

# Greatfield Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115586
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	311990
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Kerly

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	206
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pat Thorpe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Margaret Thomas
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Hulbert Crescent Hatherley Cheltenham GL51 3FZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01242 523301
<b>Fax number</b>	01242 523301

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

progress being made by pupils;

pupils' personal development and the care, guidance and support they receive;

how effectively school leaders set a clear direction for the school and monitor its performance.

Evidence was gathered from observations of the school's work, including visits to lessons, discussions with pupils, staff and governors, analyses of the school's working documents and the questionnaires completed by parents. Other aspects of the school were not inspected in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school is a little smaller than average. Almost all pupils are White British and about one in twenty are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is greater than average but the overall proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is smaller than is found nationally. Three of the leaders have taken up their posts during the course of this school year.

## 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. It has many strengths and relatively few matters in need of improvement. Pupils achieve well, and their personal development and well-being are good. The school provides the pupils with many varied and enriching activities beyond the classroom. Pupils appreciate these. Their attendance is above average and they clearly enjoy their time in school. Parents' views of the school are somewhat mixed but almost all recognise that their children enjoy school life. One parent reflected several similar comments received, by writing, 'My child has thoroughly enjoyed his time at Greatfield.' Senior leaders carry out frequent checks on the school's performance. These checks are rigorous and give the school an accurate view of the areas in need of improvement. The leadership team has established good systems for tracking pupils' progress. It uses the information well to identify which groups and individuals need to do better or require additional support, and then deploys the well-trained teachers and teaching assistants accordingly. This has enabled the school to make significant improvements in addressing previous weaker areas and it is well placed to improve further.

On entry to Reception, children have levels of skills and knowledge above those normally found for children of this age. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. This good progress is maintained in Years 1 to 6 and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently above average, often significantly so at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in science have improved rapidly after a relative decline two years ago and they are now significantly above average, with two thirds of the older pupils currently working at levels above expectations for their age. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of careful identification of their precise needs and effective support from teachers and teaching assistants. A few of the more able pupils do not make as much progress as they might in some lessons. Nevertheless, almost all pupils are on track to reach their challenging but realistic end of year targets. By the time they leave, pupils have well developed skills needed for the next stage of education and adult life.

The pupils' good progress is a direct consequence of effective teaching throughout the school. Teachers plan stimulating activities, often with imaginative links between subjects, and this motivates the pupils. Teachers are good at ensuring pupils are clear about the purposes of activities. They frequently plan different tasks for pupils according to their learning needs, and deploy teaching assistants well to work with individuals and small groups, mainly those who need additional support. At times, those who are more able are not fully challenged during whole-class introductory and review sessions or when they have to complete relatively easy tasks before moving on to more imaginative challenges.

Within the good curriculum, pupils find the range of visits and special events particularly interesting, for example visiting the local magistrates court. Trips to London and France help widen pupils' awareness of worldwide cultural diversity. Stimulating learning opportunities are adapted well to meet the needs of those with learning difficulties but not so consistently for the more able.

Pupils are very attentive in lessons and keen to participate, volunteering their ideas, for example when discussing likely outcomes in a science experiment. Their behaviour around school is also good and they are thoughtful about one another, and keep a lookout to see if anyone is on the 'friendship bench' and in need of some comforting. The school councillors and many others, such as the 'buddies squad' have responsibilities to contribute to the running of the school,

and pupils conscientiously raise funds for charities, for example by making and selling cakes. They understand the importance of a good diet and physical exercise and the school has recently received Healthy School and Activemark awards in recognition of its good work in these areas. Pupils know about keeping themselves out of danger and say they feel completely safe in school. The good care, guidance and support they receive contribute to this confidence. There is some exemplary practice in the attention given to the needs of the most vulnerable, with very strong links with external agencies and partners.

Pupils report that the occasional problem experienced is quickly sorted out by the staff and they are confident that they would be listened to. One said, 'My class teacher sorted it out in a flash.' Not all of their parents agree, with a small group reporting that they feel that issues they have raised about the care and support for their children have not been followed up effectively. Several parents of pupils with complex needs wrote very positively about the school's support for their children. One referred to 'the fantastic support', another said, 'My only regret is that I didn't move her to this school earlier.' Procedures designed to safeguard pupils are implemented satisfactorily, although a few of the procedures for logging incidents are not always systematically recorded. Academic guidance is thorough. Almost all pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve in literacy and numeracy and teachers provide constructive feedback and positive encouragement.

The leadership has been strengthened by several recent appointments. The experienced headteacher has enabled these new leaders to fulfil their roles well, ensuring a balanced approach to promoting pupils' academic and personal development. Everyone is clear about their roles in implementing sections of the detailed improvement plan. Governance is satisfactory rather than good because, whilst governors fulfil their legal duties, they do not receive enough information from the school about its overall performance and what needs to improve and they are not sufficiently involved in reviewing the evidence. This makes it difficult for them to hold the school to account for its actions. The school aims to keep parents informed of all events but some important information goes out to parents at short notice. A small but significant minority of parents identified 'short notice' of events as a problem.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The recently appointed team leader provides inspirational leadership for the Foundation Stage team. Children move confidently around their classroom and the secure, designated outdoor areas. The teachers plan a wide range of experiences across all areas of the curriculum, in and out of doors, with a very good focus on learning through independent play. Children respond to this well, for example in the class 'garden centre' and 'lighthouse café' role-play areas, and to other experiences such as the visit to the local supermarket to buy fish. There are good plans to improve the storage of equipment to allow children more independence and greater access to equipment and resources. Children make good progress. By the end of their first year, almost all have attained standards expected for their age and a significant minority have exceeded them.

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

- Develop innovative and imaginative ways to ensure more able pupils are consistently extended and challenged.
- Ensure governors receive more frequent and clear information about all aspects of the school's performance in order to support in their roles as 'critical friends'.

- Improve the effectiveness of communications between school and parents.

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## Annex A

## 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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

5 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Greatfield Park Primary School, Cheltenham GL51 3FZ

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I enjoyed talking with groups of you, seeing some of your work and watching activities during my visit. You were very helpful in answering my questions. I am pleased you like your school and you are right when you say it is a good school. Here are some of the highlights I noticed:

- You behave well during lessons and around the school and take the time to help one another, especially if someone is feeling lonely or a bit upset.
- You make good progress with your work. This is because you try hard in lessons and your teachers make sure the activities are interesting.
- Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start and have many opportunities to play and learn in and out of doors.
- The school plans lots of special events, visits and visitors and teachers think carefully about ways to make sure there are good links between different subjects.
- You say that you feel safe in school. All the adults take good care of you.
- The headteacher and other teachers carry out regular checks on how well everything is going in school. They use this information well to decide what needs to get even better.

I have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on three things to make the school even better.

- Think of interesting ways to challenge and extend those of you who find some of your work a bit too easy.
- Make sure the school governors get all the information they need so that they can be clear about how well the school is doing and what needs to be done to make it better.
- Improve the communications between the school and your parents so that all your parents feel comfortable about how and when they find out about things and the ways they can talk through any concerns.

I am sure you will have your own ideas about further ways to improve the school and will want to talk to your teachers about these.

Yours sincerely

Martin Kerly Lead Inspector