

Westcliff School

First Avenue, Dawlish, Devon, EX7 9RA

Inspection dates

11–12 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' attainment and progress dropped after the previous inspection.
- Pupils' achievement requires improvement. By the end of Year 6 in 2014, attainment was below average in writing because pupils made too little progress from Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils' progress is not yet consistently good in all classes or fast enough to make up fully for the slower progress they made in the past.
- Teaching has not been good enough over time to promote consistently good progress for most pupils.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have not been high enough.
- Teachers do not always set work at the right level of difficulty, especially for the most-able pupils.
- Children in the early years provision are not making good progress in all areas of learning, particularly in writing.
- Teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling is not consistently good in all classes.
- Not all pupils have enough opportunities to write extended pieces, in subjects other than English.
- A number of governors are new and have not yet had sufficient training to enable them to challenge leaders and hold the school rigorously to account.

The school has the following strengths:

- Leaders and managers are taking positive steps to raise pupils' achievement and to improve teaching.
- There are strengths in the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Pupils enjoy school and are respectful to others. Their behaviour is good in lessons and around the school
- Procedures to ensure that pupils are safe are effective. Pupils feel safe and well looked after by staff.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. A number of lessons were seen jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Time was spent analysing pupils' work and the information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other staff, a representative from the local authority, governors, parents and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 55 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and correspondence from parents.
- Questionnaires completed by 24 members of staff were considered.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents including school policies, safeguarding procedures and the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Marian Marks	Additional Inspector
Dianne Jones	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Westcliff is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below the national average.
- About a quarter of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. This is in line with the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for looked after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Children in the early years attend full time.
- The school did not meet the current government floor standards in 2014, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching so that all groups of pupils make good or better progress by:
 - making sure that all teachers expect pupils to do their very best
 - ensuring that all work set is at the right level for pupils, particularly the most-able.
- Improve pupils' progress and raise attainment by the end of Year 6, especially in writing, by:
 - strengthening children's writing skills in the early years
 - sharing the good practice in the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills and write extended pieces in
 - subjects other than English.
- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure that:
 - swift action is taken to improve teaching which is less than good
 - governors are provided with information and training so that they have a clear understanding of the school's performance and can challenge leaders and hold the school fully to account.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leaders and managers have not been effective enough in raising pupils' achievement and ensuring that teaching is consistently good. The school has not moved forward enough since the previous inspection and therefore still requires improvement.
- Pupils' achievement dipped in 2014 and attainment by the end of Year 6 was below average in writing. Not all pupils made the progress they should. Weaknesses in assessments and teaching in the past contributed to the drop in pupils' attainment and progress.
- The leadership of teaching has varied in effectiveness. While teaching is improving, it is not consistently good across the school and some weaknesses remain. The quality of teaching is checked by senior leaders and points for improvement are provided. Checks to ensure improvements take effect have not been robust enough in the past. There are appropriate arrangements for the management of teachers' performance. The targets set to improve teachers' skills are well linked to pupils' progress and to priorities in the school's improvement plan. New teachers, including those new to the profession, receive helpful guidance and support from experienced colleagues.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders have a clear overview of the school's performance and are taking positive steps to improve teaching and to raise pupils' achievement. Subject leadership has recently improved and so leaders of English and mathematics are making a stronger contribution to school improvement. Pupils are currently making better progress and underachievement is being eradicated.
- The school provides an appropriate range of subjects. There are more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills than previously. A good range of additional activities such as clubs, educational visits and sport enhances pupils' learning and contributes well to their social development. All pupils have full and equal access to the activities on offer. The school promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relations and tackles all forms of discrimination well. Leaders and staff are beginning to implement the new assessment arrangements.
- The primary school physical education and sports premium is used well to promote pupils' physical development and to extend their sporting opportunities. The school has established a productive sports partnership with a local secondary school. Specialist coaches and teachers have been employed to provide training and development for staff in areas such as gymnastics. Pupils participate well in local tournaments for football, netball and tag-rugby.
- The leaders and staff promote good behaviour and ensure that all pupils are safe. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are effective and robust. The school promotes positive qualities such as cooperation, good relationships, respect for others and tolerance. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The pupil premium is used properly to provide eligible pupils with extra help, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Provision for reading for disadvantaged pupils has improved since the last inspection.
- The local authority provided appropriate support soon after the last inspection and has effectively monitored the school's progress.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governors are supportive. However, some governors are new and have not yet received sufficient information and training to have a clear understanding of the school's performance.
 - Some governors believe mistakenly that the teaching in the school is good but they are not linking the quality of what the teacher does to the progress that pupils' make.
 - Governors are familiar with requirements for the management of teachers' performance but they are not sufficiently informed about teachers' performance being linked to the progress that pupils make.
 - Not all governors are sufficiently well informed about the school to enable them to challenge leaders and hold the school fully to account.
 - The governors check on how the pupil premium is spent and they are kept informed about the progress of pupils eligible for the funding
 - Governors, together with senior leaders, fulfil the statutory requirements regarding safeguarding.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils say that they enjoy school and the different activities provided. Across the school, pupils show good attitudes to learning. Most are fully engaged in their work and show good levels of concentration.
- Pupils are well behaved in lessons, in the playground and as they move about the school. The school's records of incidents show that behaviour is typically good over time. In a few classes, such as in Year 6, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are exemplary.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and show consideration and respect for others. They show a reasonable understanding of different religions and cultures.
- Attendance has improved because of the actions taken by the school and the local authority education welfare officer. Attendance levels are now average.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because occasionally, in some classes, a very few pupils are not fully engaged in their learning.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Procedures to check the well-being of vulnerable pupils are robust.
- Almost all of the parents who completed Parent View stated that their children were happy at school and felt safe.
- Pupils informed the inspectors that there was very little bullying in the school. Discussions with them revealed that they had a clear understanding of bullying and its different forms, including cyber-bullying and name calling. Pupils felt sure that any bullying would be quickly dealt with by staff.
- When pupils were asked by the inspectors if they felt safe at school, 'definitely' was a typical reply. All were confident that they could turn to trusted adults in the school should they be worried or upset.
- Pupils know and understand how to keep themselves safe at home, at school and in the community. For example, they have a good understanding of being safe on the internet.

The quality of teaching**requires improvement**

- Teaching has not been effective enough over time to promote good progress for most groups of pupils. Past weaknesses in teaching have slowed pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in writing.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils' can achieve and how much work they are expected to produce have not been high enough.
- Teachers do not always set work at the right level of difficulty for pupils, particularly the most able. When this happens, pupils do not make the progress they should because tasks are either too easy for some or too difficult for others.
- The assessment of pupils' attainment has been strengthened and so teachers now have a more accurate view of how well pupils are doing. Most teachers use this information well to plan their lessons and to set suitably challenging work for different groups of pupils.
- Recent improvements to the teaching of writing are having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Pupils are given wider opportunities to write for different purposes and in different styles. However, they do not always have sufficient opportunities to write extended pieces, particularly in subjects other than English.
- Teachers are giving increased attention to developing pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling. Guidance in these is very effective in some, but not all, classes.
- In mathematics, pupils are effectively taught calculation skills and the main mathematical operations. They are given appropriate opportunities to apply knowledge and skills to solve relevant problems.
- Teachers set useful learning goals for pupils in writing and mathematics so they know what they are aiming for. The marking of pupils' work is effective and helpful. Teachers identify good work and provide helpful comments to guide improvement. As a result, pupils know how well they are doing and know what they need to do to improve their work.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has improved since the previous inspection and pupils are making good progress in acquiring early reading skills. The reading provision for pupils supported by the pupil premium has also been strengthened.

- Teaching assistants are in the main well deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those who need additional help with language, literacy and numeracy.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment and progress dropped after the previous inspection. By the end of Year 6 in 2014, attainment was broadly average in mathematics, but below average in reading and especially in writing. Some pupils in this year group did not make enough progress through Years 3 to 6 in writing.
- The headteacher, key leaders and staff are taking positive action to raise pupils' achievement. Pupils are now making faster progress but it is not consistently good in all classes. Some classes are having to catch up in their learning because of the slower progress made in the past. Nevertheless, much of the underachievement of the past in writing has been tackled.
- The Year 6 pupils supported by the pupil premium in 2014 attained slightly lower standards than the others in the school in reading and mathematics. These pupils were about two months behind their peers. However, disadvantaged pupils attained much lower than their peers in writing and they were about four terms behind. These pupils also attained lower standards than other pupils nationally. They were about eight months behind in reading and mathematics and nearly four terms behind in writing. While progress has required improvement in the past, the school is closing the gaps in reading and mathematics and robust action is being taken to tackle the difference in writing.
- With improved teaching, the most-able pupils are making faster progress. However, there are occasions in lessons when the work set is not sufficiently demanding to extend the learning of the most-able. In 2014 the proportions of Year 6 pupils attaining the higher levels were below average in mathematics and writing but closer to average in reading.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is improving because of better teaching. Pupils also receive well-focused support that meets their needs.
- Pupils' progress in reading is improving. The proportions of pupils that reached the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check were average in 2013 and just above average in 2014. Older pupils acquire and apply more advanced reading skills such as inference and deduction. They apply their reading skills well in finding new information for their topic work.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is improving well because of the actions taken by the school to tackle previous underachievement. The writing seen in pupils' current books is of a higher standard than the low outcomes reported for last year's Year 6. Punctuation, grammar and spelling are improving in most classes. Most pupils take care with handwriting and presentation. However, pupils are not always applying their writing skills well enough in different subjects. As a result, pupils' writing in English is often better than it is in other subjects.
- In mathematics, pupils show clear knowledge and understanding of how to make calculations and carry out mathematical operations. They apply their knowledge and skills competently to solve problems.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children join the Reception classes with levels of knowledge, understanding and skills a little below those typical for their age.
- The early years provision requires improvement because children are not making consistently good progress in all the areas of learning. For example, their achievement in writing is a weaker area and provision for the development of writing is not prominent enough. They are not fully prepared to make the very best start in Year 1.
- Teaching requires improvement because teachers do not always ensure that the learning activities are at the right level of difficulty for different groups of children. Some activities are not sufficiently challenging to engage the children fully and enable them to make good progress.
- Adults have formed good relationships with the children. The children feel safe and relate positively to adults and to other children. Children share learning resources and show consideration for others. Behaviour is good in the Reception classes.
- Leadership and management require improvement because provision and children's progress are not consistently good. The early years leader has a clear understanding of the strengths of the early years provision and which areas need improvement. For example, the school has plans to improve the outdoor learning facilities.

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

Unique reference number	113196
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	448993

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	298
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Alford
Headteacher	Barbara Capper
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 October 2012
Telephone number	01626 862444
Fax number	01626 862510
Email address	admin@dawlish-westcliff-primary.devon.sch.uk

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