

West Park CofE Primary (Controlled) School

Marlborough Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN12 4HD

Inspection dates	10–11 February 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides exceptional leadership. She has rejuvenated the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection, bringing the school community together to work confidently and effectively as a team.
- The headteacher's guidance and direction have been instrumental in developing all leaders' roles. This has increased the pace and quality of improvement since the previous inspection.
- Teaching has improved and is effective in all classes.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils' attainment has increased at the end of both key stages since the previous inspection.
- Pupils make much faster progress in mathematics than at the time of the previous inspection. Consistently strong teaching in all year groups ensures that pupils become confident mathematicians by the end of Year 6.
- Staff in the special support unit (The Willows) provide highly effective care and teaching for its pupils. The teacher in charge is a strong leader, working closely with her team of experienced and well-qualified staff.
- Pupils' good behaviour helps them to make the most of school life and all it offers. Pupils of all ages work together extremely well. They feel safe and secure in school.
- The school's work makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Governors effectively support and challenge school leaders, holding them to account for pupils' achievement well.
- Children in the early years provision make rapid progress and quickly grow in confidence. Good teaching equips them with secure literacy and numeracy skills, as well as helping them to develop personally and emotionally.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few teachers set English work that does not fully challenge and extend pupils often enough, particularly for the most able.
- Some pupils are careless with the presentation of their work and with the quality of their handwriting.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Set work that challenges and extends pupils' learning in English more often, particularly for the most able.
- Help pupils to develop and appreciate the importance of a legible handwriting style.
- Make sure pupils present their work carefully and neatly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher leads the school with clarity and direction. She inspires ambition in staff and pupils alike. She has established a positive, hard-working and inclusive ethos in the school. Staff and governors work together very well as a team and share the headteacher's high expectations and aspirations for the school.
- The headteacher has established a cohesive approach to improving the school, taking her staff with her in the school's journey of improvement. Everyone is clear about the most important developments the school needs. All staff understand the part they play and know that they are accountable for their work.
- The headteacher has extended and strengthened leadership throughout the school, accelerating the pace of improvement. Leaders work closely with the headteacher to check that changes and developments are consistently in place in all classes.
- The two deputy headteachers fully share the headteacher's vision for the school. Their roles have developed substantially since the previous inspection. They have played a significant part in securing improvements in key aspects of the school's work, including mathematics, special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils' achievement.
- Strong leadership of teaching for pupils with special educational needs or disability, including for those who attend The Willows, ensures that these pupils achieve well. Leaders focus on the difference additional support makes to pupils' learning and quickly make changes if pupils are not making sufficiently rapid progress.
- Leaders make sure that teachers are aware that they are responsible for ensuring that all pupils make equally good progress. The special needs leader and assistant special needs leader support and advise teachers effectively when, for example, planning learning to focus on the needs of individual pupils.
- Leaders have established secure, reliable systems to measure pupils' progress. However, these are still at an early stage and while most leaders confidently use the information well to check pupils' progress and respond to pupils' needs, a few are not quite as familiar. Until this is fully embedded, leadership is not yet outstanding.
- Leaders use pupil premium funds effectively so that disadvantaged pupils get the most out of school. In the past, too little was put in place at too late a stage to give these pupils enough support. This is no longer the case. Accurate assessments and regular checks on disadvantaged pupils' progress mean that teachers and leaders keep a close check on pupils' learning, making changes where needed to ensure their continued progress. Information about disadvantaged pupils' progress and the work in their books indicates that the gaps between their progress and that of others in the school and other pupils nationally are now reducing. However, leaders continue to target this group's achievement as a priority.
- Subject leaders have worked together to map out the new curriculum, ensuring coverage and progression across the years and between classes. Subject plans are now well established and followed throughout the school so that pupils' learning builds well. Year leaders play a key role in checking that pupils learn similar subject content and that no classes fall behind. Teachers, leaders, governors and pupils review the way subjects are taught each year, making changes where needed, for example in science, to make sure that learning is current, lively and relevant.
- Leaders use the primary physical education and sports premium well to develop pupils' health and well-being. For example, funds have been used to increase the number of sports clubs running after school, with an additional 200 places available, with something which appeals to pupils with a range of sporting abilities and interests. As a result, more pupils participate than previously, with some involved in competitions at district level.
- The physical education leaders provide enthusiastic and knowledgeable advice for teachers in planning and delivering lessons, so that they teach confidently. The school's commitment to sport is reflected in the recent achievement of the Gold Activemark.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to reflect on world religions in lessons and assemblies. They listen carefully to adults and to each other, giving sensible and respectful responses to questions and to the views of others. Special class books provide a record of pupils' thoughts and work, illustrating the strength of the school's work in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Recent challenging topics discussed and debated include consideration of the rule of law, the conflict in Syria and recent terrorist events in Paris.

- Consideration and celebration of British values permeate the school's work. For example, pupils collaborate very well with their classmates during lessons, listening respectfully to their ideas while also confidently offering their own. Effective team skills such as these prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
 - Most parents are positive about the school's leadership. They recognise many improvements since the previous inspection and speak highly of the headteacher.
 - The local authority has supported the school well since the previous inspection. For example, training for governors has helped them to be more actively and effectively involved in the school's work. The local authority's recognition of the headteacher's success in moving the school forward is reflected in reduced levels of support over the past year.
- **The governance of the school**
- Governors reviewed their practice following the previous inspection, making appropriate improvements to the way the governing body works. As a result, governors are better informed about the school's work and effectively hold leaders to account.
 - Governors know what leaders have done to improve the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection and the difference this has made to pupils' achievement. For example, they speak confidently about improvements in mathematics.
 - The governors' astute appointment of the headteacher has been key to the school's success. They recognise the improvements she has brought to the school's atmosphere, so that staff are very positive about teaching and open to suggestions and advice. However, governors are not complacent, and are fully informed about future priorities, contributing well to the school's development. As one governor commented: 'The framework and all procedures are in place now to enable us to get on with the job'.
 - Governors know how funds are used to support pupils' learning. The governor with responsibility for checking the use of pupil premium funding frequently meets with one of the deputy headteachers to discuss disadvantaged pupils' progress and has a comprehensive understanding of how well pupils are learning.
 - Governors have worked effectively with senior leaders to manage the recent change in the age of transfer very well; the school continues to be a settled, well-organised community.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Checks on newly appointed staff meet statutory guidance so that pupils play and learn in a secure environment. Well-maintained records mean leaders keep track of pupils' safety and well-being and identify potential risks. Leaders act immediately if they have any concerns about individual pupils. For example, the pastoral manager and office manager contact the local authority education welfare officer if they are particularly worried about any pupils who are absent without explanation.
 - Staff who spoke with inspectors during the inspection were well informed about safeguarding procedures and the steps they would take if they had any concerns. Safeguarding policies includes specific guidance for pupils who attend The Willows, including individual emergency evacuation plans for these pupils so that they are as safe as other pupils. The deputy headteacher with responsibility for safeguarding, the business manager and the pastoral manager provide high-quality leadership so that all staff and parents are well informed and pupils are secure.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers expect all pupils to work hard and generate a positive working atmosphere in their classrooms. They make good use of information about individual pupils' progress to plan and shape learning, particularly in mathematics, so that pupils make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are clear about which pupils are eligible for support from additional funding and have a good understanding of their needs. They carefully monitor these pupils' learning and well-being to check that they are achieving their potential. Extra help is put in place for any pupils who start to fall behind. Additional support effectively combines clarification and reinforcement of classroom work with preparation for pupils' future learning by introducing them to new vocabulary and ideas.

- Experienced teaching assistants provide caring and effective help for The Willows' pupils throughout the school day. While attentive and alert to these pupils' needs, they also make sure that pupils have opportunities to do things for themselves so that they become confident and independent learners.
- The quality of teachers' feedback to pupils has improved substantially since the previous inspection and is consistent with the school's marking policy in all classes. It is particularly effective in mathematics, where teachers' guidance ensures that pupils are very clear about where they have been successful and what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to write. They make sure pupils learn and practise basic grammar and punctuation, as well as giving them opportunities to write creatively and for a wide range of purposes. At times, however, some of the writing tasks set are not demanding enough for all pupils to make the best progress possible, particularly the most able. Not all teachers insist that pupils do their best to write legibly and present their work neatly.
- Changes in the teaching of reading have improved pupils' progress over the past year. Training has equipped teachers and teaching assistants with good understanding of how to develop pupils' understanding of texts; timetable changes have given teachers more time to teach reading. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is embedded securely and is effective.
- Well-established routines, strong relationships and clear expectations have helped pupils joining the school in the past year to settle well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils enjoy school and feel valued and secure. They are welcoming, interested to meet visitors and polite.
- Pupils who attend The Willows are very happy and settled because relationships are strong and they get on very well with their classmates. Teaching assistants avoid intervening too quickly to help with everyday tasks, so that, while there is always someone on hand when needed, these pupils also learn to get on without adult help wherever possible.
- Pupils collaborate effectively together during lessons, listening to each other carefully. For example, during a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils discussed whether timings in a problem-solving task should be 'am' or 'pm', relating this to the 24-hour clock.
- While most pupils work hard and want to do well, sometimes a few of them do not take enough care in the presentation of their work, so that it can be messy.
- Pupils are keen to learn about different beliefs and cultures. During the inspection, for example, pupils talked enthusiastically about a recent 'India day'. They explained how they had made Indian food, decorated their hands with henna and found out about the Taj Mahal.
- Pupils feel safe, knowing that there is always an adult who will listen seriously to any concerns they have. They are well informed about how to help to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. A recent pupil survey completed by the school confirms their sense of safety and well-being.
- The pastoral manager works closely with a team of special support assistants. They provide high-quality support for pupils with complex emotional and behavioural needs; these pupils develop well personally and academically.
- Attendance is consistently above the national average and the proportion of pupils persistently absent is low.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enthuse about school, talking to visitors politely and with interest. They behave very well during playtimes and when moving between lessons, responding quickly to teachers' requests and instructions.
- While most pupils focus well and concentrate during lessons, a few find it more difficult to concentrate so that, at times, their learning slows a little.
- Pupils say that bullying is very rare and is dealt with quickly. Records support this view and show that clear procedures are in place to respond to any issues that may arise.

- Most parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, feel that pupils are safe and well behaved.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- In the past year, inaccurate assessments and a large number of pupils joining the school have skewed nationally published information about achievement, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. Information about pupils currently in the school, the work in their books and observations of learning in lessons indicate that they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability make good progress. Those who attend The Willows play a full and confident part in school life, returning to the unit periodically for specialist provision. They become increasingly independent as they move up through the school by, for example, being responsible for moving between lessons sensibly and learning strategies to help them with everyday tasks, such as putting their coats on at playtimes. They make the same good progress as their classmates and contribute fully in lessons.
- Pupils quickly acquire a secure foundation in phonics skills, helping them to learn how to read successfully. The results of the Year 1 phonics check are consistently in line with the national average and have steadily increased over the past three years.
- Pupils of all abilities make rapid progress in reading. They confidently use phonics knowledge to help them to read any tricky words and develop a good understanding of the way books are structured. During the inspection, pupils spoke enthusiastically about the characters in the books they were reading. The most-able readers speak articulately about their reading and about their preferences for books and authors. Standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 have increased substantially since the previous inspection, matching national averages in 2015. Leaders have successfully addressed a dip in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, with more accurate assessments providing reliable measures of pupils' progress across the older years.
- Pupils make rapid progress in writing and attainment has risen since the previous inspection. In 2015, standards were above average at the end of both key stages and much higher than average at the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, most pupils can structure their writing effectively for different purposes and effects. However, while most pupils write neatly and legibly, some pupils' handwriting is less well formed and sometimes messy. At times, this hampers the fluency and flow of their written work, making it difficult for them to read through and check what they have written.
- Pupils make much faster progress in mathematics than at the time of the previous inspection because the teaching of this subject has improved substantially. Pupils confidently use knowledge of number to tackle increasingly complex mathematical problems. In 2015, pupils' attainment in mathematics was above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress has improved over the past year. Those currently in the school make good progress. While the gap between disadvantaged pupils' attainment and that of others nationally increased in 2015, improvements in teaching in the current year mean that the remaining gaps are narrowing.
- In 2015, more pupils attained the higher levels in writing and mathematics at the end of both key stages than at the time of the previous inspection. In 2015, the proportion was average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. However, while the most-able pupils make good progress and achieve well, those currently in the school have made slightly slower progress in English. This is because the work set does not always extend their writing skills well enough or help them to develop a more sophisticated vocabulary.
- Pupils joining the school during the past year due to the change in the age of transfer have settled well. Their progress has accelerated since the start of the school year and they make the same good progress as their classmates.

Early years provision

is good

- Effective leadership means that teaching in the early years provision is consistently good. As a result, all groups of children make good progress from starting points that are often lower than those typical for their age. By the end of Reception, children are well prepared with the skills and attitudes needed for the next stage of their learning in Year 1. While the proportion achieving a good level of development dipped a little in 2015, current information about children's progress indicates that the school is back on track to secure at least average levels in 2016.
- The classrooms are lively and exciting places for children to play and learn. The outdoor areas are equally appealing, offering children a wide range of activities. Children get to know their teacher and other adults well so that they feel safe and confident. They behave well and enjoy their time in school.
- Teachers accurately assess children's personal and learning needs and effectively plan activities which help children to learn and develop. Teachers make sure that all children have equal opportunities to experience a wide range of stimulating activities.
- Adults provide good-quality support for disadvantaged children so that they make the same good progress as their classmates.
- Adults display words and language widely in the early years areas to motivate and support children's writing. Adults successfully encourage children to use their knowledge of phonics so that they become more confident about writing. A consistent policy for teaching handwriting skills is successfully helping children to develop good writing habits.
- Adults check that children with special educational needs or disability are supported well. They work closely with specialist staff from The Willows, as well as other agencies, to give children the right type of help. For example, techniques such as signing are routinely used by all adults in early years provision so that children with speech and language difficulties settle and learn well.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors were very positive about their children's early experiences of schooling, commenting, for example, on the clear communication between home and school, supportive teachers and children's rapid progress.

School details

Unique reference number	126016
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10002298

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	789
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Deacon
Headteacher	Caitriona Bull
Telephone number	01903 243099
Website	www.westpark.w-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	office@westparksch.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than that found in most schools. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The school has a special support unit (The Willows), which is led by a teacher in charge. The Willows provides specialist support for pupils with additional needs or disability. Pupils attend all lessons in mainstream classes, returning to The Willows for specialist support.
- The school meets the government's 2014 floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school changed from a first and middle school to a primary school in September 2015. The recent change in the age of transfer means that there are different numbers of classes in each year group. About a third of pupils have joined the school in the past year due to the change from a first and middle school to a primary school.
- The school provides full-time early years provision in four Reception classes.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs are privately run and inspected separately.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in 30 lessons or part lessons, including three completed with senior leaders.
- The inspection team held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, members of staff, parents and pupils. A meeting also took place with the Chair of the Governing Body and six other governors.
- The inspection team took account of 187 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View and 71 staff questionnaires. In addition, they considered the views expressed by parents who spoke with them informally at the start of the school day.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and considered a range of documents, including the school's improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, attendance records and safeguarding policies.
- The inspection team looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. They also listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reading.

Inspection team

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Penelope Orme	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Robins	Ofsted Inspector

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