

West Felton CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123512
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	327928
Inspection date	26 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Brian Holmes

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)	88
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	Samantha Bray
Headteacher	Nicola Maddocks
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Road West Felton Oswestry SY11 4JR
Telephone number	01691 610388
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

West Felton C of E is a smaller than average, voluntary controlled primary school with an Early Years Foundation Stage for Reception-aged children in a mixed-age class for Reception and Year 1 children. There is also a privately run pre-school on the same site as the school. Most pupils are from White British families. The number of learners with difficulties and/or disabilities is above average.

The school has gained the Healthy School Award and the Artsmark and holds the Anti-Bullying Charter.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good education. The provision for pupils' pastoral care and support is a strength and makes a strong contribution to their good personal development and well-being. The school has good links with other schools and local agencies to support pupils' well-being, for example, with the local church. Parents appreciate the 'friendliness and approachability' of the staff and the levels of care provided for their children. Both parents and pupils see the school as a safe and happy place. One pupil, typical of many, commented, 'We have happy children here and happy children make a happy school.'

From the good start they make in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils achieve well and reach standards which are above average by the end of Year 6. Standards are higher in English than they are in mathematics and science. Standards in mathematics and science have improved, with the number of pupils reaching the expected level by Year 6 above average, but more pupils reach higher levels in English by the end of Year 6. The issue of increasing the number of pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics and science is being tackled but strategies to improve pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics and their questioning skills in science are not having enough effect on the achievement of more able pupils. Pupils throughout the school achieve well from different starting points because of good leadership and management and particularly the clear direction which the headteacher and staff set for all pupils to do their best. Subject leaders have had a positive effect on improving the number of pupils reaching the expected level in science and mathematics. There are good systems for checking the performance of pupils which help staff to use the results of assessments to plan effectively for learning. The quality of teaching and learning and curricular provision is good and also has a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Teaching is matched well to the needs of most pupils and stimulates their interest through a good range of learning activities. The curriculum is broad and balanced and enhanced by a wide range of clubs and additional activities which support pupils' learning and personal development. However, engagement with different communities beyond the local area to promote understanding of the wider United Kingdom community and beyond is underdeveloped.

Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and behave well. They show very good levels of care for each other and understand how to stay safe. They know they can turn to older pupils, who act as peer mentors, or go to the Friendship Stop, if they have a problem. Pupils' enjoyment of school is demonstrated in their improved attendance, which is above average. They say that they like their teachers and their lessons. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to live healthily, as seen in their enjoyment of sports activities and healthy food choices. They make a good contribution to the life of the school through their work as school councillors and the many other roles which they fulfil, for example, as 'Jumpin Jaxx' monitors. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education because their achievement is good. They have good opportunities to work in teams through the cake stalls they organise to raise money for local charities and are developing into confident and mature young citizens.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good because of effective leadership. The teacher in charge shows a good understanding of the needs of young children and sets a clear direction with a team of committed staff. Links with parents have improved

recently and parents are pleased with the confident start their children make. One typically commented, 'My child is very happy at school and loves going because the staff are very helpful.' This nurturing, caring approach by adults, sensitive to the needs of children, ensures good provision for their welfare and results in good personal, social and emotional development. Children cooperate well with each other and become increasingly confident and independent as learners, as seen in children putting on their own wet-weather clothing to go outside.

Children join the Reception class at different times throughout the year, with skills and abilities similar to those expected for their age. They make good progress because of good learning and development. By the time they enter Year 1, most of the children who have been in the school for the whole year are reaching standards which are above average, and those who joined later are reaching standards in line with those expected. These improvements in children's attainment are recent and staff are working hard to build on them. Good planning results in a wide range of stimulating activities which children enjoy. Staff are skilled at extending learning through questioning and assessment is effective, clearly identifying next steps in children's learning. The outdoor environment is used satisfactorily to promote children's learning, but the range of activities is not as stimulating as those provided indoors.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the proportions of pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics by improving pupils' problem-solving skills and in science by improving their ability to ask scientific questions.
- Improve opportunities to engage with communities beyond the local community in order to promote pupils' understanding of the wider United Kingdom community and beyond.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most pupils make good progress and reach standards which are above average by the time they reach Year 6. Pupils currently in Year 6 are achieving well in all their subjects in relation to their starting point on entry to the school. Standards are higher in English than in mathematics and science because more pupils reach the higher levels in English. Initiatives to improve problem-solving skills in mathematics and questioning skills in science are not sufficiently impacting on more able pupils' achievement. Important factors in improving the achievement of most pupils have been the improved use of assessment to check pupils' performance and the improved checking of subject leaders to raise standards in subject areas. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well because of the good levels of support they receive for their learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Worship makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development by giving them time to think. Their good social and moral development is seen in their clear understanding of right and wrong. They make a good contribution to the life of the school through the opportunities they have to take responsibility, for example, as guinea pig monitors, and to take part in making decisions about school life through the work of the school council. The school council were involved in designing the log play area and the playground markings. Pupils have a satisfactory cultural understanding through their knowledge and understanding of different faiths and the range of activities they experience in school. Their enjoyment of school is seen in their good attendance, which has

improved significantly, and their good support for each other. 'Everyone here is nice and behaves well,' commented one pupil, and is an accurate description.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers enjoy good relationships with pupils and manage them well. They plan effectively to meet the needs of the different ages and abilities in the class and use a wide range of teaching and learning approaches to engage and stimulate learning. Pupils demonstrate good levels of interest and concentration in their learning. In most lessons, they are given good opportunities to be involved in their learning by working with others in pairs and small groups, for example, when performing extracts from a poem, 'Excuses', in a speaking and listening activity. Teachers use assessment effectively to plan activities, and during lessons to give additional tasks to stretch learning. Marking is regular but does not always identify for pupils what they need to do next to improve their work. Teaching assistants effectively support pupils' learning

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well. Work is well planned so that pupils have good opportunities to use their reading, writing and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in all their subjects. Planning to develop numeracy skills through other subjects is satisfactory and not as extensive as in reading and writing. In literacy, phonics work has been extended to targeted pupils in the junior classes, which has resulted in improvements in these pupils' spelling. In mathematics, pupils are working to improve their problem-solving skills, and in science on their questioning skills. An extensive programme of personal, social and health education supports pupils' personal development well. There are strengths in the wide range of activities the school offers to enhance pupils' learning. Specialist teaching is used effectively in music and visits and visitors are used well to make learning more interesting. Pupils have access to a wide range of clubs which are well attended, as seen in the signing club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Levels of pastoral care and support are a strength of the school and help pupils to mature into sensible young people who gain good personal skills in preparation for life ahead. Adults know the pupils extremely well and this does much to ensure that each pupil is safe, happy and ready to learn. Pupils say that there is always someone to talk to if they have a problem. Many parents comment on how happy their children are at school because of the rigorous steps the school takes to care for them. Child protection arrangements and those to safeguard pupils' health, safety and welfare meet current requirements. There are strong systems in place to check attendance which have had a positive effect on improving attendance levels. The school works well with outside agencies and parents to support pupils' learning and well-being. The 'Reading is Cool' initiative, for example, has had a positive effect on pupils' achievement in reading through reading at home. Systems to support academic guidance are satisfactory. All pupils have learning targets in English and mathematics and receive guidance on how to achieve them. However, not all pupils understand what their targets mean, particularly in mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, staff and governors set a clear direction for the school, as seen in the good achievement and good personal development of pupils and the sustained improvement of the school. The improvements in attendance in recent years are evidence that there is a common purpose to make the school better and that the school has a good capacity to improve further. Self-evaluation is good, with effective systems for checking provision and improving the performance of pupils. Subject leaders have a clear role to raise standards. In science, for example, there is evidence that the strategies implemented have resulted in improvements in pupils' achievement, with the number of pupils reaching the expected level by Year 6 improving to above the national average. Governors fulfil their duties well and challenge the school effectively to improve provision and raise standards through their regular links with subject leaders and their focused visits into school. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to the promotion of community cohesion. Pupils' good personal development and strong links with the local community contribute positively, but engagement with communities beyond the local area to promote understanding of the wider United Kingdom and beyond is underdeveloped.

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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	2
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	2

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?	3
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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Felton CofE Primary School, Oswestry SH11 4JR

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We thought you were polite and helpful. We enjoyed talking to you and listening to what you had to say. We know that you are proud of your school and enjoy your time there. We particularly liked the signing club which we saw during our visit. We think that West Felton CofE is a good school with a number of strengths. These are the main things we found out about your school:

- you make good progress in your work and reach standards that are above average for your age. Those of you who are more able do better in your reading and writing than you do in mathematics and science
- your behaviour and attendance are good and you have good attitudes to your learning
- you have a good understanding of how to live healthily and how to stay safe
- The school provides you with a wide range of activities, which are well attended and which you say that you enjoy
- you make a good contribution to the life of the school through the different jobs you do, such as school councillors, peer mentors and 'Jumpin Jaxx' monitors
- you are taught well and say that your teachers are 'good' and that you 'enjoy your lessons'
- the adults in school look after you extremely well and they all work hard to help you do your best.

In order to make the school better, we have asked the staff to:

- help those of you who are more able to do as well in mathematics and science as you do in your reading and writing
- improve links with communities in the rest of the United Kingdom and in other countries so you learn more about other people in the United Kingdom and the rest of the world.

You can help by continuing to work hard and behave well.

Best Wishes

Brian Holmes Lead inspector