

West Buckland Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123712
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	359493
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Lake

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 of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Winter
Headteacher	Helen MacGregor
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons, observing four teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils, and spoke to a number of parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at the following documents: the most recent school self-evaluation form; the school development plan; governing body minutes; the school's assessments of pupils' attainment and progress; the records held on vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspectors also examined school policies, and reports from the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils, staff and 60 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The achievement of more-able pupils at Key Stage 1 to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging.
- The role of middle managers in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning.
- The systems for checking on the impact of strategies to improve community cohesion.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller-than-average school serving mainly the village community. Almost all pupils are White British with none at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and no pupil currently has a statement of special educational needs. The school holds the Healthy Schools Plus award, Activemark and Artsmark.

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

This is a satisfactory school which provides a welcoming environment for learning. Pupils' high attendance shows how much they enjoy school. The outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that pupils not only feel very safe but have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. ♦ Strong partnerships with external agencies provide valuable additional support for vulnerable pupils and good support for the school's drive for improvement. The school works closely with parents and carers to support their children's learning. Pupils' effective personal development is seen in their good behaviour and their excellent understanding of how to keep healthy. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although their awareness of diversity within the United Kingdom is less well developed. Safeguarding arrangements are good and the good curriculum provides stimulating experiences for pupils.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving. Strong leadership from the headteacher and senior staff has halted a decline in attainment. Children get off to a good start in Reception. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall but progress slows in Year 2. This is because the quality of teaching is variable and does not always challenge pupils enough, especially those who are more able. The quality of learning and pupils' progress has improved in Years 3 to 6 and attainment in English and mathematics is rising, although attainment remains average by the end of Year 6. Information on how well pupils are doing is used appropriately to plan work that provides a satisfactory challenge to most pupils, but this is inconsistent.

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. The school development plan targets well areas for improvement. The school has recognised that analysis of the detailed records on pupils' attainment and progress is not readily enough available to the governing body and subject leaders to enable them to compare the school's performance with other schools nationally. The strengths noted at the previous inspection are being maintained, and the quality of the curriculum and of care, support and guidance has improved. Leaders are already taking action on all the areas identified for improvement in this report. The school, therefore, has satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

Up to 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching in Year 2 so that at least two-thirds is good or better by January 2012 in order that pupils, particularly the more-able, make good progress in writing and mathematics, by:

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- ensuring that information on pupils' attainment and progress is used effectively to plan lessons that challenge all pupils to achieve their best
- making sure that marking is in line with the school's policy and that pupils follow up teachers' comments
- raising teachers' expectations of the quantity and quality of work that pupils can produce.
- Seek additional ways of developing pupils' understanding of cultural diversity within the United Kingdom.
- Consolidate and embed the new systems for analysing data so that all leaders and managers, including the governing body, have easy access to high-quality information on how the year groups are performing compared to other schools nationally.

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

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and are keen to learn. Children's skills on entry are variable but generally in line with those normally found at this age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage but progress slows to satisfactory in Key Stage 1, especially in writing and mathematics. Progress accelerates again during Key Stage 2, and in Year 6 pupils now have more challenging targets and are on track to achieve above average standards this year, particularly in English. The school's focus upon improving pupils' writing skills through attention to sentence structure is proving effective. When considering the poem 'The Highwayman', Year 5/6 pupils were helped to use metaphors in their sentences through well-focused teaching and very good use of talking partners. They were encouraged to reflect upon the meanings behind the metaphors and how they made them feel. This not only helped their understanding of the poem's construction but also contributed well to their spiritual development. One pupil showed good understanding by saying, 'It gives you a picture in your mind.' More-able pupils in most classes make the same progress as other pupils and are often challenged to make even more. In an outstanding lesson, more-able pupils in Years 5 and 6 were challenged well to rewrite a line from the poem using a different metaphor. The focus on talking partners gave pupils the confidence to discuss their understanding and ensured very effective learning. Although such learning happens across the school, it occurs less frequently in Year 2, which is one of the reasons pupils in that year, especially the more able, make slower progress. ♦ Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons and, as a result, make good progress. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory and their good art work is recognised by the Artsmark award.

Pupils are polite and friendly. They say that there is very little bullying and they trust all adults to deal with it effectively. Pupils are very knowledgeable about how to stay safe and explain in great detail about internet safety and road safety. The recent award of 'Healthy Schools Plus' recognises the many opportunities that pupils take to lead a healthy lifestyle. They have healthy snacks at breaktime and many take advantage of the wealth of sporting opportunities provided. The school's sports team is very successful in the many local and regional events it participates in, as recognised by the fact that the school holds the Activemark award. Pupils undertake many roles in school as a result of the 'Learning to Lead' programme. For example, pupils organised and ran a sponsored walk to raise

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money for charity, handling all aspects of the event as a team. They take part in local fetes and sing in old people's homes. ♦ Pupils know right from wrong and have a strong understanding of moral issues through debates on matters of importance. For example, pupils recently discussed whether they should change from supporting an individual pupil in Uganda to sending their money to a charity that would help a group of people. They have a strong understanding of their own local culture and some other cultures through visitors to the school and the links with Uganda.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching has improved recently, especially in Years 5 and 6. Good appointments have strengthened the teaching team and robust action by the headteacher is focused upon eradicating identified areas of weakness. In most lessons, ICT is used well to stimulate and motivate pupils. Assessments are now more rigorous and regular with moderation procedures to ensure accuracy. ♦ This is providing a more secure base against which pupils' progress can be measured and is enabling teachers to identify the next steps in learning for pupils. Nevertheless, inconsistencies remain in the way this information is used to plan lessons that challenge all pupils to achieve of their very best. New marking systems, which involve pupils in assessing some of their own work alongside teachers and identifying 'two stars and a wish', are understood well by pupils and in many lessons used

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effectively to identify areas for improvement. Most teachers have high expectations of the quality and quantity of pupils' written work and follow the school's guidance on marking. Nevertheless, in both these areas, inconsistencies remain which slow the pace of learning and, in some lessons, pupils do not follow up teachers' comments enough.

The curriculum links areas of learning effectively and provides opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in a wide range of activities. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Visitors and stimulating visits provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about their own environment and compare it with others. The school has identified the need to improve opportunities for promoting pupils' cultural development and community cohesion, and is seeking links with schools in more culturally diverse areas of Britain. Links are being established with Gambia to supplement the good existing good link with Uganda.

Pastoral care is very strong. Child protection procedures are detailed and well known to all staff. The school works very closely with parents and carers to support their children's learning through information evenings. Parents and carers receive regular reports on the progress of their children after the high-quality individual pupil conferences in which pupils discuss their progress with their teachers. Very clear systems are in place to deal with any concerns that pupils may have and all pupils who join the school from other schools are supported extremely well. Pupils identified as gifted and talented are given suitably challenging learning targets and they gain additional support through the strong partnerships with other local schools. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive extremely good support through strong links with outside agencies. The very good support given to parents and carers, and pupils, has helped improve attendance since the previous inspection.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership that has developed in all staff and the governing body an ambition to succeed and a drive to improve. Subject leaders are involved in monitoring their subjects through activities such as scrutiny of work, although they are just developing their skills of classroom observation.

The governing body supports the school well and discharges its statutory responsibilities appropriately. It has good systems for ensuring the safety of pupils and, along with other staff, undertakes regular training on safeguarding. Pupils' progress is tracked and recorded well, and information from this used effectively to monitor equality of opportunity and to avoid discrimination. The school has identified the need to have a clearer picture of the

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progress of cohorts and groups of pupils that will help the governing body to hold the school to account. An ICT-based system has just been purchased to make analysis of data easier and more accessible to all managers and governors, but its use is not yet embedded. Community cohesion is secure at a school and local level. The school has identified the need to provide a wider range of strategies to extend this beyond the local community and is developing more robust systems for evaluating the impact of these strategies.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Close and positive relationships with the local pre-school group and parents and carers mean that children settle quickly and happily. Their progress in personal and social development is particularly good. Children display positive attitudes and learn to relate well to others. The good partnership between children and adults, and a high focus on praise, ensure excellent behaviour. High-quality care helps children to feel secure and confident, and welfare needs are met very well.

Children make good progress and enter Year 1 well prepared for learning with knowledge and skills that are above age-related expectations. A welcoming and stimulating environment is provided for children. All areas of learning are covered appropriately. Adults ensure a good balance between teacher-directed activities and independent choice that helps children develop as confident learners. Good quality systems for checking on children's progress are used effectively to plan work that challenges children to achieve well. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage, enabling good quality support to be provided. The outdoor area provides good opportunities for children to engage in physical activity but this is some way from the classroom which limits opportunities for free-flow between the two.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

A large majority of parents and carers who filled in questionnaires are very pleased with the school. This was confirmed by those who spoke with inspectors at the school gate. Typical of those who expressed written comments was the parent who said. 'Very happy overall'. A small minority had some concerns. Of these, the most significant were that their children were not making enough progress and a few felt that their children were kept too safe. Inspection evidence shows that a few children do not make enough progress by the end of Key Stage 1, but this improves significantly by Year 6. Inspection evidence also shows that pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Buckland 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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 92 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	62	22	37	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	68	18	30	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	43	32	53	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	33	33	55	5	8	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	28	47	27	45	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	47	26	43	3	5	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	43	29	48	5	8	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)	16	27	34	57	4	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	40	33	55	2	3	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	35	32	53	4	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	23	37	62	4	7	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	20	33	35	58	2	3	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	50	28	47	1	2	1	2

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 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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



4 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Buckland Primary School, Wellington TA21 9LD

Thank you for making us welcome when we came to visit you. We were impressed by your good behaviour, the strong family atmosphere in your school and the high rate of attendance. ♦

Yours is a satisfactory school that is improving. Your attainment is similar to that of pupils your age in most schools. Here are some of the others things we found to be most positive.

- You have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe because the school looks after you extremely well. You told us you feel very safe in school.
- You learn well in Reception and most pupils start Year1 with above average skills.
- Your understanding of how to keep healthy and fit is excellent. You take a lot of exercise and eat very healthily. I enjoyed hearing about the success in football.
- The 'Learning to Lead' programme is a valuable part of your good curriculum. It makes a good contribution to your personal development and helps you contribute well to the school and local community.
- Your school has a lot of good links with other organisations and schools that are helping to improve your learning, so that those of you with additional needs learn well.

In order to help your school improve further, we have asked the headteacher and the governing body to:

- help you to make faster progress in Year 2 ♦ by making sure teaching in that class improves to match that in the rest of the school
- improve the way that information on your attainment and progress is shared with leaders and the governing body
- improve the opportunities for you to learn about other cultures in the United Kingdom.

All of you can help by telling your teachers if work is too easy and continuing to attend so regularly.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lake

Lead inspector

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