

# Westfield Community Primary School

Westfield Road, Hoddesdon, EN11 8RA

**Inspection dates** 3–4 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- There remains too much underachievement for the school to be good overall. This is particularly prevalent in Year 2.
- Some disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make slow progress. Some teachers do not do everything they could to help these pupils make the gains of which they are capable.
- Teaching is not always good enough to help pupils catch up.
- The school does not monitor effectively enough the impact of the additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to write for sustained periods of time. In some classes, pupils are not encouraged to practise and develop writing skills frequently enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- Most teaching is good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Many teachers have made significant improvements in their day-to-day work.
- Where teaching is good, teaching assistants make a positive difference. Most understand how to support learning and, in many classes, they work well with teachers in providing the appropriate support for individuals and groups.
- Leaders have shown that they can effectively drive school improvement. They are in a good position to continue to improve the quality of teaching so the school becomes good.
- Behaviour around school and on the playground is good. Pupils are mature and sensible. They enjoy coming to school.
- Many teachers and teaching assistants use questions to help pupils think deeply about their work.

## Information about this inspection

- Most of this inspection was spent observing teaching. The inspector observed 11 lessons.
- The inspector observed the school's work. He scrutinised data, considered information about pupils' attainment and progress, information about school improvement, documentation relating to pupils' safety and safeguarding, notes from the governing body and work in pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with the deputy headteacher, other leaders, teachers, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Pupils read to the inspector and talked about their work.
- The inspector talked to groups of pupils around the school and in some lessons about their experiences in school.
- The inspector talked informally to a small number of parents and carers at the end of the school day and took account of the views expressed by 19 parents and carers on Parent View, the online questionnaire. The inspector also considered a very small number of letters sent by parents.
- The inspector took account of the findings from his previous monitoring visits.

## Inspection team

Michael Sheridan, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.*

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average. Most pupils are White British and most other pupils are from other white backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional government funding known as the pupil premium, because they are known to be eligible for free school meals, is above the national average. This has increased since the last inspection.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is in line with the national average.
- The school meets the current floor standard, the minimum standard of pupils' achievement set by the government.
- At the last full inspection, the school was placed in the category of special measures. This inspection took place during the third monitoring visit.
- The headteacher was absent during this inspection.

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

- Ensure that pupils who have fallen behind, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are given every opportunity to catch up quickly by:
  - improving the quality of teaching where it still requires improvement
  - ensuring that the individual needs of pupils are catered for by class teachers through the most effective deployment of additional staff and the careful matching of learning tasks to pupils' abilities
  - carefully evaluating the impact of pupil premium expenditure against eligible pupils' academic achievements, so that this funding is seen to be making a difference.
- Ensure that pupils in all classes write regularly for sustained periods and that all writing opportunities are used to develop pupils' writing skills by:
  - ensuring that pupils work on achieving their writing targets in subjects other than English
  - providing feedback that allows pupils to make meaningful improvements to their writing.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils **requires improvement**

- Pupils are much more engaged in their learning than in the past. Most gaps in achievement are closing convincingly. Many pupils throughout the school are in a stronger position than in the past because progress overall is much better than it was when the school was last inspected.
- There remains some underachievement within the school. In most classes, this is being eradicated. Achievement would be good but for the fact that there are some lower attaining pupils who continue to make slow progress and pupils in the current Year 2 continue to underachieve.
- The school has made sensible judgements about how to spend the pupil premium. This includes additional pastoral support, extra teaching assistants in classes and some targeted small-group work with the support of an experienced teacher. While much of this appears useful, leaders have not checked that all of this activity is making the difference it needs to.
- The gaps in attainment and rates of progress between pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and their classmates vary throughout the school. Leaders recognise this and have targeted extra resource into year groups where the need is greatest.
- Last year, pupils in Year 6 known to be eligible for free school meals were more than a year behind their classmates in mathematics and nearly two years behind in English. This year this gap is likely to be smaller, although the school's way of collecting data makes it difficult to be certain about this.
- There are several extra small group sessions that take place and these are helping the disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who access them to catch up in English and mathematics. The progress of these pupils continues to be uneven because they do not always make enough progress in class.
- Pupils enjoy reading, and younger pupils are learning effectively the sounds that letters make. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they read. Some lower attaining pupils have reading books that are too easy for them so they are not sufficiently challenged when reading to an adult in school or at home.
- Pupils in the current Year 6 are making very good progress and are on track to reach standards of attainment that are at least in line with the national average. This group of pupils were a long way behind when they entered Year 6 and have made up much ground this year.
- Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage have had a good start to their schooling. They are making good progress and are well prepared for the move to more structured teaching in Year 1 next year.

### The quality of teaching **requires improvement**

- Teaching has improved considerably since the last full inspection. Most teaching is good and progress in most classes is better than it has been in the past. Pupils enjoy learning and work hard to meet their teacher's high expectations.

- Where teaching requires improvement, not enough is done to ensure that work is set at the right level for all pupils. In a small number of lessons, teachers do not check carefully enough to see that all pupils understand the purpose of the task set. In these lessons, teachers do not think enough about how they are going to deliver new learning to all groups of pupils. When this happens, lower attaining pupils sometimes struggle and, as a result, make less progress.
- Most teachers give pupils plenty of opportunity to learn about sentence structure and grammar. However, in some classes, the opportunities to practise these skills are limited because pupils are not encouraged to think about this knowledge when they write longer texts, particularly in subjects other than English. In some classes, pupils do not have frequent enough opportunity to write at length so they do not build up their writing stamina.
- In the many lessons where teaching is good, teachers capture pupils' imaginations with interesting subjects or scenarios. Pupils in these lessons work hard and enjoy producing good-quality work. They know that teachers' expectations are high and they work hard to meet them.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at asking questions that help pupils think hard and deeply. This is particularly effective in mathematics, where questions are used to guide pupils in solving problems without too much help.
- Teachers and adults in class know pupils well. Pupils with additional social and emotional needs are well supported so they remain happy and engaged in school.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school and demonstrate a respect for each other and their teachers. Even in lessons that are not well taught, pupils try hard to please and apply themselves diligently.
- There is a positive buzz around school and in most classrooms. Pupils behave well in lessons because they want to be there. They know that adults will support them if they get stuck with their work.
- Behaviour in the playground is very much better than it has been in the past. Pupils play respectfully with and alongside each other. Pupils report that poor behaviour on the playground is now rare and dealt with quickly.
- Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibility. They proudly explain their roles and responsibilities, and they recognise the difference that they make to their school. Other pupils recognise the importance of these roles and treat post-holders with respect.
- Most parents and carers who spoke with inspectors said that they find their children's teachers very approachable and friendly. They are happy with the progress that their children are making and the way that the school deals with their concerns. A small number of parents who communicated with the inspector on this visit stated that the school is not always welcoming and open to considering their views. The school is aware of this view and is determined to take action to improve this perception.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Leaders have been effective in moving teaching from being inadequate to requiring improvement. Much teaching is now good. Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and

provide effective guidance and training to teachers and teaching assistants. Leaders recognise what they need to do to move the school to being good and are determined to achieve this by their next inspection. Their impact to date suggests that they are in a strong position to continue to drive improvements.

- Leaders have built a cohesive team. Staff members understand what the school wants to achieve and all show a commitment to reaching ambitious targets. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together and all are keen to continue to develop their teaching.
- Leaders have a very good understanding of the issues that the school continues to tackle. They collect a large amount of useful data about pupils' performance in different subjects. These data are used to inform future improvements and professional development. Leaders know where they need to refine their systems further and have plans well under way to, for example, improve their tracking of pupil premium spending alongside the progress of eligible pupils.
- Pupil premium is being used to fair effect, but some pupils eligible for this funding continue to make slow progress, often because of historical inadequacies. Leaders have not effectively evaluated the impact of this extra provision on individual pupils' progress.
- Leaders manage performance well. The performance management systems are new but have been used to ensure that all staff have targets that show how they will contribute to school improvement.
- Leaders are not complacent and have continued to provide opportunities for teachers to support each other in developing teaching and planning further.
- Leaders are ambitious for the school. They seek support from others and act on advice given. This is a school where all adults are eager to continue to improve.
- The local authority has provided a wide range of support during the school's time in special measures. Since the last visit, the local authority has provided less support. This was sensible and has allowed leaders to demonstrate that they are able to independently move the school forward.
- Sufficient capacity has been maintained during the absence of the headteacher, with a small amount of additional guidance from an effective headteacher from a nearby school. The local authority and governing body both rightly recognise that additional capacity will be needed if the headteacher remains absent in September, so that senior leaders with teaching responsibility are not stretched too thinly.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has set up good systems to monitor the effectiveness of the school. They understand what data says about the progress of different groups of pupils. Governors visit the school regularly to see first-hand the quality of teaching. Governors' minutes show that they hold leaders to account, asking pertinent questions about data and school improvement planning. Performance management systems are in place and governors have a secure understanding of how the new performance management structure tackles underperformance and rewards good teaching. All statutory duties are fulfilled, including those for pupils' safeguarding. Governors are increasingly confident in their roles and responsibilities. They have taken notice of the advice that they received following the local authority's review of their effectiveness. As a senior leader in education, the Chair of the Governing Body brings a wealth of experience that has proved important in steering the development of governance through a period of change and rebuilding. She

has ensured that new governors have developed in confidence and competence. An additional governor, appointed by the local authority, has provided a further model of good governance for others to learn from. The governing body is in a strong position to continue to support and challenge the school.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117270
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	420535

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<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>	196
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Linda Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diane Ashmore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01992 465739
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