

# Witney Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123018
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314457
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Saunders

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	204
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Margaret Thompson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jill Meyer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2004
<b>School address</b>	Hailey Road Witney OX28 1HL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01993 702388
<b>Fax number</b>	01993 705014

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized school on the town's outskirts. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with national figures, although higher in some year groups. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minorities or with English as an additional language is low but increasing. The number of pupils with moderate learning difficulties is broadly average for a school of this size. The school has been recognised in the Healthy Oxfordshire Schools Award Scheme and has the Active Sportsmark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, where pupils reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Teachers know the pupils well and care a great deal for them, which leads to good personal development for the pupils. However, on occasions teachers have insufficiently high expectations of pupils, particularly those who are more able. This results in pupils being insufficiently challenged in lessons. Consequently, teaching and learning are currently satisfactory.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Foundation Stage with capabilities broadly in line with the level expected for their age and make sound progress to reach most of the goals set for children of that age. This rate of progress continues in Key Stages 1 and 2. Results in Key Stage 2 national tests have been erratic in recent years, particularly in English where they were below average. Work scrutiny shows an improving picture and standards are now broadly average, although still lower in English than mathematics and science. Pupils who find learning more difficult are suitably supported by the school and make satisfactory progress.

Pupils are friendly and chat confidently to adults. They enjoy using the spacious grounds and good resources outside of lessons. Most pupils enjoy learning, behave well and are happy to come to school. They are caring and like taking on responsibilities. They know well about how to stay healthy and keep themselves safe. Most parents feel that the school takes good care of their children and that the teachers are approachable and know the children well. Whilst some parents wrote that there was good communication from the school, a few felt that more could be done. However, the school has provided effective opportunities for this, such as the coffee mornings, curriculum evenings, surveys and the well regarded website.

The academic support and guidance pupils receive is satisfactory. There are inconsistencies in the degree to which teachers give pupils specific advice in marking and about how they can improve their work during lessons; where this happens the progress of pupils slows.

The curriculum is satisfactory. The new approach to planning work around topics is working well, such as when pupils are motivated by a visit to a Victorian farm. This helps pupils to see the relevance of their learning. Good links with the secondary school help to ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of their education.

Senior leaders have developed effective systems to encourage good behaviour. Pupils are responding well to the recently introduced privilege system. The school has established a good range of partnerships outside the school that benefit learners, such as businesses, churches and representatives of other faiths. Governors are supportive and have been particularly successful in managing budgetary issues. The track record of improvement, such as the development of writing, the improvement of behaviour, and the more effective use of pupil progress tracking systems indicates a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

There are good systems in place for children starting school that take into account the needs of individuals. Children are well cared for, and adults place importance on developing social skills. Consequently they make good progress in their personal development. Children behave well, and are keen to get involved. However, some do not access the full range of tasks. This is because they are not always encouraged to show their own initiative when making decisions

about what they will do. Planning takes into account all the areas of learning, often around a topic such as 'Journeys'. Staff make good use of the information they gather on children's abilities to help them plan appropriately challenging tasks. Links between Foundation Stage and Year 1 staff are developing, especially for meeting the needs of more able children.

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

- Raise standards, particularly for English in Key Stage 2, and for high attaining pupils.
- Make sure teaching is consistently good by raising expectations the staff have of pupils, particularly the more able.
- Ensure that teachers give clear guidance to pupils about what they need to do to reach the next level of their learning.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory but with areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards are broadly average at the end of key stages 1 and 2. At Key Stage 1 the dip in standards in mathematics in previous years has been successfully addressed. Similarly, the focus on providing good opportunities for writing has helped improve standards.

Standards in English were below average at Key Stage 2 in national tests in 2007. However, as a consequence of the school focusing on more accurate assessment through the year, standards are now improving and are broadly average, although not as strong as in mathematics and science. In mathematics and science, over a quarter of pupils reached the highest standards in 2007. In English fewer pupils reach the higher levels than might be expected at Key Stage 2. There are early signs that this is also improving because teachers now use assessment data more appropriately to set work that challenges these pupils.

Those supporting pupils with English as an additional language are well trained and provide good support, and consequently these pupils make better progress than their peers.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because they are mindful of the needs and beliefs of other people. Pupils enjoy coming to school and work together responsibly. Attendance has improved and is now in line with national figures. They value their friends and are keen to be involved with what the school offers, as shown by the number of pupils enthusiastically involved in the clubs and sports. Behaviour is good, although occasionally poor behaviour by a few can disrupt learning. However, most pupils are keen to earn their bronze, silver or gold badges as they climb the rungs of the 'Achievement and behaviour ladder'. Pupils focus well on their work and respond enthusiastically to a variety of tasks. They know who they can talk to if they are worried and say that any incidents are usually sorted out quickly and sensitively. Pupils make a good contribution to the community, and school council members say they feel valued and have helped to improve playground facilities. Pupils care for others and participate in raising funds for charity. The standard of basic skills along with some good opportunities to run school shops, helps prepare pupils satisfactorily for their future lives.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The new topic approach is helping to ensure lessons are fun and enables pupils to understand why they need to develop particular skills. As a result, pupils have good attitudes to learning. In some lessons, teachers do not have sufficiently high enough expectations of pupils' work. In particular, the higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in some lessons and their progress slows. In the best lessons, such as some mathematics lessons, pupils were encouraged to choose questions that would be challenging for them and this helped them to work at a suitable level. Occasionally, introductions are too long and some pupils become restless. Lessons include good opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and groups. Teaching assistants, working closely with teachers, effectively support pupils with moderate learning difficulties and those with disabilities.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

Provision for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. The curriculum includes an increasing range of contexts that are engaging to particular groups, such as for boys' writing. In mathematics older pupils are taught in groups of similar abilities so that they receive work that is more closely tailored to their needs. Use is made of the computer suite for further developing pupils' mathematical skills and understanding. However, provision for the development of information, communication and technology skills in other subjects is not as good. Practical activities add to pupils' enjoyment, encouraging them to work together and share ideas. The creative approach to curriculum planning, and improving links across subjects is helping to put the development of skills into context. This is not yet consistent. The personal, social and health education programme promotes a healthy lifestyle, which influences the choices pupils make. Outside expertise and links with other schools and teachers, as well as residential trips, further extend experiences available to pupils and have a positive effect on personal development.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

The school offers a good level of pastoral care and support to its pupils. Regular health and safety checks ensure pupils remain safe. However, academic guidance is only satisfactory. Recently introduced tracking systems help the school identify those pupils who require additional support. Numeracy and literacy targets have been introduced. However, these are not always linked to pupils' current work, are sometimes insufficiently challenging, particularly for higher attainers, and are not yet sufficiently focused to help pupils know how to improve. In a bid to involve pupils more actively in their learning, the school is encouraging pupils to review their own and each other's work and to evaluate their levels of success. The school identifies pupils with specific gifts and talents and is moving forward in establishing ways to best develop their capabilities.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Senior leaders have worked effectively with the local authority, to identify and tackle many of the most appropriate issues to help pupils reach higher standards. This has ensured that the recent fall in English standards is being addressed. However, they have not yet ensured that all pupils are sufficiently challenged. Subject coordinators provide helpful analysis that leads to strategic decisions. For example, through increasing the opportunities to write for a greater variety of purposes, the standards of pupils' writing has improved. They are also an effective part of the evaluation process, although the lack of a deputy head has put an additional burden on all managers. This situation is being addressed. The governing body has recently been strengthened and fulfils its statutory duties; governance is satisfactory and improving. They provide suitable challenge alongside their loyal support, with a clear focus on raising standards further.

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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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### 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	3
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	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<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>	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

26 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Witney Community Primary School, Witney, OX28 1HL

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave your inspectors when we visited your school. We enjoyed chatting to so many of you, and having a quick go at handstands with a few of you. What a fantastic playground you have, with so much space to do different things!

Your school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. This means that it does some things well but that there are also some things it could do better. In particular the school looks after you well and helps you to grow into confident young people. Also, we think that your school makes good use of people from outside to help you develop. You know a lot about how to stay healthy, and almost all of you are very well behaved in lessons; you like the badges and rewards you can earn this way. Many of you enjoy taking care of one another, particularly looking after the younger pupils. You work hard in lessons and enjoy the work you are given. We also feel that the school cares well for you. Those of you learning English as a second language do particularly well because you receive some good support from teaching assistants.

Your teachers are helping many of you to make the progress you should. However, some of you, particularly the older pupils and those of you who find learning easier, could do even better and reach higher standards. We have asked the school to make sure that the work you do is challenging, so you will have to stretch yourselves a bit more. We also think that your targets should show you more clearly how you can improve. You can help by making sure you work towards your targets in each piece of work.

Most of all you should continue to enjoy learning, as you said you do, and keep working together to help make your school the best it can be.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Saunders

Lead Inspector