

Great Alne Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125511
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315253
Inspection date	24 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	110
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	10
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Don Hannah
Headteacher	Lesley Hendrie
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Road Great Alne Alcester B49 6HQ
Telephone number	01789 488247
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils come to this small primary school from the village of Great Alne and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The school has a below average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This satisfactory school provides a calm and happy environment for its pupils. The good curriculum contributes well to pupils' thorough enjoyment of school and helps them to behave exceptionally well. Children make a good start to their education in the Reception Year in the small and welcoming class, and reach above average standards. Teaching between Years 1 and 6 is satisfactory. There are some good features to the teaching in these year groups and most pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 6, standards remain above average. Pupils' standards and progress are best in English. In mathematics and science, work is not matched closely enough to pupils' differing needs and, when this happens, some pupils are less involved in lessons. In addition, teachers do not consistently make clear through marking how pupils could improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they receive good support to help them reach their individual targets.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being are evident in their good attendance, healthy lifestyles and their great enthusiasm for school. They develop good moral values and are particularly polite and friendly. They make a valuable contribution to the community through the school council and by caring for others. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education and later life because they have good basic skills and are confident and responsible. Throughout the school, teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) well to make learning interesting. For example, in Years 5 and 6, the teacher used the interactive whiteboard well to show pupils how to carry out multiplication of large numbers. Valuable additional activities such as clubs, visitors and visits boost the pupils' enjoyment of school and help them to learn, for example, how to stay safe. The curriculum promotes the creative arts particularly well.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Members of staff are caring and support pupils' pastoral needs well. Teachers carry out frequent assessments to monitor pupils' progress but do not always use this information to ensure that pupils build on what they have already learnt.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher ensures that pupils' well-being is given a high priority and there is a strong commitment to raising standards. Leaders know how to improve the school and recent initiatives are already speeding up the rate of pupils' progress, especially in writing. The school is demonstrating that it has the necessary capacity to improve further. However, subject leaders recognise the need to increase their involvement in monitoring teaching and learning so that the pace of improvement can be accelerated. Leaders already analyse information on pupils' progress frequently so that they can adapt the curriculum to strengthen areas of weakness.

There is a good partnership between home and school. Most parents are very pleased that their children come to this friendly school. They make positive comments such as, 'Children enjoy their time in school and are offered relevant activities to extend their learning out of school' and 'Great Alne Primary School is a caring and supportive learning place'. These comments reflect what the school is already doing really well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

There is good provision for children in the EYFS. Children achieve well because teaching is good and their welfare and care are a high priority. Teachers plan exciting activities that motivate children and encourage them to do their best. Consequently, whilst most children start school working at the levels typically expected for their age, standards rise to above average by the start of Year 1. Children make especially good progress in learning letter sounds due to the positive way that members of staff promote them.

Children's personal development is good. They settle into school life remarkably quickly and develop very positive attitudes towards learning. They work together well and start to make sensible choices about where they would like to work and what activities they would like to try out. Good leadership and management ensure that provision is frequently reviewed and action taken as needed. Leaders are successfully increasing the use of data to measure progress over time so that areas for development are identified quickly. The school is working on extending outdoor provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that work in mathematics and science is always closely matched to pupils' differing needs and involves them fully in their learning.
- Make sure that teachers' marking shows pupils how they can improve their work.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders in monitoring teaching and learning.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children achieve well in the Reception class and their standards are above average when they start in Year 1. Most pupils make satisfactory progress between Years 1 and 6 and maintain above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in speaking, listening and learning to read because teachers and helpers promote these skills well and encourage parents to help their children at home. Recent strategies to raise standards in writing are successful, and standards have risen, although older pupils do not consistently do their best handwriting. Progress is slower in mathematics and science because teachers do not always meet pupils' differing needs closely enough in these subjects. Good support for pupils with learning difficulties enables them to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave very well and greatly enjoy school. One pupil spoke for many in saying, 'It's a great school, not too small and not too big.' Pupils are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life and they support each other well. They work hard in lessons and are keen to do their best, although some older pupils do not take enough care with their handwriting. Rates of attendance

are above average. They have been improving due to a successful focus by the school on discouraging term-times holidays.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils are confident, articulate and polite. They take responsibility willingly and make a good contribution to the community. The way that pupils work together to prepare for their own assemblies, when they discuss their interests and moral themes, is particularly impressive. The school council has a positive influence on school life. Councillors manage their budget wisely. For example, they purchased and displayed posters to promote good behaviour. Pupils are pleased that teachers respond to their views so well. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils gain a good knowledge of their own culture through work in the creative arts, but their understanding of other cultures is less well developed.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They agree that only fruit should be allowed at playtimes and explain clearly why it is important to follow this rule. Activities such as visits from the emergency services and road safety quizzes help to develop pupils' awareness of how to stay safe. Cycling proficiency lessons have been particularly popular with older pupils, with one commenting that 'it helped me to overcome my fears'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There are good features to teaching across the school. Teachers get on well with pupils and use praise effectively to boost self-esteem. Reward systems promote good behaviour very effectively. Teachers successfully encourage positive attitudes towards learning by making work interesting, for example by using interactive whiteboards to introduce new skills. Teachers and skilled teaching assistants give pupils with learning difficulties good support, especially in literacy, helping to ensure that they make good progress.

Teachers use questioning well to encourage discussion and this ensures that speaking and listening improve quickly. Teachers plan in detail, but work is not always at the right level for all pupils in mathematics and science. When this happens work is too easy or too hard for some pupils, they become less involved in the lesson and the pace of learning slows. Teachers are conscientious about marking work. There is some good practice but not consistently across the school. As a result, there are missed opportunities to move learning on.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of interesting experiences, helping them to enjoy school very much. Pupils' creativity is promoted well, especially through art and music. The use of ICT to support learning is strong across the school, and teachers are working hard to develop other links between subjects so that work responds even more closely to pupils' interests and always builds on their different starting points. The curriculum includes a successful focus on teaching pupils how to stay safe and healthy and this is supported well by links with the local community and outside agencies.

A good range of activities additional to daily lessons enriches the curriculum and enhances learning. Pupils particularly enjoy visits and workshops where they learn new skills such as how

to find out about the past from historical artefacts. They are also very pleased that they are able to learn French as it helps them when they move to their secondary school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils feel safe and secure because they are well looked after. One pupil expressed the views of others by saying, 'Everyone has a best friend.' Pupils know that adults at the school will help them if they have a worry and they find all adults to be 'kind and caring'. The school works well with parents and outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being. Good induction arrangements ensure that there is a smooth start when children join the Reception class.

Academic guidance and support are satisfactory. The school has thorough systems for assessing learning but this information is not always used sharply enough to plan work that builds on pupils' starting points. The use of target setting to help pupils understand how to improve their work is developing. Teachers set pupils with learning difficulties clear targets for improvement and support them well, helping them to make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and other subject leaders are committed to increasing pupils' progress and have a shared understanding of what they should do next. The school's systems for self-evaluation are satisfactory, although evaluations on school effectiveness are slightly overgenerous. The headteacher has a heavy workload and governors and subject leaders are keen to take a more active part. Subject leaders recognise that their involvement in monitoring teaching and learning is not strong. The school shows that it has a sound capacity to improve because it has increased progress in writing and has started to take the right action to improve progress in mathematics and science. Leaders use the clear system for tracking pupils' progress to identify groups of pupils needing additional support and to provide intervention as needed. The school's contribution towards community cohesion is satisfactory. Leaders are extending opportunities for pupils to increase their knowledge of life in multicultural Britain.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and knowledgeable about the school and are becoming more proactive in holding the school to account for its actions.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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 learners' needs?	3
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?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

25 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Great Alne Primary School, Alcester, B49 6HQ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for sharing your work with us. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

- Here are some points about your school
- You make satisfactory progress during your time at the school.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress, especially in learning letter sounds.
- You behave exceptionally well and enjoy school very much.
- You take responsibility well. The school council is doing a good job in helping to make the school even better.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers work hard to make learning fun by using ICT well.
- You study a good range of topics, and benefit from interesting visits, visitors and clubs.
- The adults in the school care for you well and help you when you are finding your work hard.
- Your headteacher and other leaders know how to make your school even better.
- What we have asked your school to do now
- Plan work in mathematics and science that is neither too hard nor too easy so that you are all fully involved in all lessons.
- Ensure that teachers' marking shows you how you can improve your work.
- Help teachers who look after subjects to check that you are learning quickly in class.
- What you can do to help your teachers
- Make sure that you always take care with your handwriting.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We are glad that you enjoy coming to this happy school and wish you well for the future.

■ Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge Lead inspector