

Great Witley C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116881
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	290667
Inspection dates	24 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Christine Ann Field

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	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Suzanne Owen
Headteacher	David Smith
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2002
School address	Worcester Road Great Witley Worcestershire WR6 6HR
Telephone number	01299 896246
Fax number	01299 896246

Age group	5-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, personal development and well-being, teaching and learning, care, guidance and support, and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data, the school's own assessment records, observation of the school at work, discussions with staff, governors and pupils and analysis of 58 parents' questionnaires and additional comments. All classrooms were visited and the inspector and headteacher conducted paired observations of lessons. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form (SEF), were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than most and draws its pupils from the village of Great Witley and a number of outlying villages. Virtually all pupils are of White British heritage and none is learning English as a new language. The proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals and those with learning difficulties or disabilities are below average. The overall level of attainment when pupils join the school in Reception is above the level expected. A new headteacher took up his post in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Great Witley is a satisfactory and improving school. Inspection findings match the school's view of its effectiveness. Senior managers have a crystal-clear understanding of the school's strengths and shortcomings and are ensuring that action is taken where required. The school's ethos is warm and welcoming and the good care and welfare systems, together with the very good relationships, support pupils in feeling safe and settled. Pupils' attendance is much better than seen nationally and they enjoy coming to school because everyone gets on well together. In the words of one pupil, 'We have lots of friends here and are like one big happy family'. The majority of parents hold extremely positive views about the quality of education provided for their children.

Pupils achieve soundly over their time at school and, by Year 6, reach standards that are well above average. The school's data shows that pupils receive a positive start in the Foundation Stage, with virtually all reaching their personal goals by the time they move into Year 1, and with quite a few exceeding the level expected for pupils of this age. For the last few years, standards have been better at the end of Year 6 than Year 2, with a much larger proportion of pupils reaching higher levels. The school has rightly recognised that pupils should be making quicker progress and reaching higher standards by the end of Year 2, particularly the more able. A range of strategies is being pursued to support improvement, with intensive support from the local authority in literacy and numeracy beginning to make a positive difference. Boys, some of whom have a history of underachieving in their infant years, are being successfully targeted in Year 3 to work to their full capabilities, for example, in writing creatively and at length. As a result, underachievement has been tackled well. Pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 is good, with standards in the end-of-key-stage tests well above average in English, mathematics and science. In 2006, standards were exceptionally high. The school has set demanding targets for 2007 that pupils are on track to meet. The challenge in the targets reflects well on the school's concerted drive for improvement.

Pupils' good personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely well promoted by the school's positive Christian ethos. As a result, pupils enjoy school, understand the importance of keeping safe and healthy, and make a good contribution to their community. Right from Reception, pupils show pride in their school and are keen to do well. They behave brilliantly, have positive self-esteem and show great consideration for others. Pupils are developing socially responsible attitudes through their work to improve their environment. 'Waste-free Wednesday', an initiative promoted by the Eco Team, has seen rubbish and litter reduced dramatically, with recycling and energy saving high on their agenda. In many respects, pupils build good key skills that will serve them well in later life, and as they get older they show good independence and initiative. However, there is still work to do to enable pupils to make choices for themselves during their infant years, and to make sure they enjoy achieving to their full potential.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with particular strengths in the juniors that enable these pupils to make good progress. The very youngest learners enjoy a wide range of learning experiences that enable them to build key skills with confidence. A high level of teacher expectation, brisk pace and lots of challenge were features of the best lessons observed in Years 3, 5 and 6 that motivated all pupils to aim really high, get a lot done and achieve well. Pupils show a thirst for learning; however, sometimes not enough is expected of them in the infants and the more able mark time by doing the same tasks as others. Additionally, although the pupils have the skills to plan and manage appropriate aspects of their own learning, the style and balance of some lessons limits the opportunities for this. Teachers' planning is of sound quality, with close attention paid to promoting learning objectives. However, it does not always make clear exactly what skills and knowledge different pupils are expected to gain. Assessment information is used well to pinpoint those who are at risk of falling behind and to make sure they have the support they need to catch up. However, there is scope for sharper assessment of the progress made by the more able learners so that harder work can be set for them in the next lesson. There is sensible use of targets to help raise expectations but these do not feature in teachers' marking to help pupils know how to improve their work, and pupils are given limited opportunities to review how well they are doing.

Pupils benefit from good care, guidance and support and work from a satisfactory curriculum that is currently under review. Pupils are well looked after throughout the school day, with robust arrangements for the safeguarding of all pupils. Vulnerable pupils' needs are well met, with good provision made for those with learning difficulties. Gifted and talented pupils are able to access a variety of additional activities, for example, through good links with a local high school. The school is working effectively to re-shape the curriculum to take better account of mixed-age groupings and to make stronger connection between topics. There is good curricular enrichment from a wide range of activities. Participation in multi-skills and dance festivals and involvement in tag rugby are rated highly by those involved. The recent introduction of French, which pupils say they love, is supporting positively their cultural development as well as teaching them a new language. Appropriate use is being made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support pupils' work across subjects. The whole school took part in an online mathematics challenge last term, competing against pupils from all over the world for World Maths Day. The recently purchased laptops were observed being used very proficiently by Year 6 pupils to write interesting stories inspired by paintings they had enjoyed examining in close detail.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher gives strong and well-focused leadership that is helping the school build for improvement. Others with leadership roles are developing their skills well and are now fully involved in school self-evaluation activities. School leaders have built an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses and are working effectively to move the school forward. However, they do not yet have a sharp enough focus when undertaking lesson monitoring of how well different groups of pupils are learning. The staff work as a team and show 100% commitment to helping pupils do the best they can. Governors are active in their work to hold the school to account, providing support and challenge in equal measure. They fully recognise that

improvement since the last inspection stalled to begin with but has picked up well this year, with the recent track record demonstrating the school's good capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the challenge in the activities set for the more able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1, and enable pupils to make appropriate choices for themselves.
- Link target setting, planning and marking to ensure that all pupils are aware of their learning targets and have regular opportunities to review their own progress.
- Make sure that monitoring focuses on how well different groups of pupils are making progress so that intervention can be targeted swiftly to ensure that more-able pupils in particular are working at the right level.

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.

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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
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2

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
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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?	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?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

¹ 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 B



25 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Great Witley C of E Primary School, Great Witley, WR6 6HR

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. I enjoyed visiting your lessons, looking at your work and hearing your views. I am writing to tell you what I found out.

- Your school is satisfactory and improving and most of you achieve the standards of which you are capable by the end of Year 6.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you are growing up to be confident young people who have very responsible attitudes. You enjoy coming to school because everyone gets on well together.
- You are taught soundly and teachers work hard to make lessons interesting. There is a good range of clubs and visits that you told me you rate highly.
- Your school is a very caring place and you are confident that a member of staff will always help you to sort out any concerns.
- The headteacher and his staff are working hard to help you. They are going to be checking up even more on how well you are learning and need to know if you find work too easy.

To help your school even more, I have asked them to do these three things:

- Help all of you, especially those of you in Key Stage 1 who find work quite easy, to be active learners who reach even higher standards than you do now.
- Ensure that all of you know your targets, use them to improve your work and have regular opportunities to review how well you are doing.
- Make sure that when senior leaders visit lessons to check up on how well you are doing, they keep an accurate record of any differences between groups.

I know you will help your teachers by working as hard as you can.

My best wishes for a successful future, 😊

Christine A Field

Christine Ann Field
Lead Inspector