

# Whitchurch CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116919
<b>Local Authority</b>	Herefordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312444
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 April 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Mankelow

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	100
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Judith Pyatt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann Pritchard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2005
<b>School address</b>	Whitchurch Ross-on-Wye HR9 6DA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01600 890571
<b>Fax number</b>	01600 890571

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion that enters the school in year groups other than Reception is also 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

Whitchurch is a good school. A notable strength is the excellent pastoral care that is provided by all adults. This results in pupils feeling entirely safe at school and being extremely happy to approach an adult if they have any concerns. Those who would prefer an adult to come to them leave a confidential message in the 'trusted adult' box, knowing that they will be respected and approached sensitively. Another strength is the outstanding contribution that pupils make to the school and local communities. This is very much appreciated by parents, one typically commenting, 'The school provides a focal point for the whole village.' At a recent 'community day' local residents were invited to identify adult learning opportunities that they would like and this has resulted in classes being planned for Pilates and the use of digital cameras. Parents also appreciate the warm welcome and the good induction procedures for pupils when they join the school in Reception or in other year groups. A typical comment from a new parent was, 'We have been made to feel very welcome and the children settled straight away.' Children's skills when they enter Reception vary from year to year but are usually broadly in line with those expected for their age. From their individual starting points pupils make good progress as they move through the school and generally reach above average standards by the time they leave. This is because the teaching is good. Teaching is characterised by good relationships, which result in pupils having good attitudes to their work. Lessons generally move at a brisk pace and work is usually interesting and challenging for pupils of all abilities. However, in a minority of lessons, these strengths are not seen and in these cases, pupils do not make as much progress as they should, especially those with the potential to reach levels above those expected. Assessment procedures are thorough and the results are well recorded, enabling pupils' progress to be accurately tracked. This tracking is used well to identify pupils at risk of underachievement. Appropriate support is then given which ensures that all make good progress. Teachers mark work regularly and marking frequently relates to the 'success criteria' for the lesson so pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do next in order to improve. However, this is not consistent in all classes and pupils' individual targets are not always specific enough for them to know precisely what they need to do next. The good curriculum covers all statutory requirements. There is a wide range of wellattended extra-curricular clubs that make a significant contribution to pupils' good social development and their adoption of good healthy lifestyles. Many pupils view the clubs as the best thing about their school and are proud to be members of the numerous sporting teams. The leadership and management of the school are good. Senior leaders are inspirational. As a result, all staff are committed to achieving the challenging targets that are expressed in the school's ambitious development plan. All teachers are involved in monitoring how well the school is doing and staff have an accurate understanding of what is good and what needs to be better. Governance is satisfactory and improving.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children in Reception are taught alongside Year 1 pupils each morning and they are joined by Year 2 pupils in the afternoon. Good management ensures that appropriate curriculum requirements are met for this range of age groups. Reception children have a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities so they make good progress. However, on occasions, opportunities are missed for adults to intervene and ask appropriate questions, so children's learning is not developed to the fullest extent. Interesting activities are provided, so

children enjoy coming to school and quickly develop positive attitudes to learning, which they maintain throughout the school. During the inspection, children were highly stimulated by the imitation mini beasts provided for an activity related to their mathematical development. They were also very keen to explain about the role-play area that was set up as a camping corner to support their development in knowledge and understanding of the world, related to a topic about explorers.

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

- Ensure that all lessons move at a brisk pace and that work is always stimulating and challenging, especially for the most able pupils.
- Ensure that all pupils' work is marked consistently well and that their individual targets are always specific enough for them to know clearly what they need to do to move to the next level of attainment.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

As cohorts are relatively small and attainment on entry varies significantly from year to year, it is impossible to make meaningful year-on-year comparisons of attainment in national tests and assessments. However, most pupils make good progress, from the time they start in the Reception class to the time they leave. Children in the current Reception class entered with skills that were broadly in line with those expected and they are now a little above average as they head towards Year 1. Standards in the current Years 2 and 6 are above average and this represents good progress from when they entered school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress because their needs are identified early and they are well supported, in particular by a team of talented teaching assistants. When pupils enter the school in year groups other than Reception, their needs are assessed on admission and appropriate provision is made to meet them. These pupils make good progress but in some year groups a high proportion of new entrants have additional learning needs which result in lower overall standards.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' overall personal development is good. They behave well and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is above average. Pupils know that eating a healthy diet and taking regular exercise is necessary in order to lead a healthy lifestyle. One also commented, 'and you need a good night's sleep.' Members of the school council take forward suggestions from class councils and have a purposeful role in organising school events. For example, they organised a 'comedy day' which contributed effectively to their social development by drawing pupils together from Reception to Year 6 in their 'house groups'. Pupils develop into mature, confident, polite young people by the time they reach Year 6. In younger years, pupils eagerly take on monitoring roles to ensure the classrooms are safe, orderly and tidy but as one Year 6 boy said, 'In our class we don't need monitors because we just don't leave things lying around!' An inspirational assembly during the inspection made a very effective contribution to pupils' spiritual development, leaving pupils reflecting on what they would ask for if just one wish could be granted. Pupils have a good understanding of the beliefs of a variety of cultures but their understanding of Britain as a diverse society is less well developed. Above average standards in literacy, numeracy,

information and communication technology skills, and the ability to work together collaboratively mean that pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers use their good subject knowledge in lessons to ensure that explanations are clear and well understood. Teachers make it clear at the beginning of lessons what the pupils should be learning and make regular checks during lessons to ensure that the learning intentions are being achieved. At the end of lessons, pupils frequently assess for themselves whether they have achieved what was intended and the results of such assessments are used to plan future lessons. Lessons are usually well planned with work that is accurately matched to pupils' prior learning and that captures their imagination well. An example of this was seen in an outstanding Year 6 mathematics lesson involving problem solving related to planning a football tournament. Occasionally, these strengths are not apparent and a few lessons do not move at a sufficiently brisk pace so some pupils, particularly the more able, make less progress than they could.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school's curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE), including values education contributes well to pupils' good personal development. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 very much enjoy Wednesday afternoons when they receive effective specialist teaching in PSHE, music and French. Visits to places of interest and visitors to the school are used well to enrich the curriculum. For example, pupils on the learning council told inspectors how much they learned about Ugandan culture from the question and answer session they had with the headteacher from their link school in that country. Some opportunities are provided to link work in different subjects, but the school recognises the need to develop this further in order to make work even more interesting.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

The school's strong emphasis on health and safety and excellent pastoral care results in pupils' adopting excellent safe practices. Current government requirements for safeguarding are fully met. Bullying is extremely rare and pupils say that it is well managed if it does occur. Challenging whole-school and end-of-year targets are set and progress towards meeting them is well monitored. However, pupils' individual, shorter-term targets are not detailed enough in some classes to ensure that pupils know precisely what they need to do next to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

#### **Grade: 2**

A significant strength in the leadership of the school is the team spirit fostered by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. All teachers make a genuine contribution to the school's self-evaluation which leads to the construction of the development plan. As a result, the school is well placed to improve further. There are good links with outside agencies, for example the

educational psychology service, which are used well to support pupils with additional learning needs. Links with local high schools are particularly strong and have led to increased resources for information and communication technology and, consequently, higher attainment in the subject. Governance is satisfactory and improving. Following recent training from the local authority governors now have a fuller understanding of pupils' achievement and they hold the school to account for this.

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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	1
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	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?	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

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

28 April 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Whitchurch CE Primary School, Whitchurch, HR9 6DA

You may remember that I visited your school a few days ago with another inspector. Thank you very much for telling us all about your school and for making us feel so welcome. I am writing now to tell you what we found. You and your parents believe that you go to a good school and we agree with you. The two things that impressed us most were the excellent way the adults look after you and the outstanding contribution that you make to the way your school runs and to the local community. You all feel very safe and secure at school and you know that adults listen carefully if you have any worries and they will come and talk to you if you put a note in the 'trusted adult' box. Your school council is very good at organising events and helps you to raise lots of money for charities. You all make good progress in your work because you are taught well. In most lessons you are given work that is interesting and at the right level. One of you told us, 'The work is just right and takes us out of our comfort zone.' Most of you reach standards that are better than most 11-year-olds by the time you move on to your high school. There are a couple of things that we have asked your teachers to do even better. First, we have asked them to make sure that all lessons are interesting and challenging and make you work quickly. Second, we have asked them to make sure that your targets tell you exactly what you need to do to make your work better. You can help your teachers a lot by continuing to behave well and work hard. I wish you all the very best for the future. Yours sincerely David Mankelow Lead inspector

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You can help your teachers a lot by continuing to behave well and work hard.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Mankelow  
Lead inspector