

# Worle Community School

## Inspection report

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|                                |                     |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 109313              |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | North Somerset      |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 377907              |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 22–23 February 2012 |
| <b>Lead inspector</b>          | Tom Winskill HMI    |

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>                      | Secondary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11–16  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 1487   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Mr D Wright  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mr P Binding   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 11–12 March 2009   |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Redwing Drive<br>Weston-super-Mare<br>North Somerset<br>BS22 8XX |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01934 510777   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01934 520941   |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | p.binding@worle-school.org.uk                                    |

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|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>          | 11–16               |
| <b>Inspection date(s)</b> | 22–23 February 2012 |
| <b>Inspection number</b>  | 377907              |



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## Introduction

### Inspection team

|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Tom Winskill    | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Pauline Robins  | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Linda Peck      | Additional inspector    |
| Vicky Matthews  | Additional inspector    |
| Clifford Walker | Additional inspector    |

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 54 lessons and 54 teachers, visited registration periods and an assembly and met with groups of pupils, staff and governors. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at 339 parental questionnaires together with planning documentation and records of the school's work.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized comprehensive school serving a residential area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school is a media arts specialist college. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Since the last inspection there have been major changes in the school's senior leadership team, including the appointment of a new headteacher.

**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

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>          | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Achievement of pupils</b>          | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Quality of teaching</b>            | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>      | <b>3</b> |

## Key findings

- This is satisfactory school. The school has a number of strengths. The great majority of school leavers go on to further education and the good relationships between pupils and teachers provide a strong base for raising achievement further. In addition, the headteacher and senior staff are clear about what needs to be done to improve teaching and achievement. The school is not yet a good school because teachers do not always ensure pupils make as much progress as they could in lessons and senior staff do not monitor the quality of teaching well enough.
- Pupils arrive at the school with attainment which is broadly average. They make satisfactory progress and achieve broadly average GCSE results. Disabled pupils and those who have special education needs make satisfactory progress because teaching and learning activities are suitably modified for them.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. In some lessons, the teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. In the best lessons, pupils make good progress because good questioning and challenging tasks encourage them to think for themselves. Marking does not always help pupils understand how well they are doing or what they need to do next.
- Pupils generally behave well and are polite and courteous. However, their attitudes to learning depend very much on the quality of teaching. Where teaching is no better than satisfactory, pupils become disengaged. In addition, parents, carers and pupils have noted that learning is slowed down occasionally by pupils misbehaving.
- The headteacher and senior staff are introducing a number of much-needed changes to improve the quality of teaching. These essential changes are reversing the decline in standards which occurred after the last inspection when the school did not consolidate its good overall effectiveness.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Ensure that the marking and assessment of pupils' work always enable pupils to understand how well they are doing and how to improve the quality of their work.
- Ensure that teaching takes full account of pupils' prior attainment and progress so that learning activities:
  - are based on suitably high expectations of what all pupils can achieve
  - challenge the most able pupils to think and learn more deeply throughout each lesson
  - capture pupils' attention, stimulate their interest and ensure pupils remain on task.
- Ensure that the monitoring of the quality of teaching:
  - is systematic and based on an evaluation of how well teaching accelerates pupils' progress
  - makes the expectations of the requirements for good and better teaching clear to all staff.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils generally concentrate well in lessons, particularly where the work is interesting and planned to meet different pupils' needs. For example, in a good history lesson, younger pupils worked independently on tasks matched to their ability and potential. Pupils with high levels of prior attainment were able to work at a suitably challenging level throughout the lesson and as a result all made good progress. This is in contrast to the more typical approach where pupils are closely directed in their work by the teacher, regardless of their potential. This ensures that no-one falls behind but hinders the progress of pupils who are capable of more rapid progress or more advanced learning. Such approaches also limit the opportunities for pupils to take more control over their own learning, which was an area for improvement at the last inspection. However, the school has introduced 'Home Challenges' which allow pupils to spend time researching a particular topic in depth. Pupils say they enjoy these tasks, but they are not coordinated across different subjects so their impact on learning is inconsistent.

Teachers now have comprehensive assessment information on the pupils in their classes. However, not all lessons are planned to take account of the different levels of prior attainment and potential of the pupils in each class. As a result, planned tasks do not always fully stretch higher-attaining pupils. For example, in some lessons all pupils, irrespective of their ability, complete the same series of tasks and it is not until late in the lesson that more challenging work is provided for those pupils capable of achieving the highest grades. As a result, achievement is satisfactory rather than good.

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Such restrictions on learning in the classroom are reflected in pupils' progress over time. For example, in English and mathematics, pupils with high prior attainment do not always make the progress expected of them, while the number of pupils with average levels of prior attainment who make better than expected progress has risen. However, this latter improvement is the result of the effective extra support provided rather than improvements in teaching. As a result, GCSE results are improving and attainment is broadly average.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress as a result of a range of strategies designed to meet their particular needs. For example, pupils with physical disabilities are supported effectively in lessons to access the mainstream curriculum. Pupils with specific learning difficulties are provided with satisfactory support in class or through targeted work in small withdrawal groups. The school also provides additional support for pupils who struggle with reading. This is satisfactory but does not accelerate pupils' progress in reading so that these pupils are able to catch up fully with their peers.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teachers' relationships with pupils are good and those parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were generally positive about how well their children are taught and how much progress they make. However, teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve are often misplaced. They are based on the premise that all pupils will complete a given set of tasks irrespective of whether the pupils find these tasks interesting or whether they genuinely extend pupils' learning. In good lessons, teachers' expectations are based on ensuring that learning, not just gathering information, is of high quality. In these lessons, opportunities to work independently, supported and challenged by effective questioning, ensure that pupils make good progress. For example, in a well-planned science lesson pupils worked in pairs to plan and carry out a simple experiment successfully and safely. Effective questioning then helped them evaluate their findings and reflect on what they had learned. In a good geography lesson, excellent questioning ensured that pupils developed their answers fully. Importantly, pupils knew that the teacher would not settle for one-word answers but expected them to think things through and offer more developed explanations.

Marking and assessment are of inconsistent quality, ranging from good to weak. Where marking is good, comments are made about how a pupil can improve and grades, or levels, are clearly shown. Weaker marking, exemplified by apparently random ticks in exercise books, does not provide the pupils with sufficient information about how well they are doing or how to improve. Exhortations such as 'add more detail' are unhelpful. All too often such instructions are clearly ignored by pupils and not followed up by teachers. In the better lessons, effective monitoring of progress through the regular checking of pupils' written work, well-timed plenary sessions and the questioning of small groups and individuals enable teachers to monitor pupils' learning and progress and adjust the activities accordingly. For example, in one lesson, some pupils found the initial task too hard and the teacher

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successfully amended it so that pupils could make good progress.

The school has rightly identified the need to improve pupils' literacy skills. Actions to tackle this issue include the emphasis on the good use of key words in many subjects but it is rare that pupils' poor spelling or grammar are picked up in marking. In some good examples of activities to start lessons, pupils were asked to correct the spelling and grammar of written information on the subject where key words were misspelled and simple grammatical rules, such as the use of punctuation, were applied incorrectly.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' conduct around the school at break and lunch time is good. There is a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the school restaurant despite the large number of pupils who gather there. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is generally good and serious incidents are rare, as shown by the low exclusion rates, although pupils, parents and carers point to some lessons being disrupted. This is usually associated with weaker teaching where pupils are not enthused or engaged by the activities or, more rarely, where teachers do not have the behaviour-management skills to deal with more unruly pupils. A small minority of pupils are tardy in getting to lessons. In lessons where expectations are not clear or acted on, pupils' relaxed attitude to learning means the pupils do not progress as well as they should.

Pupils, parents and carers are confident that pupils are safe in school and that bullying, when reported to senior staff, is dealt with promptly and effectively. However, some pupils noted that verbal comments about individual pupils which could be hurtful were sometimes dismissed by teachers as 'banter'. Pupils' awareness of different types of bullying is good as these are discussed by all year groups. Attendance is broadly average.

### **Leadership and management**

At its last inspection the school was judged good overall but it has suffered a decline in subsequent years. Under the leadership of the current headteacher and senior staff the school's capacity for improvement is improving. There is a renewed focus on raising standards, resulting in rising GCSE results and an improvement in the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. In some areas, the quality of teaching has improved and the headteacher is rigorously tackling the weakest teaching. Improved monitoring of pupils' performance data ensures that the headteacher and senior staff are crystal clear about the need for change. Their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in achievement of different groups of pupils, such as those eligible for free school meals and those who have achieved well in primary school, is well founded. This evaluation is underpinning a range of changes in how the school is run and placing the improvement of teaching and learning as a top priority. Improvements to teaching are underway but are inconsistent. Some senior staff lesson observations focus too much on teachers' actions and not enough on the quality of pupils' learning and progress. As a result,

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teachers have not always been clear that improvement was needed.

Senior staff and most middle leaders now use monitoring information effectively to track pupils' progress and to intervene where underachievement is apparent. The monitoring of progress data also underpins a more rigorous performance management system for teaching staff. Although not yet consistent across all subjects, middle leaders are taking increasing responsibility for the progress of pupils in their subject areas and are holding teachers to account for the achievement of pupils. The governing body is supportive of the school's work but does not yet hold the school to account with sufficient rigour.

The school provides a broad, balanced curriculum based in Key Stage 4 mainly on a wide range of GCSE subjects. Consequently, the proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSEs at A\* to G is above the national average. On leaving school, few pupils are not in education, employment or training and the great majority go on to further education. The school provides many good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development both in lessons and through other activities including community projects. However, there is no overarching plan to coordinate or monitor the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding are entirely in order and the school takes its responsibilities to promote equality and tackle discrimination seriously.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

| Grade   | Judgement    | Description  |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

| Type of school       | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) |      |              |            |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
|                      | Outstanding   | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools      | 46  | 46   | 8            | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 8   | 47   | 40           | 5          |
| Secondary schools    | 14  | 38   | 40           | 8          |
| Special schools      | 28  | 48   | 20           | 4          |
| Pupil referral units | 15  | 50   | 29           | 5          |
| All schools          | 11  | 46   | 38           | 6          |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement:               | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.   |
| Attainment:                | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.  |
| Attendance:                | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.   |
| Behaviour:                 | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.   |
| Capacity to improve:       | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:     | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.  |
| 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. |
| Safety:                    | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.             |

**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.**



24 February 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Worle Community School, Weston-Super-Mare BS22 8XX**

Thank you for taking time to talk to us during our recent inspection. I can report that Worle Community School is a satisfactory school.

You make satisfactory progress as a result of the satisfactory teaching you receive and achieve broadly average GCSE results. The great majority of you go on to further education when you leave at 16. There is a positive atmosphere in the school as you get on well with each other and with your teachers. We think these good relationships are a good base on which to improve your learning and to help boost GCSE results further. Your conduct around the school is usually good and you feel safe there. You generally behave well in lessons, but not all of you give of your best in all lessons.

The headteacher and senior staff are clear about the improvements that are needed and we have asked the headteacher and your teachers to do the following.

- Make sure that you understand how well you are doing and how to improve the quality of your work by clearer marking and assessment.
- Make sure that in all lessons and in different subjects you are all working to your full potential and that activities capture your attention and interest. You can help by always focusing on your work in class.
- Senior staff should check regularly, and often, how well you are being taught to make sure all of you are making as much progress as possible in all subjects.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Tom Winskill  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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