

# Inspection of a good school: West Minster Primary School

St George's Avenue, Sheerness, Kent ME12 1ET

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Inspection dates:

30 November and 1 December 2021

## Outcome

West Minster Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at school. They like their lessons and get on well with their teachers and other adults. Teachers make learning interesting. School is an exciting place to be. There is always lots going on for pupils to get involved in.

Teachers' expectations of work and behaviour are high. Pupils understand the school values, such as responsibility. They strive to model these in all that they do. They work hard and attain well. Pupils are proud of their school. They value the inviting spaces in the school, such as the well-used library.

Pupils behave well. Relationships across the school are warm and friendly. Everyone gets along. Pupils do not worry about bullying because they say that lessons on anti-bullying have helped them to 'learn how to react when there is a problem', which they say is rare. They trust in adults to help resolve any difficulties promptly.

The school is an important part of the community. Pupils get involved in their locality through activities such as collecting waste plastics from the beach. They then use this to learn about the wider world by learning about pollution of the oceans and how to care for the planet.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have carefully designed an ambitious curriculum that is right for their pupils. They have ensured that the curriculum is packed with experiences and opportunities that inspire pupils to learn. Leaders have recently made some changes to the core curriculum. There is a renewed emphasis on developing vocabulary and on developing problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics. Leaders know that these are the skills that pupils need to continue to sharpen to further support their learning across the curriculum. These changes are well underway but have not yet been fully evaluated to check their impact.

Reading is rightfully a central component of the curriculum. Children get off to a good start with learning to read. Teachers provide plenty of stories and rhymes in the Early Years. Children also have regular phonics teaching. Their progress is carefully monitored. Any children who start to fall behind can be quickly identified. Teachers then help them to catch up. This year leaders have extended phonics teaching up into Key Stage 2. This is to help support pupils who have not yet achieved fluency in their reading.

Regular reading practice, visits to the library and plenty of story sharing help pupils to develop a love of books. Pupils are able to talk about stories and the characters in them. Teachers ensure that those pupils who find reading more difficult have texts adapted so that they can access them. With these adaptations, teachers help pupils to meet their high expectations and to become confident readers.

Right from the start in the nursery children start to explore numbers through play. For example, children digging for worms accurately counted them as they transferred them to the 'bug hotel'. As pupils move up through the school, they systematically build their number skills and knowledge. This helps them tackle increasingly complex calculations. Pupils across the school enjoy learning their times tables through quizzes, challenges and songs. They apply this knowledge confidently to help solve problems and calculations. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the help they need through additional adult focus or support materials. They achieve well in mathematics. For example, pupils in the Ivy Centre quickly and accurately solved four-digit subtraction problems.

The wider curriculum has been carefully considered. Staff have benefited from training and support. It has helped them to sequence lessons that build knowledge for pupils well. Pupils in religious education had sufficient knowledge of faiths to discuss the idea of judgement. This broad knowledge helps pupils to develop their own informed opinions. It also prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

In lessons and around the school pupils behave well. Classes are calm and well ordered. Pupils listen to their teachers and work well together. Pupils have fun. They enjoy the good-humoured relationships that are evident across the school, but they also work hard.

Pupils' personal development is supported through a wide range of clubs, experiences and opportunities to get involved with school life. Pupils explained how much they enjoy and learn from trips to the theatre or to a police station to learn about cybercrime and to see the police dogs in action. They are proud of their contributions as play leaders or healthy living ambassadors. Teachers encourage them to think about their aspirations for the future and set their sights on careers as artists, interior designers or architects.

Leaders have steered the school through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff feel well supported by leaders and note that 'there is a lot going on, but we are given the time we need' when asked about their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular training to help identify safeguarding needs. They know how to record concerns. These are regularly reviewed to identify patterns or highlight where support is needed to help keep pupils safe. Leaders have built up strong relationships with parents and a range of support services who can provide help. Provision is regularly reviewed and any necessary referrals are made in a timely and detailed way.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. There are regular lessons on safety, including online safety. In addition, leaders have prioritised resuming swimming lessons, which they know are an important part of keeping safe, because pupils live so close to the sea.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have introduced a number of new initiatives across the core curriculum. These are underway. Leaders have not yet fully evaluated the consistency of implementation and impact of these. Leaders, including governors, should ensure that their chosen approaches are having a positive impact on pupils making progress to learn and remember more.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2016.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118438
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200419
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	514
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kenneth Mackness
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anna Pattenden (Executive Headteacher) Hazel Brewer (Head of School)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sheernesswestfederation.org.uk">www.sheernesswestfederation.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	29 and 30 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is in the process of expanding to have three classes in each year group. Currently, there are two classes in Year 3 and Year 6, with three classes in other year groups. There is a nursery and the speech and language centre, The Ivy, which has two classes.
- Along with another local school, Rose Street, the school is part of the Sheerness West Federation. An executive headteacher oversees both schools. Following the departure of the previous executive headteacher, an interim executive headteacher was in place before the current executive headteacher was appointed in April 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation.

- During the inspection, the inspector met regularly with the executive headteacher and the leadership team. Meetings were also held with other school leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator and the safeguarding lead. The inspector met with governors, including the chair. The inspector also had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector conducted deep dives into reading, mathematics and RE. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to some pupils reading.
- Records associated with safeguarding were reviewed, including the single central record and appointment procedures. The inspector spoke to staff about their safeguarding training and spoke to pupils about the support they have in understanding how to keep safe.
- The inspector reviewed responses to the parents', pupils' and staff's Ofsted questionnaires.
- Groups of staff met with the inspector to share their views about the school, including on workload and well-being. The inspector completed a tour of the school with pupils and spoke to them on the playground.

### **Inspection team**

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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