

Great Tew County Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123002
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	314451
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Jeffrey White

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	73
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Vivienne Bennett
Headteacher	Mr Edward Way
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2004
School address	Great Tew Chipping Norton OX7 4DB
Telephone number	01608 683642
Fax number	01608 683642

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Most pupils in this small school live in or near the small rural village of Great Tew. Almost all pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is just below average. This includes pupils with severe disabilities and emotional and behavioural needs, as well as those with moderate learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that has improved considerably. The partnership with parents is excellent. One parent commented, 'We are extremely happy to see the school grow and thrive at the heart of our community'. The dynamic leadership of the headteacher, coupled with the excellent support from the governors, is a key reason why the school is very well placed to improve even further. Pupils' achievement and progress are excellent. Standards are consistently above average and often higher, with standards in science well above average by the time pupils leave the school.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and they are very well prepared for their future life. Parents comment on how much their children love coming to school. Behaviour is excellent, not only in the school but also when they make visits to the local community and further afield. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their work and are very keen participants in the range of sporting and cultural events provided through the excellent local partnership of schools. These opportunities contribute extremely well to their academic and personal well-being. Pupils' highly positive attitudes mean that they are always ready to learn. Their opinions are valued highly. For example, pupils' suggestions resulted in the development of a vegetable garden to help them keep healthy.

Teaching is excellent. Targets for individual pupils' learning are very challenging and regularly reviewed to ensure that expectations are high for all pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to ensure that those with the greatest need are supported appropriately. They ensure that where appropriate the very able pupils are suitably stretched by giving them work that would more usually be provided for older pupils.

Pupils enjoy the good curriculum. The school has successfully applied to become a Creative Partnership Change School. Governors, staff and pupils were involved in making the bid and planning is already underway. The school's current curriculum is therefore in a transitional stage towards initiating a more creative curriculum from September 2008. It is very well enhanced by a wide range of additional opportunities. For instance, pupils work with visiting artists and sculptors and particularly enjoy learning French. These opportunities contribute well to their cultural development. It has recognised in its development planning that in this small rural school pupils' understanding of ethnic and cultural diversity within Britain is under-developed.

The quality of care, guidance and support is excellent. Parents regularly praise the school's pastoral care, which ensures that their children are safe and happy. Pupils know their targets well and are therefore very well aware of what to do to improve.

The headteacher and governors provide extremely clear direction to ensure the schools' continued improvement. The headteacher's outstanding leadership is highly praised by parents. The governors have been the driving force behind the raising of funds to substantially improve the school's accommodation. This has benefited pupils' learning considerably by providing purpose built accommodation for the Foundation Stage and a new computer suite. The governors are very much involved in the strategic planning and make sure that progress towards objectives are monitored regularly.

Given the improvements since the previous inspection and the consistently very high achievement levels of pupils, the capacity to improve the school is excellent.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is improving and is well led. Children's attainment on entry to Reception varies significantly from year to year. In the current class the range of skills is wider than in last year's group. The children make good progress, especially in personal development, reading, and mathematical development. Children respond extremely well to the frequent opportunities to develop their independence and their co-operative skills. They enjoy their work in a safe and healthy environment both indoors and in the outside area. On occasion, their work in the outside area lacks challenge and their progress slows. They behave well. Basic skills, such as linking sounds to letters, are taught thoroughly. The children enjoy visiting the local community and enjoy visitors such as a local sculptor and a thatcher. Links with parents are excellent and they are warmly welcomed. Parents are regularly informed of their children's progress and their responses are considered during the next stages of planning children's work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding of diversity in Britain.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Small numbers make comparisons with national averages difficult. However, it is clear that over time the trend has been one of above average standards and excellent progress. In 2007, only three pupils took the tests in Year 6. Two of these had learning difficulties and this accounted for a dip in standards, although achievement remained excellent. Although standards vary between the different year groups because of the small numbers, the school's data indicates that pupils continue to perform very well and their achievement is excellent. Rigorous tracking of progress and target setting are key strategies for ensuring pupils' achievement. Pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties, in addition to those with physical disabilities or behavioural and emotional difficulties, make excellent progress as do pupils with very high abilities. This is an indication of how well the headteacher and staff promote equality of opportunity.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' excellent personal development, highly positive attitudes and good attendance contribute very substantially to their learning. One pupil commented, 'We all get along really well together'. Pupils' understanding of how to keep safe and be healthy is excellent. They really enjoy the opportunities to develop healthy lifestyles, quoting, for example, the sponsored walks and the walk to school initiative. Pupils very much enjoy being responsible for roles around the school for example older pupils look out for the youngest children. At lunchtime, when the weather allows, pupils sit outside in small groups to eat their lunch and a very strong ethos of caring for each other is highly apparent at this time. Pupils in the school council are very active, for example, they organise an annual programme of fundraising for charity. Pupils' involvement in the local community is outstanding, for instance, they run stalls in the village fetes and festivals. People from the local community regularly help in the school and pupils thoroughly enjoy working with them, for instance, when tending the school's garden.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Lessons are very well planned to cater for the range of pupils' needs. Teaching is calm, purposeful, and discipline is highly effective. The teachers have high expectations and consequently pupils work hard. They provide excellent opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking when talking about their work and they respond very confidently. Discussion with pupils is managed extremely well and questions are sharply focused to check and challenge pupils' knowledge and understanding. This keeps pupils on their toes. Pupils' personal development is promoted strongly and this has a very beneficial effect on their learning, for example, they work effectively and harmoniously in pairs. Teachers use assessment extremely well to help plan pupils' work. In an excellent lesson, pupils were encouraged to check their progress towards meeting their personal targets, which they did eagerly and very competently.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Basic skills in literacy, numeracy and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) are developed very well. Good links are made between subjects such as history, art and English, for example in a topic about the Romans. Pupils make good use of ICT to develop research skills. Good use is made of visits and visitors to the school to enhance the curriculum. For example, following a visit to Blenheim Palace, pupils created their own emblem for the school, using recycled materials. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the very good range of extra-curricular activities in sport, music, art and drama which enriches their experience. They have very recently thoroughly enjoyed working with a sculptor using wicker. Opportunities to develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding are good although pupils have too few opportunities to develop their understanding of diverse cultures within Britain.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school has extremely robust and highly effective practices for safeguarding pupils. Excellent pastoral care is informed by regular discussions with parents. Staff are very responsive to the needs of individual pupils who know that they can turn to the adults if they have a problem. Parents of children with learning difficulties and disabilities praise the headteacher and staff for their children's pastoral care and for their outstanding progress. Excellent effective links are made with external agencies. For example, a specialist teacher visits to promote the use of Braille during lessons for any visually impaired pupils. Teachers' marking promotes progress very well by indicating to pupils how they can improve their performance. Pupils thoroughly understand their clear targets for learning and use them in assessing their own progress. Attendance is monitored extremely well and the headteacher's consultation with parents has succeeded in reducing authorised absences.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher manages his teaching load and leadership responsibilities extremely well. Monitoring and evaluation are very well embedded. His observations of teaching are highly evaluative and provide extremely helpful advice to staff. Self evaluation is extremely thorough and ensures that any weaknesses are identified as early as possible so that they can be rectified. For example, the headteacher's tracking of the progress of pupils with moderate learning difficulties identified some who were not on course to achieve their end of year targets. Consultation with the governors resulted in the appointment of an additional teaching assistant who helped these pupils to meet their targets. Excellent links with other schools benefits pupils' personal and academic development very considerably, for example, in the range of opportunities provided in sport, art and music. Not complacent, the headteacher and the school welcome new ideas in the interests of the pupils.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

14 July 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Great Tew County Primary School, Chipping Norton, OX7 4DB

Thank you for your help and friendliness during my visit to your school. It was a great pleasure to talk to you and hear your views. Yours is an outstanding school.

I could see how much you really enjoy all the opportunities that your school provides for you. Your achievement is excellent and the standard of your work well above that seen in most schools. Your headteacher and governors lead your school extremely well. You have very positive attitudes towards each other and you are very keen to learn. I was very pleased to see you behaving excellently, not only in the classrooms, but also outside. You are taught extremely well and this is a key reason why you are making such excellent progress. Your headteacher and staff take very great care of you to ensure that you are safe and happy. They give you very good guidance in your work so that you know what to do to reach your targets for learning.

You have some opportunities to learn about different cultures, for example, in your French lessons and in music and art. I was also pleased to see you using ICT to research some of the history of different countries. I have asked your school to help you learn even more about different cultures within Britain.

Yours sincerely

Jeff White

Lead Inspector