

Whoberley Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103674
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	308380
Inspection dates	3–4 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Helen Barter

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Kendrick
Headteacher	Nicola Simmons
Date of previous school inspection	25 May 2004
School address	Overdale Road Coventry CV5 8AJ
Telephone number	02476 673452
Fax number	02476 717573

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is located near Coventry city centre. Ten different minority ethnic groups are represented in the school population, but most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. More pupils join and leave the school in different year groups and particularly at the end of the Nursery year. The school opened the First Friends Foundation Unit in September 2005 and, in the afternoon, provides care for Nursery age children for which their parents pay.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Whoberley Hall is a satisfactory, and improving, school. Parents greatly appreciate the improvements made under the leadership of the headteacher, typically commenting, 'I would be happy to recommend the school to any of my family and friends and I am sure the school will go from strength to strength.'

Children make a good start to school in the Foundation Unit. Accurate assessment of children's early learning helps teachers to have a clear understanding of what pupils should achieve as they move through the school. Results in the 2007 Year 2 assessments and Year 6 tests improved as a direct result of better use by teachers of information about pupils' progress and higher expectations of their learning. Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved from well below average in the past three years to broadly average, and pupils' achievement is now satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory and there are good features in many lessons. However, school data show that pupils do not achieve as well in some classes as in others and that more able pupils do not always make as much progress as their classmates.

Pupils enjoy school, typically describing it as, 'a big family where teachers are really kind and help you'. They receive good care, guidance and support and this helps them develop well. They behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They respect others and learn to lead safe and healthy lifestyles because all adults in the school set them a good example. Pupils make a good contribution to the community. They support local events and charities and the school council plays an important part in making their school a better place to be. Pupils cooperate well with each other, share ideas and take responsibility. They are satisfactorily prepared for the future.

The school's commitment to 'Unlock the Magic of Learning' has led to the introduction of a new curriculum. Pupils enjoy greater opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge through topics such as 'The Rainforest'. The school recognises it needs to evaluate how effective the curriculum is now in raising standards in the foundation subjects, and providing pupils with wider opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills.

Accurate evaluation of performance has led the school to identify key priorities for improvement. Improved staff stability has enabled the headteacher to delegate leadership and management responsibilities to others, although not all leaders and managers yet have sufficient expertise in identifying and monitoring the precise actions required to bring about the school's development priorities. Staff, and governors, are dedicated to school improvement. As seen in the rising standards and pupils' improved achievement, they have satisfactory capacity to bring this about.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's achievement in the Foundation Unit is good because staff understand how young children learn and teach them well. Children join the Nursery with lower than expected skills for their age. They make good progress and most reach their early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Staff support each child skilfully and plan exciting activities that develop their curiosity in learning and encourage them to explore new skills for themselves. There is a strong focus on promoting children's personal and social skills so they play and learn together well through the wide range of inside and outdoor activities. Children's literacy skills are

promoted well, especially their ability to listen, express ideas and develop early writing skills. All staff monitor children's progress well and ensure that new activities extend their knowledge and understanding, although the mathematical understanding of some more able children is not always extended fully. Nursery children are cared for well in the afternoon. While some rest, many freely choose to join in with the older children's activities and gain a great deal from the extended provision available to them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Spread the good practice in teaching so that pupils, especially the more able, make even progress each year and reach higher standards by the time they leave.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the new curriculum in raising standards in the foundation subjects and improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
- Develop the expertise of leaders and managers in identifying, and monitoring the effectiveness of, the actions needed to fulfil the school's priorities for development.

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 during their time in school is satisfactory. Improved assessment of their progress has resulted in faster rates of learning than in the past. Standards at the end of Year 2 improved from being exceptionally low in 2006 to below average in 2007, although pupils did not do as well in writing as they did in reading and mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been well below average since the last inspection but rose in 2007 to be broadly average. Targets set for pupils were adequately challenging and they were met in English. However, mathematics targets were not met because fewer than expected pupils reached the higher levels. School data and pupils' work indicate that progress, while uneven across year groups, is generally improving. Nevertheless, more able pupils need greater challenge if they are to do better. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are learning to speak English make the same satisfactory progress as others because effective support is provided.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' social and moral skills are particular strengths of their personal development. Their relationships are good and they respect one another's differences. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They understand expectations for their behaviour in lessons, although some younger pupils are restless at times when teaching lacks interest and challenge. Pupils' behaviour in assembly, at lunchtime and in the playground is very good. Pupils enjoy school and are happy being with their friends and adults. They are confident that any bullying is dealt with fairly and greatly appreciate the time that adults take to listen to their worries. Pupils lead safe and healthy lifestyles. They enjoy eating a balanced diet at lunchtimes and say that taking part in sport and dance helps them to be fit and healthy. Pupils are proud of the help they give to charities and the money they have raised to improve playtimes for everyone. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. They have good interpersonal skills and are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy lessons because teachers manage their behaviour well and make classrooms interesting places to learn. Skilled teaching assistants contribute considerably to the quality of teaching and learning across the school and provide caring, well-focused support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For the most part, teachers plan satisfactorily for the different ages and abilities within their classes. However, pupils' progress is uneven because there are still some lessons where the pace of learning is too slow and the expectation of what they can achieve could be higher. Assessment information is now being used more effectively to identify pupils who need specific support or more challenge. This is particularly good in the three Years 5/6 literacy and numeracy groups, where teachers continually assess how well pupils are doing and move them up and down within different topics to support or accelerate their progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The recently introduced International Primary Curriculum provides pupils of all abilities with interesting activities which help them understand how subjects link together and which they greatly enjoy. Information and communication technology (ICT) resources have improved well since the last inspection and pupils have good opportunities to develop their ICT skills through the topics. The school recognises the need to develop more planned opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in the same way, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the new curriculum in improving pupils' learning across all subjects. Good emphasis is given to developing pupils' personal skills and understanding of how to lead healthy lives and care for others. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the wide range of clubs and activities outside lessons. These contribute successfully to their social and physical development and to their learning, especially the highly popular mathematics club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care provided is very good. Pupils greatly appreciate the help and guidance they receive to behave well. As one boy explained, 'We are not shouted at but talked to, and it takes all the anger out of your body.' Staff ensure that vulnerable pupils play their part in all aspects of school life. Rigorous attention is given to ensuring that the school is a safe and secure environment and that safeguarding procedures are fully implemented. Pupils receive good academic guidance. Marking in their books helpfully tells them what they have done well and what the next steps to improvement are. The school recognises that individual target setting for literacy and numeracy is proving successful with Year 5 and 6 pupils, but the practice has yet to be implemented consistently in other classes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Over the last year, the headteacher and senior leaders have concentrated effectively on raising standards, and now pupils' achievement is better than before. Although there is more to do to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress, there are signs that the right action is taking effect. Regular and accurate monitoring and evaluation of teaching and pupils' progress by senior leaders has raised expectations of pupils' achievement and helped the school to identify its development priorities. The school recognises the need to develop the expertise of all staff in identifying the precise actions that need to be taken and monitored to ensure that the key priorities are effective in raising standards. Governors promote links with the community well and are beginning to be more involved in evaluating the school's effectiveness as they gain a greater understanding of its performance. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

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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?	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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

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

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
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well 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 the 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

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 A

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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

5 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whoberley Hall Primary School, Coventry, CV5 8AJ

Thank you for making the inspectors welcome when we came to visit your school. We really enjoyed meeting and talking with you all. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. This means that there are many good things and a few things which can be improved.

These are the good things we found:

- You get a good start to school in the Foundation Unit because the teachers there really know how young children learn through lots of play.
- You do better in your tests than you used to do. Now you do as well as most other children of your age.
- You are growing up to be sensible, caring and well-behaved young people and this will help you a lot when you are older.
- You really enjoy learning lots of interesting things. You told us how much fun you are having learning about rainforests and finding out about them on the Internet.
- Teachers want you to do well and care for you a lot. This really helps you if you have a problem, not just with your work but if you are feeling unhappy too.

All the adults are working hard to make sure your school gets even better. To help them we have asked them to do these things:

- Make sure that you learn well in every lesson, especially those of you who find work easy, so that you do as well as you possibly can.
- Check that while you are learning lots of interesting things you are also getting plenty of practice to develop your literacy and numeracy skills.
- Work out exactly how to make things improve even more and then keep checking that what is happening is making the school as good as it can be.

Keep working hard because this will really help you in the future!

Yours faithfully

Mrs Helen Barter Lead inspector



5 October 2007

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Yours faithfully

Mrs Helen Barter
Lead inspector