

# West Kidlington Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123004
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	292555
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Thompson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	351
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr D Rochford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr E Symonds
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 June 2002
<b>School address</b>	Oxford Road Kidlington OX5 1EA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865 373369
<b>Fax number</b>	01865 377080

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

West Kidlington Primary is located to the north of Oxford. It is larger than most primary schools, but the number on roll is steadily declining and is about 25 % less than it was at the time of the last inspection. The demographic profile of the area is changing. At present the home circumstances of pupils are broadly average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities. The large majority is of White British heritage. Thirteen different nationalities are represented in the school, but the proportion of pupils with English as a second language is below average. Due to circumstances beyond the school's control there have been some significant changes in staffing within the past few years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

West Kidlington Primary provides a good education for its pupils. Parents agree. Inspection questionnaires relating to about a third of the pupils were returned, and almost all of these were overwhelmingly positive. One sums up the views expressed in many others when noting, 'The school provides a lovely, calm and encouraging environment for my children to take their first steps on the ladder of education!'

An outstanding feature of the school, and one that contributes strongly to the very good climate for learning evident in all classes, is the personal development of the pupils. For a number of years the school has deservedly enjoyed a national reputation for its work in developing 'values education'. Evidence of the success of this initiative is seen in the demeanour of its pupils, for whom qualities of respect, honesty and consideration for others are an everyday feature of school life.

Children are given a good start to their education in the Reception class. The good improvements made since the last inspection are evident in the excellent area for outdoor learning and the good range of the curriculum provided.

The school's academic performance in previous years has been variable, but most pupils are now achieving well. By the time that pupils leave at the end of Year 6, their attainment overall is broadly in line with the national average. The school has always been successful in ensuring that most pupils attain the nationally expected standard when they are assessed in Years 2 and 6. However, it has not always fully developed the potential of its more able pupils. This situation is now being addressed, and the most recent data relating to these pupils show that they are generally working at above average levels. Nonetheless, they should do even better as there is still too much variation in the quality of the challenges presented to them.

The pupils make good progress because they are generally well taught and because the curriculum provided for them is good. The school provides outstanding pastoral care for its pupils. The quality of academic guidance is good, and as a result pupils clearly know what they need to do to improve.

A key factor in the school's recently improved performance has been its success in developing a good new system for tracking the progress made by pupils. This has resulted in a much sharper focus on pupils' achievement than has been the case in previous years. The school acknowledges that much still needs to be done to extend this system further and to develop greater consistency in teachers' assessments of their pupils. The leadership and management of the school are good. The management structure has recently been broadened, and some of the tasks previously undertaken by senior staff are now devolved to middle managers. However, these teachers do not monitor the effectiveness of their areas of responsibility with enough rigour. As a result of the clear direction of the headteacher and the good support of the governing body, the school has made good progress since its last inspection. It has a good capacity for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve assessment procedures and develop the use of the new system for tracking pupils' progress to ensure a sharper focus on achievement and consistency of challenge for the more able.
- Develop the skills of subject managers in monitoring their areas of responsibility.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Throughout the school, there are significant variations in the attainment of pupils from year to year. For example, the attainment of children transferring from Reception to Year 1 in 2006 was very high, while the attainment of the current group of Reception children is broadly average.

In some years in the recent past pupils have achieved satisfactorily rather than well. The reason for this was partly the disruption to pupils' learning caused by staff changes. In addition, the school's monitoring systems provided a limited overview of pupils' progress, and this inhibited the effectiveness of managers in targeting help where it was most needed. These issues have now been resolved. The school has enjoyed a period of relatively stable staffing and the new system for tracking pupils' progress enables managers to more effectively target those needing additional help. Most pupils are now achieving well. The attainment of the current group of pupils in Year 6 was below average when they were in Year 2. The school's predictions of slightly above average standards by the end of the year, verified by the inspection, represent good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because they have clear targets to achieve and are given good quality help in reaching them. Overall, pupils progress at the same rate, regardless of gender or ethnicity.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The teaching of core values that guide all aspects of pupils' behaviour underpins all aspects of school life and prepares them very well for life in the wider community. 'Values make our school special and help us live our lives better,' said one pupil. Behaviour both in and around the school is excellent. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their good attendance.

Pupils respond very well to the outstanding provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and all adults act as very good role models. 'Your teacher is like your best friend,' said a member of the school council. Pupils contribute exceptionally well to both their local and wider community and are given many opportunities to take on responsibility both through the school council and in monitoring the safety and security of pupils at lunchtimes. They are very aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and recent changes to meals provided reflect the need to eat healthily.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching varies in quality from satisfactory to outstanding and is good overall. There is an excellent climate for learning in all classes. This stems from teachers' very high expectations of pupils' behaviour together with pupils' enjoyment of and commitment to their studies. Teachers make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn. They often use questioning and discussion to ensure that pupils have thoroughly understood what they have to do. Lessons often have good pace, and teachers increasingly use information and communication technology, such as the interactive whiteboards, to make lessons more interesting. Teachers also work closely with teaching assistants to make sure that extra help is given to those pupils who need it most. However, teaching does not consistently challenge all pupils, particularly the more

able. This is because some teachers are not secure enough in their assessments of pupils' work and consequently tasks are not always pitched at the right level.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum has some outstanding features such as the ways in which pupils' personal, social and health education are promoted. There are high quality sporting activities and a strong emphasis on the promotion of pupils' health and well-being. A further strength is the attention given to the environmental education of the pupils. This helps them gain a good understanding of how recycling and energy saving can contribute to improving their own and worldwide living conditions. For example, the school councillors are proud of their composting bins and are looking at the feasibility of using solar panels and a wind turbine. A wide variety of visits and visitors to the school and the very good range of out of class activities enrich and enhance the curriculum. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are carefully addressed through their clear individual education plans. The few negative views expressed by parents were mostly directed at the adverse effect that the intense focus on numeracy and literacy was having on their children. Inspectors agree that there are not yet enough links made between subjects. This means that on some occasions opportunities are missed to give additional cohesion and relevance to learning by enabling pupils to use work in other subjects to extend their basic skills.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The highly caring ethos of the school is fostered by all the adults. Pupils are strongly encouraged to make their own contribution to this harmonious and inclusive community. The school has excellent partnerships with parents, outside agencies and local schools. Robust health and safety procedures and arrangements for child protection are in place, and pupils are taught how to take care of themselves and to make healthy and safe choices. Clear targets are provided for the pupils to work towards, and these are regularly reviewed and adjusted. However, until recently, data collected from periodic assessments was not used effectively enough to track the progress of individuals. This adversely affected the achievement of some pupils, particularly the more able. Assessment information is now being used with increasing effectiveness to provide challenging targets for all pupils, but there are still improvements to be made.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The impact of leadership and management is seen in the good progress now made by the pupils. The headteacher works well in partnership with his senior staff, and is successfully managing the challenges presented by the decline in the number on roll. He has an accurate understanding of the strengths to be built on and the weaknesses that need to be addressed. The leadership recognises that its most important recent initiative, the development of a computerised system for checking on pupils' progress, needs further refinement.

The school is aware of areas for improvement and is taking steps to tackle them. For example, it is developing further the role of middle managers to enable them to monitor the impact of provision on achievement more accurately and it is reviewing a number of school policies to

ensure consistency. Governance is good. Governors know the school well. They carefully monitor the work of the school and are good at holding it to account.

The successes of leadership include the way in which it has developed excellent partnerships with outside organisations which help promote pupils' well-being.





## Annex A

## 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>	2
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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>	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	2

### The quality of provision

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

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I would like to thank you very much for being so helpful when your inspectors came to visit your school. We really enjoyed meeting you, talking to you and looking at all your work.

We think that you go to a good school. This is a list of some of the things we liked best.

- You do well in your work.
- You are all really good at following the values your school teaches you. Everyone in your school is friendly and welcoming, and your behaviour is excellent.
- You learn well in lessons because the teaching you are given is good.
- Your teachers are good at planning interesting things for you to do.
- All of the adults in your school make sure that you are really well looked after.
- Your headteacher and the other people who help run your school are doing a good job.

Every school has something that could be better. Your school has a new system for checking on how well you are doing and we think that this needs to be improved a bit more. We also think that your teachers need to improve their skills in assessing what you know and can do. Once these improvements have been made we hope that you will do even better, especially those of you who sometimes find your work a bit easy. This should mean that, in future, all of your work will make you think hard. We know that you are ready for this challenge! Some of your teachers are in charge of subjects. We would like them to become even better at keeping a check on what you are doing and making decisions about how to improve things for you.

With best wishes for your future success,

Mike Thompson

(Lead inspector)