



# Great Milton Church of England Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 123130  
**Local Authority** Oxfordshire  
**Inspection number** 292589  
**Inspection date** 15 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Graham Lee

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>	The Green
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Great Milton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		Oxford OX44 7NT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01844 279388
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	128	<b>Fax number</b>	01844 279388
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr James Cunningham
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Fran Hill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 September 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 15 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 292589
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a smaller than average primary school serving a number of villages in a rural area near Oxford. The majority of pupils come from relatively advantaged backgrounds but there are elements of social and economic deprivation within its population. Almost all pupils are of White British origin, and there is also a small group of Traveller learners of Irish heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is a little below average. Attainment on entry varies from year to year but is generally above average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a successful school which provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Some aspects of its work are outstanding. A strong Christian ethos pervades the school where 'Every child feels that they are nurtured and loved on an individual basis' as one governor put it. In consequence, pupils feel safe and thrive in this caring and supportive environment. Their personal development and well being are outstanding. They are proud of the school and enjoy everything it has to offer. They behave well and are enthusiastic learners, which helps them to achieve well.

When they arrive in the Foundation class, children are helped to settle quickly and make good progress in all aspects of their learning because of good provision for their needs. By the time they enter Year 1 standards are above average. Pupils of all abilities continue to make good progress in the infants and juniors because of good teaching and their very positive attitudes to learning. Some good examples of marking were evident that gave pupils a clear idea of what they needed to do in order to improve. This is not consistent in all classes, however. By the time they leave the school, pupils reach standards that are well above average. They are well prepared for secondary education and the world beyond.

The headteacher is an outstanding leader who has developed the Christian ethos of the school extremely effectively to ensure that every child is welcomed and included in its activities whatever their ability or needs. This is illustrated effectively by the warm and trusting relationships that have been established with the Traveller community. The headteacher is ably supported by a good leadership team and governing body and committed staff. They are constantly striving to improve teaching and learning and raise standards still further. Of particular note is the way the accommodation and grounds have been developed imaginatively to provide a rich and stimulating learning environment for pupils. Leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They have put in place effective strategies to address any weaknesses and this ensures that all pupils achieve well. Performance data is used effectively to identify trends and to provide help for pupils who need additional support.

Pupils' enjoyment is fostered through the good curriculum which provides an excellent range of enrichment activities in music, languages the arts and sport. Pupils' enthusiastic participation in physical activities and understanding of healthy eating choices contribute to their outstanding adoption of healthy lifestyles. Modern foreign languages are established as part of the curriculum throughout the school. Pupils are proud of the contribution they make to the school community through the school council. The positive impact of the school on pupils' all-round development is appreciated by most parents. One commented 'We have been delighted with the standard of education, care and values that the school adheres to'.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that teachers' marking and feedback consistently give pupils a clear idea of what they need to do to improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. The standards reached by learners in English, mathematics and science at the age of eleven are well above average and have improved over the past three years. Higher attaining pupils do well and, in 2006, more than half reached the higher level in all three subjects. Improvements in English have been particularly marked as a result of successful strategies to improve standards in writing. After a dip in 2005, standards at the age of seven recovered in 2006 and were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress as a result of the effective support they receive, and often reach the expected standards for their age.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' great enjoyment of their education is illustrated by the enthusiastic way they talk about all aspects of school life and in the excellent attendance of most. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils behave very well and those who present challenging behaviour are helped to cope successfully by staff and pupils, who are very supportive of one another. One Year 5 pupil explained very maturely how 'time out' strategies help these pupils to reflect and calm down. Members of the school council talk enthusiastically about the changes they have helped to effect, for example in the controversial limiting of football on the playground in the interests of all pupils. Older pupils appreciate the privileges they are given, for example, in enjoying the tranquillity of the 'Japanese garden'. They have close links with the church and raise money for a variety of charities. Pupils' economic well being is enhanced through the many opportunities they have to work collaboratively and through projects such as the 'Christmas shop' which helps older pupils to develop an understanding of the principles of enterprise projects.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and ensure that pupils make good progress. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and generally high expectations of what they should achieve. They plan effectively to meet the needs of all learners and work closely with teaching assistants. Consequently, pupils of all abilities have very positive attitudes to learning and achieve well. Pupils are often given challenging activities which help them to develop their thinking and express their ideas. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, for example, pupils were engaged in lively discussion and constructed robust arguments about the location of a new fast food outlet from the varying perspectives of children,

teachers and local residents. Occasionally, however, teachers dominate lessons and do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to be involved. Pupils are increasingly involved in assessing their own learning and teachers often give them good written and verbal feedback on what they need to do to improve. Pupils are very clear about the support they receive from teachers. One said 'Teachers make lessons fun. If you don't understand anything they will help to explain it again in a different way'. However, school leaders are aware that there is a lack of consistency in this practice.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage provides well for children's development in all areas of learning. Outside learning for these children is currently limited, however, and plans are in place to enhance the outdoor environment. Throughout the school, provision for the development of basic skills is good and ensures that pupils make good progress. There are a good range of strategies in place to help those who are at risk of underachieving. The outstanding range of enrichment activities allows pupils to develop their talents and interests on a range of fronts and makes a considerable contribution to their personal development. A particular feature of the curriculum is the strong environmental focus and the way the local area is used to enhance learning. Information and communications technology (ICT) is used effectively to support learning in a number of subjects and a thematic approach is being developed to enable pupils to see how the different aspects of their learning fit together. The school recognises that more work needs to be done on these aspects before they are firmly established.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good and the pastoral aspects are outstanding, reflecting the strong Christian ethos of the school. At Great Milton every child really does matter and the support for vulnerable pupils and their families is exemplary. Pupils with a range of learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with emotional and behavioural problems, are given good support which allows them to prosper and achieve well. The school draws effectively on the expertise of a range of outside agencies to help learners. The school is also responsive to the needs of its families. As one parent pointed out 'We recently requested a breakfast club to be set up and within a few weeks there it was. Fantastic!' The school provides good academic guidance for its pupils although the quality of marking and feedback to pupils is variable in relation to how it helps pupils to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good overall and secure a good quality of education, which results in pupils' outstanding personal development and good achievement.

The headteacher leads by example and has developed a resourceful leadership team and committed and effective staff group. All aspects of the school's work are monitored and evaluated rigorously and action taken to bring about improvements where necessary. For example, standards in English have been raised as a result of a successful focus on improving pupils' motivation and opportunities to write. Governors bring a wide range of expertise to their roles and offer a good balance of support and challenge to school leaders. The school enjoys a fruitful partnership with parents, although a significant minority do not believe that the school communicates effectively with them, particularly in relation to the use of homework and how well their children are doing. The school has continued to improve since the last inspection and the drive and enthusiasm of school leaders ensure that it has good capacity for further improvement

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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>	2
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	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	2
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	2
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1

### 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.

## 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	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

You may remember that I visited your school earlier in the week. I am writing to thank you for being so friendly and welcoming. I really enjoyed my day at Great Milton. Many of you helped with the inspection by being so willing to talk to me about the school. I thought you would like to know what I found out.

First of all you are rightly proud of the school because it is a good school which is outstanding in some of the things it does. There is a strong Christian atmosphere in the school and everybody looks after you very well and makes sure that you feel safe and secure and stay healthy. I was really impressed by your very good behaviour and the enthusiasm you have for lessons and other school activities. Well done! You are very lucky to have such a lot of extra things to do which you really seem to enjoy. I wish you the best of luck in the big football match you have coming up!

You do really well at school because the teaching is good. You told me that you really like your teachers and that they make learning fun. Some of you talked about how they help you when you don't understand things. Some of the marking in your books gives you a clear idea of how to improve your work. I have asked the school to make sure that this happens all the time. By the time you leave you are doing very well in English, maths and science and are well prepared to make the most of your secondary education. Those of you who find things a bit more difficult are given lots of extra help.

The school is extremely well led by the headteacher and she gets lots of help from all the staff. Together they are working hard to make things even better for you. I wish you all the best of luck in the future.

Yours truly

Graham Lee

Lead Inspector