

Ombersley Endowed First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116905
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	312441
Inspection date	5 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Rowena Onions

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Smith
Headteacher	Mari Jones
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2003
School address	Ombersley Ombersley WR9 0DR
Telephone number	01905 620384
Fax number	01905 621293

Age group	4–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average and serves the village of Ombersley and the surrounding district. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and speak English as their first language. A very small number have English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and two pupils have a statement of special educational need. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but is broadly average. The school has an Artsmark award (Gold) and Healthy School status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Ombersley is a good school where pupils achieve well overall and where they are helped to become enthusiastic and engaging young people. The headteacher provides strong, energetic leadership that has enabled staff to undertake a considerable amount of improvement work over the last two years. This has resulted in a marked upturn in standards and progress. Children in Reception make good progress in all aspects of their learning. In the rest of the school, pupils progress well in learning to read and write. Progress in mathematics has accelerated, but is currently satisfactory because pupils are not able to record their mathematics on paper as well as they can talk about it. Basic skills in English, mathematics and in information and communication technology are systematically taught and this, together with an emphasis on working together, is beginning to prepare pupils well for their future in the world of work.

The school has a warm, supportive ethos that is strongly approved of by parents and pupils. In the words of one parent, the school provides a 'friendly atmosphere for children to learn in'. Every individual is known and supported very well. Assessment procedures are very strong and are used very productively to plan an appropriate level of activity in lessons and to ensure that pupils know how to improve their work. When asked for the best thing about their school, several pupils cited the way teachers help them to make their work better, for example, commenting, 'The best thing is the teachers because they really give us advice and help us.'

Pupils' personal development is good. Great care is taken to ensure that pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe and well. Pupils feel safe in the knowledge that there is always someone to turn to. The importance of taking exercise and eating healthily is well promoted through the curriculum and through day-to-day activities. It is a lesson that is well understood by the pupils. Safety is very well addressed with, for example, older pupils taking part in risk assessments around the school. There are many ways in which pupils learn to be part of the school and wider community. They learn responsibility, for example, through understanding the need to recycle. The school council provides a valuable forum for pupils' opinions. Lately, for example, these pupils have been responsible for planning the decoration of the soon to be refurbished toilets.

Enjoyment of learning is evident and is due to the good teaching pupils receive. Teachers design lessons with a practical and varied approach and the activities planned are very successful in interesting the pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants work productively together to maximise the amount of attention each pupil can have. Pupils' behaviour is good overall. They are polite and self-confident and work and play well together.

Led by the headteacher, there is a shared desire amongst staff and governors to improve the school. Since her appointment, the headteacher has successfully implemented improvements at an impressive rate. School self-evaluation is largely accurate but has until recently been based on the checking of work by the headteacher and senior management team. The school has rightly identified a need to spread this work to include other staff. There is a will to do this which shows, together with the successful raising of standards through improvement activities, that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Reception class is good. Teaching and learning, and the curriculum, are good, promoting the good progress of the children. Their attainment by the end of Reception broadly meets expectations in all areas of learning. Children have access to a wide range of stimulating activities both indoors and outdoors. Induction procedures are very good and ensure that the children rapidly settle into school life. The headteacher and class teacher manage the provision well, especially in overcoming difficulties with accommodation to enable pupils to learn out of doors.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress in mathematics by improving pupils' ability to record their thinking on paper as well as verbally.
- Develop the role of senior teachers in monitoring, evaluating and improving their areas of responsibility.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils progress well. Very thorough tracking of the progress of individuals, groups and subjects allows the school to pick up early on any potential underachievement and to take good action to prevent this. This makes a demonstrable difference to all pupils' achievement and the impact is seen in rising standards. Additionally, it ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the very small number who have English as an additional language do well.

In 2007, Year 2 pupils attained standards in reading and writing that were above those seen nationally, representing good progress from their average attainment when they entered Year 1. Standards amongst the current Year 4 are above average in English, showing good progress from the standards they attained at the end of Year 2. Pupils throughout the school are making satisfactory progress in mathematics. Pupils show sound mental skills and ability to talk about their work in mathematics but are not as secure in explaining their methods and solutions in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Although good overall, pupils' personal development has some outstanding features, particularly in the enthusiastic way they join in with all that is offered to them. Voluntary take-up for clubs, for example, is very high. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show good knowledge of right and wrong and generally act upon this. Respect for the cultures and traditions of others has been successfully promoted in the curriculum through, for example, religious education and geography. Pupils are ready to help and support each other in class and in the playground. However, some pupils' enthusiasm occasionally carries them away and they hamper their learning by calling out answers, confusing both themselves and others.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are well planned and stimulating. Teachers try very hard to make the work they give the pupils varied and practical, and this has a direct impact on the effort pupils put in and the quality of their learning. Good use of resources, for example, bead strings in mathematics, helps pupils to visualise what they are learning. Particularly effective use is made of electronic whiteboards to clarify and enliven explanations. Pupils are not, however, always given enough teaching and practice in how to record their working in mathematics and there is some overuse of worksheets that do not encourage pupils to do this. Relationships are strong so pupils want to do well to please their teachers. Whilst teachers manage pupils well overall, they do not always fully contain some over-enthusiastic calling out. Pupils benefit from good staffing levels because teachers deploy skilled teaching assistants well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has recently been revised. Whilst revisions are not yet complete and there are some aspects such as increasing the focus on speaking and listening that staff wish to strengthen, the school has correctly identified and tackled several important areas. There is a good balance between basic skills work and creative elements, such as art and music, which add to pupils' personal development and beneficial first-hand experiences include participating in Divali celebrations and working outdoors in the school grounds. Pupils value the weeks when they focus on one subject as these enable them to 'do more exciting things'. The curriculum is fully inclusive, providing opportunities for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to make progress and develop well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The pupils are at the heart of all the school does. Individuals are supported and guided very well. Great attention is given to the all round development of each child and each is enabled to learn in a safe supportive community. Pupils with additional difficulties, be they educational, physical or social, are fully included and every effort is made to ensure that they gain from all the school offers. Target setting and opportunities for each pupil to discuss their work with their teacher mean that each is sure of what they should do to improve and has the confidence to do so. Increased action to promote attendance has resulted in a marked improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school successfully. School self-evaluation and improvement work has been securely and accurately promoted. The headteacher's focus on raising achievement and enhancing pupils' personal development is very positively reflected in improved standards and attendance. The tracking of pupils not only supports full inclusion but also enables the school to set challenging but attainable targets for the pupils. Staff fully support the headteacher and have worked hard to enable the improvements. Senior staff have been fully consulted, but

have not yet all had significant opportunities to directly check on provision in their areas of responsibility and thus to play a full part in their improvement. Governors are well informed and supportive and this enables them to play their part in ensuring that the school runs well and meets its statutory responsibilities. Overall, parents are highly supportive of the school and consider that it is doing well by their children. A small number identified that they would like more information about their child's progress. The inspectors found that staff provide parents with good information and are available to provide more when requested.

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

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?	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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 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	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

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

Mr Wakeman and I really enjoyed our visit to your school and would like to thank you for the friendly way in which you talked to us. We think that your school is a good one and that it is getting better all the time. This letter is to tell you what we found.

- You are making good progress in learning to read and write but you could be making more progress in maths.
- Your headteacher, teachers, teaching assistants and governors are working hard to make your school better and better.
- Teachers are very good at helping you to know how to improve your work.
- You mostly behave well and you know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe.
- You get on well with your teachers, who try to make your lessons interesting and fun.
- The adults in the school take very good care of you.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to do two things to help make your school better.

- Help you to make faster progress in your maths.
- Share some of the jobs that the headteacher is doing with some of the other teachers.

We are very glad that you like your school and think you are right to do so. We think that you could help your teachers to make your school even better by working really hard with your maths.



6 December 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Ombersley Endowed First School, Ombersley WR9 0DR

Mr Wakeman and I really enjoyed our visit to your school and would like to thank you for the friendly way in which you talked to us. We think that your school is a good one and that it is getting better all the time. This letter is to tell you what we found.

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- Teachers are very good at helping you to know how to improve your work.
- You mostly behave well and you know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe.
- You get on well with your teachers, who try to make your lessons interesting and fun.
- The adults in the school take very good care of you.

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- Share some of the jobs that the headteacher is doing with some of the other teachers.

We are very glad that you like your school and think you are right to do so. We think that you could help your teachers to make your school even better by working really hard with your maths.

Best wishes

Rowena Onions
Lead inspector