

Great Budworth CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111248
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	325327
Inspection dates	21–22 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Graham Martin

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	45
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Southern
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Cottam Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane Great Budworth Northwich Cheshire CW9 6HQ

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	21–22 January 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This village school is much smaller than average. Most pupils are White British: a very small number are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. A smaller than average number of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is through a Reception class which shares a classroom with the Year 1 and 2 children. The school does not have a substantive headteacher but a consultant headteacher who leads the school on a part-time basis. The school holds the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, an Activemark and the local authority's Healthy Schools Award. There is out of school childcare provision on site, which is run by a private provider and did not form part of this inspection.

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 is improving rapidly under strong guidance and leadership. Good involvement from governors and staff support this improvement well. The school has a particular strength in the very good quality of the enrichment opportunities pupils experience from visits and visitors, which enhances their learning well. Pupils achieve well overall. Achievement in English and science has improved recently in Key Stage 2 and standards in these subjects are above average. Standards in mathematics are also improving but more slowly because pupils' achievement is satisfactory in this subject. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards of writing are above average but in Key Stage 1 the work to improve writing skills has not yet had enough impact on standards.

Pupils behave well. They get along well with their school friends and the adults in school. Pupils say that their school has improved quickly, agreeing with the views their parents express. Pupils' listening skills have improved since the last inspection. They are now attentive in lessons and their good enjoyment of learning stems from their positive attitudes. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils make good contributions to their school, village and the wider communities, frequently receiving complimentary letters from organisations and associations they have helped. They have a good awareness of how to keep safe, such as making their own assessments of risk before going on any visits. They appreciate the value of a healthy lifestyle, understanding the importance of good nutrition and healthy exercise. They are proud that their good health and fitness helps to produce successes in local friendly sports competitions that match, and sometimes exceed, those of larger schools.

Teaching and learning are mostly good. Teachers plan and prepare interesting learning activities and provide lessons that are matched well to the widely varying abilities and ages of pupils in each class. Pupils' work is usually marked well to guide them towards achieving their learning targets. However, some follow-up marking of later work does not always reinforce the advice given previously, so that some pupils repeat mistakes rather than sustain their improvements.

The school provides pupils with good opportunities for learning. It enriches pupils' learning exceptionally well by providing workshop activities, day and residential visits of high quality. These visits, such as to an outdoor adventure activities centre and to theatres in major cities, broaden pupils' understanding of the world and add much to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are well cared for. Teachers and their assistants have a good knowledge of the pupils' emotional and social needs from their close contact with families. Parents and carers acknowledge that their children are well cared for and that school staff will readily respond to any concerns and deal with them considerately and sensitively.

Leadership is good and has a significant impact on improvement. Governors have improved their influence on the school since the last inspection and it is now very effective. School leaders and governors share the vision and aspirations for school improvement and work together well to achieve it. They clearly identify any weaknesses and take firm and prompt action to enhance provision, such as that to improve teaching and learning and to enrich the curriculum as seen in the school's external awards. Positive links between the school and its local partners, frequently involving pupils in decision making, promote good community cohesion. The school has established good partnerships to support its rapid improvement, such as the one with the local authority that is helping to raise standards in mathematics. All this is lifting expectations

of what the school can achieve, giving it good capacity to improve further. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

On entry to the Reception class, children's skills vary widely from year to year, although overall are similar to those typical for their age. Children achieve well in the Reception year from their individual starting points and as a result they are well prepared for Year 1. Good leadership and management of the EYFS ensure that the children's welfare needs are well met. Parents comment how quickly their children learn routines and how well their children enjoy learning with, and from, the older children in the class. Good checks on children's learning ensure that they are moved on with their key language and number skills at appropriate times. The good quality of teaching provides well for the particular needs of the Reception children; these are well known from visits to their homes and the induction visits they make before starting school. Because of this, the children settle quickly. The classroom is organised very effectively and activities are carefully planned and managed so that the children learn well. A strength in the curriculum is that the challenge to provide good outdoor learning opportunities is well met. Outdoor learning is well planned into daily routines. Steps have been taken to improve opportunities for creative development but this aspect is not as enriched as others. As a result, children's learning in this area is satisfactory rather than good. To develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the world staff take full advantage of the wider amenities available in the community, such as their historic village and the nearby Marbury Country Park.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement and raise standards in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- Raise standards in writing in Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that children in the EYFS have consistently good opportunities for their creative development.
- Ensure that teachers' marking consistently reinforces and sustains improvements in pupils' learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Because each year group has very small numbers, comparisons of test and assessment results with national statistics need to be treated with caution. Importantly, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, achieve well from their starting points. Achievement has improved recently in many areas, although the achievement of Key Stage 1 pupils in writing and of Key Stage 2 pupils in mathematics does not yet enable pupils to attain highly. The school's data show that standards are broadly average overall at Key Stage 1 and pupils achieve well in reading and mathematics. Their overall achievement in writing is satisfactory as some pupils do not use their grammar and vocabulary skills well enough to attain more highly. Standards in English and science by the end of Key Stage 2 are above average, the result of effective leadership that focuses on ensuring all pupils achieve as well as they should. However, this impact has not yet been seen in pupils' mathematical achievement at Key Stage 2, where problem-solving skills are not secure. In Key Stage 2, achievement in writing accelerates because writing activities are linked closely to pupils' interests. Pupils attain standards which are above average in English and science and

broadly average in mathematics, as confirmed by the school's own data and from the end of Year 6 provisional national test results in 2008.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and of fair play. They are constructive in their relationships with each other and with adults and they are polite and well mannered. Extensive extra-curricular opportunities make a strong contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is good. Pupils take responsibility seriously, such as when those who are 'buddies' teach younger pupils how to have good manners and eat their meals properly. The school council works well to establish strong links with the local community, such as when funds are raised in aid of local charities. Dance performances in church celebrate the good quality of creative learning that goes on in school. Letters of compliment from many local individuals and organisations show how well the community values the contribution pupils make to village life, including the work older pupils did to assist school governors in measuring the area of the school for an evaluation of the building's amenities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is mostly of good quality. Teachers have acted very well on the support and guidance provided from leaders' evaluations of their lessons. This has led to better teaching and learning in all subjects, although there remain a few incidences of satisfactory teaching, most often reflected in inconsistent marking of, for example, English grammar. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and promote good learning. Teaching assistants add to this learning well by providing good support for pupils who sometimes find learning difficult. Lessons are carefully prepared and managed to meet the learning needs of the wide range of age and ability in classes. Consequently, pupils learn well because activities are matched closely to their skills, interests and learning needs. The result is that, in the great majority of lessons, progress is good. In some mathematics lessons, however, pupils do not always fully understand how to interpret a problem as a number calculation, which hinders their mathematical achievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is exceptionally good provision to enrich pupils' learning and educational experience that adds value to how well the school promotes the key skills of English and, increasingly, mathematics. Pupils benefit greatly from workshops, visits and visitors that enhance their learning. Visits to theatres in large cities broaden pupils' appreciation of the wider world and their understanding of the diversity of cultures. Explorations of the local countryside to discover and map the source of a river enhanced pupils' understanding of local geography, as did their survey of traffic flow and parking amenities in their village. Activities, such as a residential adventure activities visit, promote pupils' personal and social development well, establishing self-confidence, strengthening relationships between them and their teachers and developing mutual trust. Pupils work well together in the mixed-age classes. They benefit from resources and teaching that support their individual learning needs. There are significant strengths in

the curriculum but, overall, it is judged good because there is still more to be done to promote better learning in writing at Key Stage 1 and mathematics at Key Stage 2.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents have well placed trust in the school's provision for their children's care. Pupils support this view, commenting that they are happy in school and that they have full confidence in their teachers' abilities to help them if they feel troubled by anything. The school's welcoming atmosphere and good level of care for individuals by staff mean that pupils feel safe and secure. Procedures for safeguarding meet requirements. The school emphasises the importance of caring for each other, and this is seen frequently in the positive, trusting relationships among the pupils and between them and the adults who help them. Inconsistent marking by some teachers does not always reinforce the guidance previously given to pupils on how to sustain improvements to their work. This leads to grammatical errors in writing being repeated, for example, and hinders pupils' progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The excellent guidance provided by the headteacher has resulted in rapid improvement to many aspects of the school's work. This includes pupils' achievement in most areas and their good understanding of how to contribute positively to the community at local and international levels. The school promotes equality well and ensures that pupils appreciate cultural diversity and richness. There is good team work and staff are collectively committed to the headteacher's high aspirations for the school. They are well supported by a governing body that has strengthened the impact of its work to make it more effective than at the time of the last inspection. The school took good steps to make a careful evaluation of its work recently, taking account of the views of staff, governors and parents. This led to effective action to remedy identified weaknesses and raise standards. Recent examples include improvements to teaching and the enrichment of learning that promotes greater enjoyment among pupils, thus raising standards. The focus on raising standards in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and writing in Key Stage 1 continues. The momentum of change is being sustained well by staff and governors, giving the school good capacity to continue its improvement.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	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/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	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 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

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	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

Thank you for your welcome when I came to inspect Great Budworth School recently. I enjoyed having discussions with you in lessons, at lunchtime and in the meeting with the school council. The things you told me helped me to judge how good your school is. You told me that your school has improved a lot recently. I agree with you that you have a good school that is improving well.

You have very good opportunities to learn from exciting visits, interesting visitors and the good work you do in partnership with the community. You all get along well together and the older children take good care of the younger ones. You are better at listening and learning than you were when the school was last inspected, which is good. You are well cared for at school. This together with the good leadership and teaching helps you to do well in English and science, which means you do better in your tests than most children your age.

I have asked your teachers to improve a few things to make your school better still. This is what I have asked them to do:

- make sure that you reach higher standards in mathematics in Key Stage 2
- help you to do better in writing in Key Stage 1
- help the Reception children to use and develop their artistic, creative and imaginative skills
- when they mark your work, to tell you when you are repeating the same mistakes!

Thank you again for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school. I am sure that you will keep trying hard with your learning. You can help by making sure that you follow the advice your teachers give you to help you reach your learning targets, so best wishes for the future.