

# Much Wenlock Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 123407             |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Shropshire         |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 340331             |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 15–16 October 2009 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Mike Best          |

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

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|--|---|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                       |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                                     |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed   |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 115   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                            |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Malcolm Gribbin                               |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mrs Lindsey Andrews                           |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 2 May 2007                                    |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Racecourse Lane<br>Much Wenlock<br>Shropshire |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited five lessons, and held meetings with governors, parents, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at school documentation and policies, teachers' planning and assessment records, and scrutinised pupils' work from the current and past school years. Thirty seven parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

- the achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ascertain whether assessment is accurate and being used effectively to inform the next steps in learning.
- the achievement of pupils to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging.
- the effectiveness of the school's policies and practice in promoting and ensuring pupils' good behaviour.
- how well the school's promotion of community cohesion is securing pupils' cultural development.

## Information about the school

Much Wenlock is smaller than an average sized primary school. Almost all pupils come from a White British background. Children start in the Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage in September if their fifth birthday falls in the autumn term, or in January if it falls in the spring or summer terms.

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to most schools, although the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is higher. Pupils' needs include moderate learning difficulties, visual and hearing impairment, and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

The headteacher joined the school in September 2009 and two part-time staff are on temporary contracts, awaiting the appointment of a new deputy headteacher from January 2010.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Children make good progress in the two or three terms they spend in the Reception Year, particularly in their personal, social and emotional skills. Progress is not as fast in the rest of the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the good quality support they receive. However, other pupils are not making consistently good enough progress to achieve the higher standards of which they are capable. As a result, overall attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is broadly average.

While teaching is satisfactory and the curriculum has a number of good features, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not sufficiently high and the pace of learning too pedestrian. Teachers regularly assess pupils' work and give positive encouragement in their verbal and written comments. However, such comments are not sufficiently focused on what pupils need to do to improve their work. The headteacher has wasted no time in analysing records tracking pupils' progress and identifying what needs to be done with the aim of meeting more challenging targets. Indeed, across all aspects of the school's work, her recognition of the school's strengths and the plans she has to tackle the shortcomings identified are spot on. Pupils and parents are particularly pleased with the decisive action she has already taken in reviewing and revising the school's discipline policy and applying sanctions steadfastly. However, the school's capacity for improvement is currently satisfactory because more time is needed to ensure that planned actions are successful and securely embedded.

Safeguarding procedures are robust and the school provides a good standard of care, support and guidance for pupils, especially those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Staff work closely with parents and carers and the school enjoys good partnerships with other providers and support services. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and a good appreciation of other cultures in their locality and nationally. This illustrates the positive impact the school is having on community cohesion within its own community and beyond. However, governors do not have a policy against which they can systematically evaluate the impact of the school's work in this area.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement and enjoyment to good by:
  - improving the quality of teaching so that it is good or better in the large majority of lessons by ensuring that all groups of learners are systematically challenged through the effective use of assessment

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- increasing the pace of learning in lessons so that it is consistently good
- ensuring that pupils achieve challenging but achievable targets by the end of Year 6.
- By the end of the summer term 2010, draw up and implement a whole-school policy for community cohesion to evaluate the school's provision and put in place an action plan to guide the next stage of development.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils attain broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. Girls attain higher standards than boys but the gap is not significant compared with the national picture. The quality of learning and pupils' progress is satisfactory. Most pupils listen attentively to adults and act promptly on the advice and guidance they receive. Pupils enjoy working together to solve problems and explain their thinking logically. They successfully use the internet to research information about people and places, and speak with enthusiasm about their particular interests. Most pupils settle down to work independently without fuss. However, they do not meet challenging, yet achievable, targets because they do not always know what they have to do to improve their work. Lessons often lack the necessary urgency to move pupils' learning on at fast enough pace to enable them to make the good progress needed to reach the next level in their work. In contrast, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are well supported by adults in meeting the planned goals in learning in their lessons and they work diligently to meet their clear, timed targets.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils engage enthusiastically in a range of artistic and sporting activities and value the opinions and successes of others. They have a good understanding of staying safe and are confident that any concerns they may have will be promptly dealt with by staff. The attitudes and behaviour of the vast majority of pupils are exemplary and they have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Although the behaviour of a very few pupils has given cause for concern over time, the strict application of sanctions and the positive use of praise has had a strong impact in a relatively short period. Pupils respond very well to the school's health promotion activities and are highly informed about the importance of regular exercise and good eating habits. The very well balanced school meals prepared on the premises are popular with pupils, and fruit and vegetables grown in the school garden supplement the locally-sourced ingredients. Through the elected school council, and by taking responsibility for a variety of tasks in and around the school, pupils make a good contribution to the school community. Their involvement in local sporting and arts activities, together with fundraising for national charities, is complemented by active links with a primary school in Wolverhampton. Pupils develop

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satisfactory workplace and other skills in preparation for the world of work and they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education. Attendance is only average because a significant number of school days are missed to due to parents taking their children on holiday during term time.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 3        |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress  | 3        |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress                      | 2        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 3        |
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>  | <b>2</b> |

### How effective is the provision?

Staff and pupils get on well together and there is positive atmosphere in lessons. Pupils are interested in their work and get on with it without interruption because staff apply the school's behaviour policy firmly but fairly. Teachers' planning identifies alternative activities for pupils who learn at different rates and provide support staff with clear and detailed guidance to enable them to work effectively with their pupils. Learning objectives are routinely shared with pupils at the start of lessons and reviewed at the close. However, these objectives are often quite broad and are not focussed enough on pupils' different stages of learning. As a result, they do not provide a strong enough challenge to enable all groups to make consistently good progress. Overall, the pace of lessons is not brisk enough and pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher

<sup>1</sup> 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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rather than getting down to work. Pupils' attainment and progress is monitored regularly and tracking systems are accessible. However, teachers do not make sufficiently rigorous use of the assessment information available to drive their planning or, in their marking, to provide pupils with succinct advice on how to improve their work.

The curriculum is adequately matched to pupils' needs, interests and aspirations. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are developed across different subjects. The 'forest school' provision for learning out-of-doors in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, provides many valuable opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their skills and knowledge in practical situations. The individual needs of vulnerable pupils are well provided for, with good learning resources readily available. However, pupils capable of the higher levels are not consistently challenged and this reduces the overall quality of the curriculum. Links with a Wolverhampton school are particularly effective in promoting pupils' social and cultural development and there is an appropriate programme of personal, social and health education and citizenship. The curriculum is suitably enhanced by visits and visitors, including a popular residential trip for older pupils.

Pupils and parents alike appreciate the good quality care, support and guidance the school provides. The school's work with families and a range of agencies to support individual pupils facing challenging circumstances is a particular strength. The arrangements for reintegrating pupils following fixed-period exclusions are good. The before and after school provision is well managed and pupils enjoy the opportunity to meet their friends and participate in a good range of activities.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The use of assessment to support learning  | 3        |
| <b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>   | <b>2</b> |

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has high expectations of staff and pupils. She is working well with them to help drive further improvement and achieve the goals in the well-focused school development plan. She has quickly earned the respect and support of all members of the school community and communicates a clear ambition for securing high-quality teaching to enable all pupils to achieve and enjoy to the full. The governing body is supportive of the school and many members visit on a regular basis. They have a clear understanding of their role as the school's critical friend and maintain frequent contact with pupils and parents. However, the governors' knowledge of the school's target-setting procedures is under-developed, with the result that, over time, they have

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not effectively held the school to account for pupils making satisfactory rather than good progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. Governors have not set in place a school policy on community cohesion and have not evaluated the impact of the positive work already done in this area, nor set objectives for building on this.

The school fosters good relationships with parents and carers. Staff are approachable and parents welcomed into school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes, parents and carer are actively encouraged to join their children at the start of the day in a range of activities. This is very successful, both in getting the school day off to a smooth start and in helping parents and carers to see, at first hand, how their children are getting on. The school has a thriving parents' association and there are regular formal, as well as informal, opportunities for parents and carers to meet staff to discuss children's progress. Similarly, the school works well with a range of partners to support pupils' achievement and well-being, particularly in providing specialist help and resources for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Good provision is made for developing pupils' understanding about differences and valuing the differing skills and talents of individuals and the school is a harmonious community. However, its promotion of equal opportunities and effectiveness in tackling discrimination is satisfactory overall because not enough has been done to ensure that all pupils make consistently good, rather than satisfactory, progress. This is also why, despite many good features in its deployment of resources, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

**Early Years Foundation Stage**



**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

When they start in the Reception Year, children's skills and experiences are broadly similar to those expected for their ages, although girls are often ahead of the boys in the development of their communication, literacy and language skills and in their personal, social and emotional development. Children enjoy learning and achieve well, particularly in Forest School work that incorporates activities across the six areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year, most children meet the early learning goals. The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Staff take good account of children's prior learning in planning a wide range of activities that strike a good balance between adult-led and child chosen activities. Support staff are well briefed and follow lesson plans carefully. Good use is made of assessment, which is systematically and accurately undertaken through regular observations of children at work. The emphasis on practical learning helps children develop their understanding and children's individual needs are met well. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The staff team works well together and children's welfare and enjoyment are given high priority. Good links with parents and carers, together with productive partnerships with pre-school groups and outside experts, ensure a smooth start to children's full-time education.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>2</b> |
| 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 overwhelming majority of parents are happy with their child's experience at the school. Of those who made written comments on the inspection questionnaire, many commented positively about the recent improvement in pupils' behaviour. A few parents expressed concern that their children's needs were not being fully met and, as a result, were not making enough progress. Inspectors found that the measures taken this term to improve pupils' behaviour are effective but that teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in their work are not consistently high enough to ensure all pupils make the best possible progress.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Much Wenlock Primary 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 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 115 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly Agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 24             | 65 | 11    | 30 | 2        | 5 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 23             | 65 | 14    | 38 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 23             | 62 | 14    | 38 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 15             | 41 | 18    | 49 | 3        | 8 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 17             | 46 | 20    | 54 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 17             | 46 | 20    | 54 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 25             | 68 | 12    | 32 | 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) | 20             | 54 | 15    | 41 | 0        | 0 | 2                 | 5 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 19             | 51 | 15    | 41 | 2        | 5 | 1                 | 3 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 13             | 35 | 19    | 51 | 1        | 3 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 15             | 41 | 20    | 54 | 1        | 3 | 1                 | 3 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 14             | 38 | 19    | 51 | 2        | 5 | 2                 | 5 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 25             | 48 | 25    | 48 | 2        | 4 | 0                 | 0 |

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul> |
| 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.**



20 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Much Wenlock Primary School, Much Wenlock, TF13 6JG

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school last week. When I met representatives of the school council, I promised to write to you to tell you about the findings from the inspection.

You have a good understanding of how to keep safe and your appreciation of healthy lifestyles is outstanding. Around the school, you take responsibility for a variety of important jobs and many of you take part in activities that involve pupils from other schools and people from the local area. You and your parents told us that you are very pleased that Mrs Andrews and the staff are taking a firm line with the very small number of pupils whose behaviour falls short of the high standards you aim for in the school.

Children make a good start to their school days in the Reception class where they particularly enjoy their Forest School activities. Most of you make satisfactory progress as you move through the school, with those of you who need extra help making good progress. You listen carefully to instructions and quickly settle down to what you are asked to do in lessons. However, we think you could make faster progress if teachers made sure all of you were challenged by the work they give you and that time was better used in lessons. The school works well with your parents and carers. It also has some good partnerships with other schools and outside experts. The links you have with a primary school in Wolverhampton are particularly important in helping you learn about different people and places. We have asked the governors to make sure that they can keep an eye on how well this and other activities are helping you to grow up to understand the many differences in our world.

You can all help the school improve by working hard and taking a full part in all its activities. Enjoy your work and keep trying hard.

Yours truly

Mike Best

Lead inspector  
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