



# Slimbridge Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 115536  
**Local Authority** Gloucestershire  
**Inspection number** 296416  
**Inspection dates** 5–6 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Andrew Harrett HMI

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 address</b>	St John's Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Slimbridge
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Gloucester GL2 7DD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01453 890216
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	96	<b>Fax number</b>	01453 899085
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Steve White
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Anthony Mitchell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 January 2000		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

## **Description of the school**

Slimbridge Primary School is smaller than average. English is the first language of all its pupils. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was on maternity leave and the deputy headteacher was the acting headteacher.

## **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 good school in which the quality of personal development and wellbeing is outstanding. Parents have confidence in the school and the pupils are happy and keen to learn. When children enter the school, their attainment is slightly above that expected for their age. They make good progress in their first year and attain standards that are above expectations in all areas of their learning. Older pupils make good progress throughout the school, with no groups underachieving. By the end of Year 6, their progress in science is outstanding. In mathematics and reading, their progress is good and in writing, it is satisfactory. The outstanding quality of personal development and well-being accounts for the feeling of security and enjoyment which is so evident among the pupils. One parent said, 'Our children are so happy at the school, they really miss going during the holidays.' The behaviour of the pupils is excellent. They are enthusiastic participants in the opportunities presented to them in classrooms and in clubs and activities. They respond kindly to each other, are socially adept and have positive attitudes towards personal differences. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Good relationships and well-established routines help the pupils to feel secure in their learning. Pupils readily participate in lessons. They ask for clarification and offer their own contributions confidently. In the best practice, the pupils assess their own performance and that of their peers effectively, helping them establish how to improve their work. Although lesson planning is good, ensuring that lessons have pace and purpose, it does not always take sufficient account of assessment information to address the needs of particular groups of pupils or of individuals. Marking is satisfactory but insufficiently influences the direction of future learning activities. The curriculum is good. It meets statutory requirements and caters for all learners. It is enhanced by a good range of trips and visitors to the school. Planned changes are having a beneficial effect. In particular, more coherent links are being established between subjects. However, the curriculum does not offer enough opportunities for extended writing. Some aspects of the provision for the care, guidance and support of the pupils are outstanding, particularly the care for their personal well-being and the provision to ensure their safety. However, the arrangements for assessment and the setting of targets do not consistently enable pupils to make such good progress in writing as in other areas of the curriculum. Leadership and management are good. The work of the school is monitored and evaluated rigorously, leading to actions which have sustained the outstanding quality of personal development and well-being and improved progress in science, reading and mathematics. The governing body is effective and its support has led to improvements in provision over time. The quality of subject leadership is good, but the school does not provide the literacy and numeracy coordinators with sufficient opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and to enable other staff to benefit fully from their expertise in these areas. Improvements since the last inspection demonstrate that the capacity of leadership and management to improve the school is good.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum.

- Develop the role of the literacy and numeracy coordinators in improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Improve the use made of assessment to set targets for pupils and to ensure that they know how to improve their work.
- Ensure that lesson planning focuses on the particular requirements of groups and individuals.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter Reception with standards that are generally around or above national expectations, particularly in their language development. By the end of their first year, they make good progress and their standards are above national expectations in all areas of learning. At Key Stage 1, the pupils make good progress and attain standards that are above average, particularly in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing have risen in recent years and are above the national average. In the national tests at the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards in science which are well above average and they make exceptionally good progress. In mathematics, standards rose in 2006 and were above average. This notable improvement resulted from the good progress being made by the pupils. However, standards in English declined in 2006 and were broadly in line with the national average. Although pupils made good progress in their reading, progress in writing was satisfactory. The school sets challenging targets for its pupils that are generally met, but fewer pupils meet their targets in writing than in the other areas. Standards and achievement observed during the inspection were similar to those indicated by results in national tests.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The quality of personal development and well-being is outstanding. The school is particularly successful in fostering a sense of social and moral responsibility amongst the children as they mature. All years from 1 to 6 have representatives on the school council and this is clearly a prized position to hold. The pupils talk eagerly about its achievements, particularly in raising money to improve the school's environment and conducting surveys to gather the views of the pupils. Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility in the school and do so enthusiastically. A high level of maturity is also shown in their attitudes to work. They respond positively to the school's health education programme with good levels of participation in physical activities. In assemblies, the pupils' excellent personal development and the school's positive reinforcement of high expectations are clearly evident. The pupils enjoy contributing to presentations and speak with confidence and clarity. Spiritual and cultural development are both good, with many activities within and beyond the curriculum enabling the pupils to widen their experiences. The pupils adopt safe practices around the school. Preparation for their future economic well-being is good and is linked to the good progress made in numeracy and literacy.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well structured with an appropriate variety of tasks and activities which engage and sustain the interest of the pupils. Learning objectives are explained well to make the purpose of lessons clear to the pupils and they are referred to throughout the lessons. Teachers use questioning techniques very skilfully to probe understanding and to challenge the pupils to extend their thinking and improve problem-solving skills. A particular strength of the teaching is the way in which subject-specific vocabulary is introduced and developed in lessons across the year groups. Oral work is well managed and the pupils speak and listen confidently. Although lessons are planned well for whole classes and taught with a high level of expertise, planning does not take sufficient account of the particular needs of individuals and groups of learners in all subjects.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and it is enriched by an appropriate range of out-of-school activities and trips. The school has good relationships with local organisations and agencies which provide appropriate opportunities for widening the pupils' experiences, such as the fire service and the Royal Mail. The long-term planning of the curriculum is good in terms of what is provided for different classes throughout the year. However, planning for the day to day needs of particular groups and individuals is not precise enough to raise the rate of progress across all subjects to the outstanding levels achieved in science.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Some aspects of care and support are exemplary. For example, the staff have a particularly strong commitment to pastoral care and to the safeguarding of their pupils. Children are confident that they will receive help and guidance and know that requests can be made to any teacher or to a lunchtime supervisor. In classrooms, there are innovative means by which children can signal their need for support discreetly, for example, by putting their name on the 'bubble board', which alerts the teacher to their request for guidance. Support for children with specific learning difficulties and disabilities is good, with effective contributions from teachers and teaching assistants. Although procedures for setting and communicating targets for improvement are satisfactory, they are insufficiently precise to maximise the children's progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Senior leadership has secured sustained improvement over time and the effective governing body has managed its finances carefully and efficiently. The school provides good value for money. Parents and pupils are fully involved in the evaluation of the school's work and value the contribution that they make to its planning. The quality of subject leadership is good. However, the expertise of the literacy and numeracy coordinators is not fully exploited in terms of evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and in ensuring that their good practice is shared so as to achieve a consistently excellent standard of teaching and learning across the school.

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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	2
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.

## 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	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**

Thank you for the help that you gave me during the recent inspection of your school. I was very impressed by your politeness and by the interest that you showed in your work. These are the things that I particularly liked about your school:

- You make good progress in your work, particularly in reading, mathematics and science.
- The school is excellent at making sure that you are looked after well and that you develop into polite and thoughtful young people.
- The quality of teaching in the school is good.
- You show a lot of interest in your work.
- Your behaviour in class and around the school is excellent.
- The school makes sure that you are fully involved in the school through the school council.

Even in good schools like yours, there are things that could be improved. I have asked the school to do this in a number of ways:

- Make sure that you have more chances to practise your writing in your lessons.
- Set you challenging but reachable targets.
- Make sure that you know exactly how you can make your work better.
- Plan lessons to take account of your individual needs.
- Make sure that the teachers in charge of numeracy and literacy can help others to teach these areas really well.

I thoroughly enjoyed visiting your school and meeting you all.