

Western Road Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	114406
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	378855
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2012
Lead inspector	David Marshall

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	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maya Fender
Headteacher	Garry Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	30 April–1 May 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Marshall

Additional inspector

Liz Kissane

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors spent seven hours observing teaching, which included visiting 15 class lessons and a number of smaller teaching groups. In all, ten teachers were observed teaching. In addition, discussions were held with different groups of pupils, governors, the headteacher, staff members and parents and carers. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including information about pupils' performance and progress, the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, school policies and curriculum planning documents. In addition, questionnaires from 67 parents and carers, and those from staff and pupils, were analysed.

Information about the school

Western Road is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average. The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

The breakfast and after-school clubs operated by the school were visited as part of this inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Western Road is a good school. It has improved significantly since the previous inspection so that now pupils achieve well, their attendance is high and their behaviour and safety are outstanding. Parents and carers are very pleased with all the school does for their children. The school is not outstanding because teaching is not yet leading to pupils achieving outstandingly well.
- Pupils' progress and their achievement from their starting parts are good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do well because care and support are good and children settle happily to their learning. Attainment is consistently above average by the time pupils leave Year 6.
- Teaching is good and continuing to improve. Teachers know pupils' academic development well through the good use of assessment, and pupils' progress is tracked carefully. Occasionally, tasks planned provide insufficient challenge for the more able. The exciting curriculum enables pupils to enjoy a range of activities that promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and pupils show excellent attitudes to learning. They thrive in the caring atmosphere. The school's attention to their safety means that pupils have an exceptional understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Senior leaders and the governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Middle leaders are developing well but not all are skilled in checking the quality of teaching and learning, and opportunities to share best practice are not fully utilised. However, the rigorous focus of senior staff on the quality of teaching, an effective programme of staff performance review and focused staff training have successfully improved the school since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement to outstanding by ensuring all lessons meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more able.

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- Improve the leadership of teaching and learning by:
 - improving middle leaders' contribution to, and skills in, observation and evaluation of teaching and learning
 - extending opportunities for staff to observe the best practice.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils join the school with skills and knowledge that are generally in line with those typical for their age, but there are many variations within each cohort. Parents and carers expressed a high level of satisfaction in the progress their children make and are appreciative of the efforts the school makes to involve them in their children's learning. Inspection findings show that throughout the school, all groups of pupils achieve well and they are particularly well prepared for the next stage of their education. All pupils, regardless of their ability, make at least good progress. Effective organisation enables children to make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. Last year's national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 6 showed them achieving significantly above average standards overall in English, particularly in reading. Pupils can select key points in texts and use deduction well to identify which books they will go on to next. Their enjoyment of reading is striking.

In mathematics, pupils' past work and progress within lessons illustrate their growing confidence in basic and more advanced number calculations and problem solving. Throughout the school, the pupils' work on display and in their books clearly shows the good progress they make in subjects across the curriculum, including in creative pursuits such as art. Disabled pupils, and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. This stems from the high priority the school gives to meeting their needs. For this group and others, the introduction of 'teaching teams' ensures consistent and high quality help from well-qualified teaching assistants wherever it is needed. As a result, those pupils whose circumstances may make them particularly vulnerable make good progress. Any gaps in performance between them and their peers are closed effectively.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good and leads directly to pupils' good achievement. Staff prepare lessons that link different subjects to make learning meaningful to pupils. They use learning resources effectively to assist the pupils' understanding. Teachers' good knowledge of their subjects enables them to pose questions effectively and also answer pupils' questions fully. In the Year 6 class, for example, pupils' study of the Tudors in history was linked effectively to mathematics and design and technology when making bread and cakes in a traditional way. The excellent learning was enhanced by the pupils' discussions, developing their skills in speaking and listening.

Staff provide welcoming, interesting and attractive classroom environments which

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support learning well. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the range of activities for the outdoor area enhances different aspects of the children's development, including interesting opportunities for their physical development. Lessons in the Reception class are, on the whole, well paced, with good use of time. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to allow the children to explore and set up their own tasks and as a result, learning dips.

Throughout the school, staff have very good strategies to manage behaviour and provide extremely well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The skilled planning of opportunities for speaking and listening, including role play, keep the pupils focused. Teachers regularly use paired talk, which supports speaking and listening skills effectively and also social development. For instance, pupils in Year 3 showed good speaking and listening skills and consideration and respect for others' views in their discussion of different styles of writing. Marking is helpful and supports the pupils' next steps in learning. Staff keep good records of pupils' progress and use them to ensure pupils are well challenged in most lessons. Very occasionally, the planning of work for the more able pupils in individual lessons is not challenging enough. In these cases, progress for this group slows.

The impact of the planned curriculum on the quality of teaching is clearly evident; communication skills are very well developed through the teaching approach. Teaching of basic skills is good, applied across the curriculum, and contributes to the pupils' good progress. Teaching assistants are deployed well. Extra teaching expertise for pupils who have difficulties in reading and mathematics is well managed and utilised and helps specific pupils catch up. Learning intentions are shared well and staff are consistent in ensuring that the pupils know how to be successful in their tasks. Pupils often contribute effectively to this process and suggest extra pointers for success before they begin the activity. Parents' and carers' views that teaching is good are confirmed by the inspection.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Almost all parents and carers report that standards of behaviour in the school are high and, without exception, they agree that their children are kept very safe at all times. The behaviour of pupils in class and around the school is outstanding and all evidence shows that this is typical over time. Pupils are aware of different types of bullying but say there is none of any description in the school as they are 'all friends'. They are confident that if any issues or concerns around bullying did arise, they would be dealt with swiftly and sensitively; one older pupil observed in discussion, and all others agreed, 'The teachers are always there for us.'

Throughout the school, pupils are enthusiastic learners. Pupils' high attendance is testament to their thorough enjoyment of school and all it offers. The school has devised a broad curriculum that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and includes plenty of opportunity for pupils to work cooperatively with others. This strategy was demonstrated particularly effectively in a session where pupils in the Year 5 class discussed, 'Are zoos a paradise or a prison?' The

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enthusiasm and careful thought they showed in working together in doing this were exceptional.

Pupils show very caring attitudes to each other and know there is always someone they can turn to in moments of difficulty, either academic or personal. They acquire an excellent awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe. Pupils were keen to show how much they enjoy the responsibility of the school council or being prefects. The school council is justifiably proud of the input it has made to influence changes. Year 6 pupils organised and financed a successful money-raising afternoon tea for their parents, to pay for their forthcoming residential trip. Before- and after-school care provides a supportive start and end to the day for pupils who participate. One parent said, reflecting the views of many, 'This is a fantastic school, providing a safe, nurturing and happy environment, with a strong and genuine sense of community – within which the children are encouraged and given opportunities to develop as individuals in all kinds of ways.'

Leadership and management

The headteacher and governors know the school's strengths and what needs to be refined further very well. Their careful monitoring and clear self-evaluation, and their implementation of initiatives to enthuse pupils, have kept the school moving forward relentlessly since the previous inspection, and have contributed to pupils' consistent good progress. These factors illustrate the school's good capacity for continuing its improvement.

Leaders are strongly committed to the continuing professional development of all staff and improving the quality of teaching still further. They ensure that it is closely related to the school's development planning. Middle leaders are becoming increasingly involved and effective in this process, although their skills are not yet fully developed. The governing body makes a strong contribution to the school's work. It is fully involved in all decisions and requests explanations where necessary. It holds the school to account in a challenging but supportive manner.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, contributing to their consistently excellent behaviour and good achievement. The curriculum supports learning well. It is enhanced by a range of visits and visitors, linked well with learning. Rigorous attention to safety matters is paid by managers at all levels, which ensures safeguarding meets statutory requirements. This includes detailed procedures through the checks made on all adults who work in the school. Pupils' safety and well-being are paramount at all times, ensuring that the school is a very safe and supportive place to be. The governing body and senior managers, supported well by all staff, are effective in tackling discrimination should it occur and in ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils and across all aspects of the school's work. The good progress achieved for all groups of pupils indicates the school's successful action in this respect.

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).

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 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Western Road Community Primary School, Lewes BN7 1JB

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school when we visited you recently. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and would now like to tell you what we found out about your school. We agree with what you told us – Western Road is a good school. These are the main reasons why it is good:

- You behave exceptionally well, work hard and listen very carefully to your teachers – all of this helps you to succeed.
- You make good progress because of good teaching and you really try hard at all times. It was clear you know what to do to make your work even better.
- We saw that you are very appreciative of the many activities you experience both during and after school.
- Your headteacher and staff do a really good job in organising the school.
- You all really enjoy being in school. Many of you try very hard to help others. For instance, the school council and prefects do a great job.
- All the adults in the school look after you very carefully. They always make sure that you get help if you need it.

I have agreed with your headteacher and teachers that even in a good school, there are some things that will help it to become even better. We have asked them to make sure all of you make the best progress you can, especially those of you who find some lessons quite easy. We know your teachers are all working hard to be the best they can be and we have asked that they look at what each other's lessons are like so that they can see what you enjoy most and what works best, and that those staff responsible for different parts of your learning are given more opportunities to be really effective managers.

You can help too by listening carefully and take note of what your teachers say. Then you will all make even better progress in your learning.

Yours sincerely

David Marshall
Lead inspector

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