

Great Witley Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116881
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	338914
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter Clifton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	130
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bill Middup-Jones
Headteacher	David Smith
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including the development plan, recent monitoring reports, safeguarding procedures and pupils' books. Inspectors analysed the 52 responses to the parents' questionnaire.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the extent to which teaching promotes good progress for all groups of pupils, especially in writing across the school and mathematics at Key Stage 1
- how well targets are used in lessons to promote higher standards, including pupils' own assessment of how well they are doing
- how well leaders have successfully promoted improvement through monitoring, particularly in improving the quality of teaching and learning and the challenge for more able pupils
- what is being done through specific developments to the curriculum to improve writing standards and the extent to which these are established across the school.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school which draws its pupils from the local village and the surrounding area. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and they are taught in five mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average but increasing. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children from the age of four who share their classroom with pupils in Year 1. The school has very spacious outdoor areas.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has improved markedly since its last inspection because the headteacher's strong leadership has successfully encouraged the staff to have high aspirations for themselves and pupils. Improvement in the way leaders monitor and evaluate teaching and learning outcomes has strengthened pupils' progress. Pupils achieve well, and standards are above average and improving. Evidence from the standardised assessments in 2009 and from the work of current pupils, shows there is more to do to improve writing, particularly for boys of all ages. However, a good start has been made to encourage pupils to write by making writing activities more meaningful and relevant and developing word banks so that the pupils can be more independent. Good progress has been made in improving the level of challenge provided for the more able pupils, especially at Key Stage 1, which was a key area for improvement from the last inspection. The curriculum has also been strengthened and is now good. The inclusion of themes such as being healthy, recycling and climate change ensure that it reflects a changing world. The school is rightly proud of its recently acquired 'green flag' award for its eco work. Success is celebrated through good quality displays across the school which also reflect the global dimension of the curriculum. The school is well placed to improve even further.

Most pupils behave well in and around the school and have very positive attitudes which make a considerable contribution to their learning. However, there is a very small minority in one class who find it difficult to maintain their concentration in lessons and display immature attitudes. This is a barrier to their learning. The pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and lead healthy lives. Their spiritual, social and moral development is good and is shown in their friendly manner, cooperative working and in the way that older pupils support and help younger ones. Their cultural development is satisfactory. Although attendance is above average, too much time is lost for some pupils because they are taken on holidays in term time. The school council has a positive influence on how the school develops. Pupils have a good understanding about keeping themselves safe and trust the adults who look after them. At break times, the pupils are very active in the spacious play areas. Most express their views and opinions with great confidence and maturity.

Teaching and learning are good because lessons are well planned to meet the full range of pupils' needs. Teaching assistants make a good and sometimes outstanding contribution to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. While lessons have clear objectives for learning, these are occasionally too general and of limited benefit in helping the pupils understand what is expected. The marking of writing is consistently good, providing comments to commend good work and set further

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challenges. Pupils have regular opportunities to share how well they think they are doing. However, the use of individual pupil targets during lessons is at an early stage of development.

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The children enjoy school and join in confidently with all the activities offered. They respond well to the good range of opportunities to make choices and decisions for themselves.

Leadership has continued to be well focused since the time of the last report. Staff have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which they openly debate. This is enabling them to refine and further develop their practice. Governors have a visible presence around the school and have helped to forge strong links with parents. They provide a satisfactory challenge to the headteacher and other leaders to account for the success of changes being made.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop and embed strategies to raise standards in writing, particularly for boys, by:
 - providing more opportunities for them to develop their skills through other subjects
 - being clearer about expectations for writing in lessons
 - widening opportunities to write for the children in Reception.
- Involve pupils more fully in setting and measuring their own targets so that they have a clearer understanding about what they need to do next to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The school's tracking information and samples of work show that most learners, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making good progress. Pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are on track to reach above average standards. Although writing across the school remains the weakest area, there are clear signs that it is improving, and the gap in attainment between girls and boys is closing. In the current Year 6, a high proportion of pupils are working at the expected Level 4 or the higher Level 5. In over two thirds of the lessons visited during the inspection, the pupils made good progress. Nearly all pupils worked well independently, and showed good concentration and perseverance. The pupils say they find the work challenging. A good example of this was in a Year 4/5 mathematics lesson where the pupils had to find different ways of solving complex problems.

The assessment results in Year 6 since the last report show that standards are mostly significantly above average. They were particularly good in 2008, being above average in English, mathematics and science. The 2009 performance information provided by the school shows a similar picture in mathematics and science. The outcomes in English were not quite as good because of the relative weakness in writing. In Year 2, there has

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been a rising trend of improvement with a strength in reading. The 2009 outcomes in writing and mathematics were not as high as those in 2008. However, the current Year 2 pupils are on track to continue this improving trend. Those pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to others.

Pupils say that there is no bullying, although they do comment on the silly behaviour of a few pupils. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their punctual arrival, ready to join in with the day's activities. They readily take on extra responsibilities around the school to help make sure it runs smoothly. They play happily together before school and at playtimes, and show a well-developed understanding of right and wrong. Links with a contrasting school are developing their understanding about living in a multicultural society. Pupils have good work habits and are independent in their learning, all of which prepares them well for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The good teaching is based on a clear understanding of the needs of the different groups of pupils in the mixed-age classes. Planning takes into account the different

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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abilities of the pupils in the class and teaching is often lively and interesting. As a result, the pupils are usually keen and eager to respond to questions and to be involved in discussion. On a few occasions the teachers do not communicate what they expect the pupils to achieve, for example in writing, and this results in a few pupils not always producing their best work. In the lessons visited during the inspection, the teaching assistants were well deployed and worked with groups of pupils very confidently. Some support provided for pupils with literacy and numeracy needs was excellent. In addition, planning and support for those pupils with disabilities is of high quality. Teachers show good subject knowledge through their marking of writing and explanations of new ways to solve problems. However, while nearly all pupils are fully engaged in their learning and respond well to direction, there is a small minority in one class who do not and this has not yet been challenged sufficiently well. The targeted support and guidance for vulnerable pupils is based on a good understanding of their needs. They are cared for well. Learning takes place in a secure climate where pupils feel confident to make mistakes: teachers value contributions and correct errors sensitively.

The school has successfully reshaped the curriculum since the last inspection. There is good enrichment from a wide range of activities with excellent use of the school grounds to grow vegetables and promote environmental aspects of the curriculum. There is a good range of trips and visits. The good links with the local high school provide those pupils who are particularly able or talented with additional opportunities to learn and develop. A range of strategies to improve writing are making a difference, such as the introduction of writing tables, widening the range of writing opportunities, encouraging descriptive writing through the use of video, and linking writing to other subjects such as history. Leaders rightly acknowledge that these strategies are not yet fully embedded across the school. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used satisfactorily to support learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Action to drive improvement, introduced by the headteacher, has been well thought out and builds on a good understanding of the school's development needs. The headteacher is well supported by other staff and there is a good team spirit amongst the staff. Monitoring and evaluation involve all the teaching staff and have led to higher expectations and the sharing of expertise. The school is a calm and orderly community

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in which pupils are safe and secure. This is because the headteacher ensures that safeguarding policies and procedures are clear and effective. The school works well with parents. Communication through newsletters is regular and teachers make themselves available to discuss any concerns. Resources are used well to promote learning. Provision to secure equal opportunities for all pupils is good, with the differences in the achievement between boys and girls closing. Governors are supportive of the work of the school and provide a satisfactory level of challenge to leaders. A strategy to promote community cohesion based on a clear understanding of the school's own local context is in place. Planning to promote pupils' understanding of living in a multicultural United Kingdom is beginning to widen pupils' awareness.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are given a good start in the Reception class and achieve well. They come to school with skills that are generally in line with expectations for their age. Their speaking and listening skills and their personal and social development are usually the strongest areas on entry to school. The children settle quickly and provision promotes good independence. Children have a good grasp of vocabulary and they take turns and share well when using ICT. The school's tracking shows that reading and writing skills are less well developed areas. Although writing is suitably promoted, for example, through role play, only a few children choose to do this. The spacious outdoor area is well set out with a range of activities such as ordering numbers, ride-on toys and water play. However, the use of this space is currently limited during bad weather because

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there is no cover. Leadership is good. The coordinator ensures a separate and distinct curriculum for the Reception children and those in Year 1. She provides detailed plans to support the work of the teaching assistants who make a considerable contribution to the children's learning, including the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Adults regularly note and record how well the children are doing. There are good links with parents.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The school has a positive relationship with most parents and carers. Communication between parents and the school is regular, although a few parents would like more information about how well their child is achieving. A very large majority of parents are happy with the school and its family feel. A few parents express concerns about the mixed-age classes and how this has affected their children. The inspection found that children's needs are being met well in lessons. Parents feel that their children enjoy school, that the school keeps them safe and that they are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. All the parents spoken to during the inspection commented positively about how well their children had settled into the Reception class.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Witley School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 130 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	58	19	37	2	4	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	37	71	12	23	1	2	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	38	28	54	2	4	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	29	29	56	4	8	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	22	42	28	54	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	40	28	54	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	62	20	38	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	42	25	48	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	35	31	60	2	4	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	42	27	52	2	4	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	31	35	67	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	42	28	54	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	47	28	47	2	3	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



7 October 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Great Witley Church of England Primary School, Great Witley, WR6 6HR

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and were very impressed with your friendliness and how confidently you expressed your opinions. The valuable information you gave us was a great help. You go to a good school. Adults in the school care for you well. We agree that a highlight of the school is the 'green flag' award you have just gained. Teaching is good and helps you to learn and achieve well. We were impressed by the very positive attitudes that most of you have to learning. Your behaviour is good and you attend well. Your teachers are making changes which are now helping you to make even better progress.

This is what we found.

You get off to a good start in Reception.

Your headteacher, other adults and your considerate behaviour ensure that the school is a happy and welcoming place which you are rightly proud of.

Your teachers provide you with interesting and challenging activities to help you to learn. Other adults support your learning well.

You have told us that you enjoy school a lot and we agree that you have a good range of learning activities and experiences in school. There are many example of these displayed around the school.

Your teachers have introduced changes which are helping you to improve your writing. These are now making a difference in the standards of your work.

You develop good learning skills which prepare you well for your next school.

We have asked your headteacher and the other adults to do two things:

- give you even more opportunities to develop your writing skills in all your subjects so that so that you become even better writers
- involve you more in setting your own targets and measuring how well you are doing.

You can help your school to improve even further by continuing always to do your best.

Yours sincerely

Peter Clifton

Lead Inspector

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