



# Whittlebury Church of England Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 122003  
**Local Authority** Northamptonshire  
**Inspection number** 292288  
**Inspection date** 24 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Frances Gillam

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Whittlebury
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Towcester
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		NN12 8XH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01327 857700
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	43	<b>Fax number</b>	01327 857700
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Judi Ainsley
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Allison Sargeant
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 January 2003		

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 24 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 292288
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Whittlebury is smaller than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is higher than in most schools. Almost all pupils come from a White British background and the proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is lower than average. Children in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 are taught together in the infant class, and pupils in Years 3 to 6 in the junior class. At the time of the inspection, the infant class was taught by a temporary supply teacher.

## **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, which has established a positive climate for learning. Pupils make good progress in their personal development and well-being, and achieve satisfactorily in their work. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is good. They behave well, act sensibly and take good care of themselves and others. Many pupils commented on the school's family atmosphere. Pupils are friendly and quickly develop positive relationships. Pupils make good choices about their diet and take regular exercise because of the good emphasis the school places on healthy lifestyles.

Children's attainment on entry in the Reception Year is broadly as expected. Children do well in their first year and most achieve or exceed the goals for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Predominantly satisfactory teaching ensures that most pupils make expected progress and reach broadly average standards by Year 6. Well focused support for pupils with learning difficulties enables these pupils to grow in confidence. This supports their learning well and they make good progress. Efforts to improve pupils' writing are proving successful, particularly in the junior class. The school is providing lively experiences such as residential visits, music and visual resources to stimulate pupils' thinking and to set their writing within themes that pupils say are now relevant and interesting. Within mathematics, games and solving problems appeal to junior pupils but the work they are expected to do when working independently is not always challenging. This is because these independent activities do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to use the mental strategies they have learned previously to calculate and solve problems.

A strength of the satisfactory curriculum is the extensive range of activities outside normal lessons and the good use of visitors to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' personal development. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory with a number of good features. Pupils feel safe and free from harm. All pupils receive good care and guidance to support their personal development but they are less sure about how well they are doing and how they can improve their work further to promote better progress.

Satisfactory leadership and management have drawn staff and governors together to work with a common purpose. They have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and identify the right action to bring about change for the better. Improvements in science and for children in the Reception Year have been good but tracking pupils' progress is an area where improvement since the last inspection has been slower. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are not yet rigorous enough to check that all pupils are achieving as well as they should. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers provide better guidance for pupils about how well they are doing and how they can improve their work.

- Ensure that mathematical activities provide better opportunities for pupils in the juniors to use mental strategies to calculate and solve problems, especially when they work on their own.
- Improve how pupils' progress is tracked to gain a better understanding of how well pupils are doing and whether they are doing well enough.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory for most pupils in Years 1 to 6 and standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave the school. Throughout the school, progress is good for pupils with learning difficulties and for children in the Foundation Stage. Activities in the Reception Year build well on children's experiences and they quickly settle into school. They make good progress because the basic skills are taught well. Most of the children achieve or exceed the goals for their age by the time they enter Year 1.

Pupils with learning difficulties receive good support. This builds their self-esteem, increases their confidence and enables them to build successfully on their previous learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress by Year 6 but junior pupils could be doing better in mathematics, especially when they are working independently. Work from the school's mathematics scheme is not always adapted sufficiently well to ensure these pupils make good use of the mental strategies they have learned. This reduces the opportunity for pupils to consolidate their understanding and to develop their ideas further to enable better progress in mathematics.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils act safely in and around the school. They have a good sense of right and wrong and this enables them to think carefully about their actions and how these may affect others. Older pupils are careful to look out for the welfare of younger children. They welcome responsibility and many pupils are excited at the prospect of being able to share their views about the school through the newly established school council. Pupils make a good contribution to the local community. They raise money for charity and recognise that there are others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils work and play together constructively. Activities such as growing their own vegetables and managing stalls at fund raising events help them to gain an increasing understanding of the world of work. These, and the pupils' satisfactory literacy and numeracy skills, prepare them adequately for their future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Staff work together well. They monitor the achievements of pupils with learning difficulties regularly and use the information well to plan the next steps in learning. This is effective in meeting these pupils' needs and enables them to make good progress in their learning and personal skills. Well focused activities for children in the Reception Year build well on these children's achievements. This enables them to make a positive start and sets them up well for their next stage of learning. In Years 1 to 6, teachers, in the main, plan satisfactorily for the differing ability groups within their class. They assess pupils' achievements each term but are not rigorous enough in checking whether pupils are making enough progress towards their end of key stage targets.. This means that pupils who are in danger of underachieving are not always identified as early as they could be to ensure that their rate of progress does not slow. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. Positive comments encourage pupils to work hard but the comments do not always indicate to pupils how they can improve their work next time.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

Pupils experience a broad range of learning activities that for most part build satisfactorily on what they have done before. Writing is a main focus within the English curriculum and recent developments are providing exciting experiences for pupils in the junior class to write about. Work is under way to improve pupils' understanding of letter sounds in the infant class but the school acknowledges that this is not yet fully developed. The school provides a wide and extensive range of exciting activities outside normal lessons, including residential visits to places such as Everdon and book weeks to support pupils' writing. Pupils find these experiences very interesting and the activities enhance their creative and personal skills effectively.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Within this small school community, pupils feel safe and well cared for. Child protection procedures are well established and staff respond quickly to any concerns the pupils may have. Staff value pupils' efforts, and pupils commented that they feel special and part of a caring family. Staff promote healthy lifestyles successfully and routinely remind pupils about the need to take care of themselves and others. This contributes successfully to pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils have good information to support their moral and social development and this guides them successfully to behave well and look out for others. Guidance and support to help pupils to make good progress is not yet fully developed and pupils are not always sure about how well they are doing and how they can do even better.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Governors and staff have a secure understanding of the school's effectiveness. The headteacher evaluates the quality of lessons and analyses test data carefully. This information is shared with governors and places them in a suitable position to raise questions about the school's performance. It also ensures that priorities for development are relevant and focus appropriately on improving pupils' achievements. Action to make change for the better is proving successful, particularly in aspects of writing and in the progress pupils make now in science. Though self-evaluation processes are satisfactory, and in the main are driving school improvement, the tracking of pupils' progress is not yet rigorous enough. This is because pupils' progress towards their end of Year 2 or Year 6 targets is not checked well enough to ensure they are on track and achieving as well as they can.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed meeting you and seeing all the exciting things you were doing.

Your school, the people in charge and your teachers do a satisfactory job and this is helping you to make satisfactory progress and reach broadly average standards by the time you leave in Year 6.

Here are some of the most important things I found good about your school:

- The children in the Reception Year do well. They make a good start to school and enjoy all the exciting things they have to learn.
- You behave well, act sensibly and care for yourself and others. You like to help others and you make a good contribution to your local community.
- You like your school and this shows in your good attendance and your eagerness to learn.
- You eat plenty of fruit and vegetables and make good use of all the sporting activities in school because you know this will help you to grow up fit and healthy.
- You enjoy the special activities that are provided for you. Many of you enjoyed your trip to Everdon and the 'book week' activities.
- Children who need special help with their learning do well because they have good support from their teachers and the adults who work with them.

To improve the school still further we have asked the people in charge and your teachers to work together on three things:

- To make sure you have good information to tell you how well you are doing and how you can make your work even better.
- To make sure the older children have better opportunities to use mental strategies to calculate and solve mathematical problems, especially when they work on their own.
- To make sure they check how well you are doing so they can give you better help when you need it.

You can all help by making sure you work extra hard in lessons.