerates. A factor preventing teaching from being more effective is the level of challenge and support not being closely enough matched to the full range of pupils' needs.

Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved recently and is satisfactory. Further action is necessary to develop it as a tool for learning across all subjects and to give pupils more independence as learners.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils behave well and form positive relationships. Whilst most enjoy school and want to learn, there is a lack of real sparkle and enthusiasm in lessons. This is because pupils do not have enough opportunities to take initiative and responsibility as learners. Pupils are conscientious in helping in classrooms and around the school, but they do not make the strong input to the school community of which they are capable. There is too much focus on adults organising and directing activities.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Parents are right in saying that the school gives good attention to their children's personal welfare. Pupils are confident that they have an adult to whom they can turn should they have worries or concerns. Systems for guiding pupils on how to improve their school work are new, developing and satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The momentum is there to keep the school moving on. However, staff have only recently become involved in the school's leadership. Nevertheless, there is a sense of empowerment among staff and governors. This, together with the recent rapid pace of change, shows that the school is securely placed to develop further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the level of support and challenge in teaching is closely matched to all pupils' needs.

- Increase opportunities for pupils to use and develop their ICT skills across all subjects.
- Develop the extent to which pupils take initiative and responsibility in lessons and more generally.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. With the small number of pupils in each year, there are inevitable fluctuations in the standards reached. Pupils make satisfactory progress from the start of the Reception Year to the end of Year 6.

There are examples of a few individuals making good gains and also of a few who do not move on well enough. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2006, for example, showed that a number of pupils had made good gains in science. However, a few fell short of their expected levels in writing and mathematics. The individual instances of progress being better than expected, or not as good as expected, apply to pupils of various levels of ability, including the most capable and those with learning difficulties.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Most pupils like school and are starting to enjoy it more. Pupils' growing enthusiasm is reflected in the improving attendance rate. They welcome the changes that are being made, such as the new computers and increasing opportunities for work outdoors. Pupils' good behaviour contributes to the school's safe and calm environment. Children in the Reception year quickly learn the school routines and settle in well.

Pupils have the expected understanding for their age of how to stay safe and healthy. They know, for instance, that it is important to eat a balanced diet and to take regular exercise. They make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community. There are some good aspects, including their contribution through the school council and the way in which older ones care for younger ones during wet break times. They are capable, however, of doing more. At present, they fulfil only fairly routine responsibilities in classrooms and about the school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. An aspect that is relatively less well developed is pupils' understanding of modern multi-ethnic society. Through the development of basic skills, such as in literacy, numeracy and ICT, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Satisfactory teaching results in pupils making satisfactory progress as they move up from the start of the Reception year to the end of Year 6. There are some good features. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and explain this so that pupils know what they are aiming to achieve. Activities are well organised. Pupils' work is carefully marked.

Teaching is not always consistently matched to all pupils' needs to give the right level of challenge or support for all. In whole-class sessions, for instance, the input can be the same for all. There are examples of activities being well matched to pupils' needs. In an English lesson in Years 3 and 4, for example, the writing activities provided pupils of differing capability with the right level of challenge. In general, there is too much emphasis on adults leading and directing activities and not enough on pupils making choices and decisions about their work. Sometimes, pupils with learning or other difficulties have too much support and this restricts their independence.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The learning opportunities ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress across the range of their school work. A wide variety of extra activities, such as clubs, visits and visitors, enriches daily lessons and, for example, brings topics in history to life. Pupils say that the residential visit in Year 6 does much to develop their confidence.

Improvements are taking place to add excitement, interest and challenge for pupils. Staff expertise is being harnessed in the provision of specialist music, physical education and outdoor lessons. Children from the Reception year to Year 2, for example, recently enjoyed making maps outdoors using natural objects.

Increased opportunities for ICT this year have brought the provision up to a satisfactory level in this subject. The school recognises that the use of ICT in other subjects requires further development to enhance skills and to support more independent learning. Children in the Reception Year do not have enough opportunities to make choices, for instance, by selecting activities for themselves from a range provided. They do not have sufficiently frequent and routine access to learning outdoors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Good pastoral care for pupils contributes much to their personal well-being and helps them to feel safe and secure at school. Much is done to develop pupils' awareness of healthy eating. Pupils with particular difficulties are well supported through friendship groups, social skills groups and activities that, for example, help those who find it hard

to listen carefully to others. Action is being taken to work more closely with parents to support learning and meet their children's personal needs.

Academic guidance is satisfactory, with pupils being increasingly involved in evaluating their progress. New systems for monitoring pupils' short-term and long-term progress are already being used to set pupils targets to help them to improve their performance. There are examples of good marking, but links between targets and marking are not sharp enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The good and clear leadership of the acting headteacher is driving the school forward. Staff welcome the significant changes being made. They are not content that the school provides a satisfactory education, and share the acting headteacher's high aspirations for pupils. The quality of teamwork is a significant strength. Staff are starting to share responsibility for leadership of the school. Their roles as subject leaders are moving on as the right systems are introduced for their involvement in rigorous checking of the impact of teaching and the curriculum on learning. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school has identified the right priorities.

Governance has improved recently and is satisfactory. Governors are also committed to change. They have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are increasingly asking critical questions to help ensure the school's development. Everyone in the school has welcomed the local authority's effective close support during its unsettled period and over the last year in particular.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and finding out about your school. You told us that lots of new things are happening that are making your school better. Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education and we agree with you that the changes are improving it. We are really pleased that these changes are helping you to enjoy school more. You told us about the new clubs, the new computers and other good developments such as the outdoor lessons.

We found you to be polite and helpful young people. You behave well and this helps to make the school a safe and pleasant place. The adults make sure that you are safe and look after you well. Because your school is small and like a family, they know each one of you well.

The school makes sure that your progress with your school work is satisfactory. The adults want to help you to do better than this. We have asked them to do some things that will help you to do even better. We have asked them to make sure that the teaching in lessons is at just the right level for each of you. We have asked them to build on your enthusiasm for using the computers by giving you more opportunities to use ICT in different subjects. This will also help you to develop better computer skills as well.

We think that you are capable of having more opportunities to show initiative and responsibility in lessons and more generally in school. You are such sensible young people who have a lot to offer. This will help you and your school.

Keep working hard and doing your best.