



Mead Vale Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109112
LEA North Somerset
Inspection number 278129
Inspection dates 20 March 2006 to 21 March 2006
Reporting inspector Helen Barter AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Kestrel Drive
School category	Community		Worle
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Weston-super-Mare BS22 8RQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01934 511133
Number on roll	417	Fax number	01934 518237
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Nicholas Smart
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr Jeffrey Bateson-Winn

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average primary school is situated in a district of Weston-super-Mare. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a small number from other backgrounds. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is above average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has doubled in size since it was built in 1977 and is oversubscribed. The school is part of an Excellence Cluster and held Beacon Status from 2002 to 2005.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school is outstanding. It has many significant strengths and gives excellent value for money. The first-class leadership and management and continual drive for excellence by the headteacher and staff are what makes this school as highly effective as it is. Rigorous analysis of information by staff at all levels about how well pupils are doing ensures that the school is very clear about its own strengths. Though it recognises its excellence, it is quick to identify any areas it thinks should be improved. The school has moved a long way forward since its last inspection and has very good capacity to maintain the momentum of school improvement in the future.

Many children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities that are below those normally expected for their age. Good provision in this Foundation Stage enables them to make good progress although their writing skills lag behind their learning in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils' progress accelerates as they move through the school. Consistently high quality teaching helps them to reach above average standards by the end of Year 6 and ensures that pupils of all abilities have achieved outstandingly well in both their academic and personal development by the time they leave. Pupils receive a thorough education and experience a rich range of activities that excite them and develop in them a real enjoyment of learning. The partnerships that the school has with others locally, nationally and abroad make a big contribution to pupils' learning and the enrichment of their education. Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Care is outstanding in the school itself but some requirements are not met in the after-school club. However, pupils talk warmly about how they can turn to staff if they have a problem and say that they feel safe and well cared for. The school has a happy atmosphere and pupils' behaviour is excellent. They love coming to school, and become increasingly mature and responsible as they grow older.

What the school should do to improve further

- provide more opportunities for children in the Reception classes to develop their writing skills. Note: Issues relating to the after-school club are reported in the Child Care Inspection report annex.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' progress through the school is outstanding. Some children enter the Reception classes with skills and abilities which are in line with those expected for their age, but there are many whose language, literacy and social skills are weaker. Through a strong emphasis on learning through first-hand practical experiences, children make very good progress in the Reception Year in some areas, although they do not progress as much in writing. However, this is rectified during the course of Key Stage 1, so that by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and arithmetic are slightly above the national average. Standards have improved steadily over the last three years. Targets for the next year are challenging and the school has compelling evidence that

they will be achieved. During the course of Key Stage 2, the rate of progress improves further, so that by the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards which are well above average. Achievement is outstanding, with the pupils reaching challenging targets in all areas of the curriculum by Year 6, particularly in mathematics and science where standards in the 2005 national tests were exceptionally high.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Excellent relationships throughout the school help pupils to become confident and well-motivated learners. Pupils' attendance is good and they are keen to come to school. They have exceedingly positive attitudes to everything they do, and say that they really appreciate the way in which teachers make learning so much fun. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show lots of common sense in the way they act and are always friendly and kind to each other. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility and are very helpful school members. Although only older pupils are representatives, all pupils feel they have a strong voice through the school council and that adults will always listen to their point of view.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding in all respects and is helping them to become well-rounded citizens. Their cultural awareness is exceptionally strong through the school's innovative and wide-ranging international links. They are highly supportive of the school's work to promote safe and healthy lifestyles and are keen and active participants in a variety of sports, outdoor activities and first aid training.

Pupils contribute very well to the community by participating extensively in activities outside school and through their support and links with children overseas. Pupils' very positive attitudes to work, highly developed sense of responsibility and good numeracy, literacy and thinking skills will help them greatly in later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching is outstanding. This, coupled with highly positive attitudes to learning, results in pupils' outstanding achievement. Significant features of teaching are teachers' in-depth knowledge of all the subjects and their planning of lessons to ensure that pupils of all abilities have work which meets their needs. Teaching is often highly innovative and challenges pupils to solve problems, recall facts, and analyse information. In one excellent science lesson, two teachers held a joint question-and-answer session which engaged and stimulated all the pupils and resulted in very good revision of knowledge and understanding. Different parts of the curriculum are often cleverly combined in lessons so that pupils make progress on several fronts.

A key influence on the progress that pupils make is the school's excellent system for identifying early on any difficulties in learning, using the information to ensure that the right support is provided and then regularly checking that pupils are making the progress that they should. As a result, learning difficulties are tackled and resolved early and this enables pupils to make rapid progress as they get older. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make equal progress because teachers ensure that these pupils are given work which meets their needs and well-trained teaching assistants give them very good support. Pupils with gifts and talents are also supported by a very effective and wide-ranging programme of activities in school and with others locally.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is broad and balanced and has many outstanding features. Provision for the core and foundation subjects is well balanced, and cross-curricular approaches greatly enhance learning. It is supported by a wide range of highly stimulating activities, for example outside "storytellers" to develop writing in Year 4 and drama and music activities as part of the partnership with a local secondary specialist school. Opportunities to practise writing, however, could be more frequent in the Reception class. A very unusual feature of the curriculum is the use of teachers from around the world to develop pupils' cultural and language awareness. During the inspection, a Chinese teacher and assistant were introducing the pupils to Mandarin, and the rudiments of Chinese dance. Pupils greatly enjoy the very good range of trips and activities out of school time. There is considerable involvement of the pupils in sporting activities which contribute significantly to their capacity to stay safe and healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. It is outstanding in the school although it is only satisfactory for those children participating in the after-school club. Child protection procedures and health and safety requirements are securely in place and staff are well trained to deal with concerns. Pupils say that they feel very safe because they know adults will listen to their problems and act quickly on comments placed in the 'worry box'. The confidence that this gives them results in a school full of happy, secure children. Vulnerable pupils, including those with behaviour or attendance issues, receive outstanding support from the Learning Mentors who play a significant role in ensuring that these pupils achieve as well as others. The school works very successfully with outside agencies to help pupils receive any additional support they may need. The level of care and consideration children show each other is very good. They appreciate the support they receive from older pupils. Links with parents are very strong and they are very pleased that the school listens to their views and concerns. They say that staff do all they can to support and help their children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher shows excellent leadership and very successfully keeps the school moving forward at a rapid pace. He persistently holds the expectations of what should be achieved at a high level and creates an atmosphere in which all staff work together as a highly effective and enthusiastic team. The staff are fully committed to providing the best possible quality of education for the pupils. Governance is satisfactory. Governors play an active part in school life, have a good understanding of its effectiveness and support the headteacher and staff fully in their drive to improve the school further. However, the governing body has not been sufficiently aware of the need to ensure that the after-school club meets the national standards.

The school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate and takes into account fully the views of parents, pupils and governors. All staff with leadership and management responsibilities are highly involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work, including teaching and learning. The school has exceeded its targets because it uses data very effectively to track pupils' progress and to identify where additional support is needed so that all achieve equally. The thorough analysis of pupils' performance, followed by successful action to raise standards and improve achievement, indicates clearly that the school has continued capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to let you know how much the inspectors enjoyed coming to visit your school. Thank you for making us so welcome and being polite and helpful when we talked to you about your work and what you think about your school.

Yours is an outstanding school. We were impressed by the things we saw and here are some of them:

You work very hard in lessons and are interested in everything you do.

You make fantastic progress and do very well in everything you learn.

Your school is a very friendly and happy place and your behaviour is really excellent. You obviously enjoy coming to school very much!

You like your teachers a great deal and you told us that they work really hard to make lessons as much fun as possible. We also think the teachers work extremely hard to help you to learn.

You really appreciate all of the extra interesting and exciting activities that the school provides for you. You obviously enjoy the chance to learn lots of new things such as Chinese dance and French.

We think the school does a good job of taking care of you and is very careful to check that you all do as well as you possibly can.

We think that your headteacher does an excellent job of organising your school and making sure that he and all the other teachers help you to become so successful.

We think the school is great as it is. Even so, we have asked the school to give the children in the Reception classes even more chances to practise their writing so that they can be as good at that as they are at other things.

We wish you all the best for the future and much success in everything you do.