



West Park Community School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112997
LEA City of Derby LEA
Inspection number 279075
Inspection dates 30 November 2005 to 1 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. Shaun Dillon LI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	West Road
School category	Foundation		DE21 7BT
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01332662337
Number on roll	1415	Fax number	01332280767
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Neville Taylor
Date of previous inspection	28 January 2002	Headteacher	Mr. Brian Walker

Age group 11 to 16	Inspection dates 30 November 2005 - 1 December 2005	Inspection number 279075
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

West Park is an increasingly popular school. It is above average size for an 11 to 16 secondary school but the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is just below the national average. Over two thirds of the pupils come from areas of relatively high social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, including those with statements of special educational need, is below the national average. Overall, the proportions of pupils with English as an additional language and of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are below national averages. Pupils' attainments when they start at the school at age 11 are generally comparable with the national averages.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory, which differs from the school's view of it being good. Senior leaders correctly judge their school to be an improving school. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school at age 11 is broadly average and they make satisfactory progress. Their attainment in Year 11 improves each year but is just below national average. The school's own data for 2005 show further improvements in attainments. The good practice in mathematics is being used to improve standards in other curriculum areas. Pupils behave well and enjoy their education. Their attendance is satisfactory and they arrive at lessons on time. Most pupils adopt a healthy lifestyle and act safely. They make a positive contribution to the community. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but high attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. The curriculum provision is satisfactory and meets the needs of most pupils. However, the vocational programmes in Years 10 and 11 are underdeveloped. The quality of care, guidance and support is good and enables pupils to progress. The self-evaluation report is mostly accurate. The school has made considerable progress in many areas since the last inspection. The headteacher and the leadership group lead by example. They and the governors set clear strategic and operational targets for improvement. They work well with staff and pupils to raise standards and expectations. Governors and senior staff have the capacity to continue the school's improvement. The review and monitoring of lesson observations and equality and diversity policies are underdeveloped. Links with local primary schools and community organisations are effective. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' attainments in Years 9 and 11.
- Continue to disseminate the good practice in mathematics to other subject areas.
- Implement and monitor equality and diversity action plans.
- Improve analysis and moderation of lesson observations in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of vocational provision in Years 10 and 11.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement and standards are satisfactory and improving and this confirms the school's evaluation. Pupils join the school with broadly average standards and make satisfactory progress during their first three years in school. Test results at the end of Year 9 have been improving in recent years. In 2004, they were average overall, with pupils doing better in mathematics and science than in English. The school's data indicate that results were better in 2005, largely because effective action had led to a marked improvement in English results. The progress made by pupils in Year 9 in lessons is satisfactory and they are generally attaining average standards. GCSE results have improved considerably over the past four years. Although below the national

average in 2004, GCSE results were better than those in the previous year and represented satisfactory performance for the pupils concerned. Results in 2005, which have yet to be validated, were better than those in 2004. However, pupils' attainments in vocational courses are below average for the school. Pupils in Year 11 attain average standards and make satisfactory progress in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as expected. The school met its targets in 2005, both for national tests and GCSE examinations. It has set challenging targets for pupils' progress and attainment for 2006.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good and this confirms the school's evaluation. They enjoy school, feel safe and secure and have positive attitudes to their work. Behaviour is good and adults and pupils treat each other with courtesy and respect. However, some pupils are distracted from learning in a minority of lessons by the occasional interruptions of a small number of pupils. The recently introduced behaviour improvement programme is very effective and has reduced exclusions. The consequences for misbehaviour are clear. Attendance is satisfactory and improving and pupils are generally punctual. The school actively promotes healthy lifestyles. Pupils' proposals through the School Council and the Focus Groups have resulted in improved access to drinking water and a healthier menu. Sport is very popular amongst pupils and many take part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The provision of a learning mentor to support pupils at times of vulnerability is much appreciated by pupils. Incidents of bullying and racism are dealt with well and the safety of pupils is a high priority. Many pupils take part in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and develop good leadership skills. Others work with primary schools and take part in community events. The potential for the School Council to become more involved in community work has been recognised. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This judgement confirms the school's evaluation, based on its lesson observations. The planning of and preparation for lessons are mostly good. Lesson plans usually have clear objectives and identifiable outcomes. In most lessons pupils respond with hard work, enthusiasm and good behaviour. Classes are generally well managed. In the best lessons a wide range of learning activities, including effective use of information and communication technology, is used to maintain pupils' enthusiasm. The careful monitoring of pupils' understanding underpins satisfactory progress. However, where there is much teacher direction or insufficient variety, pupils are not actively engaged in their learning and make less progress. Pupils' independent learning is sometimes impaired by a lack of

pace and challenge. Few lessons contain activities to stretch a range of different abilities. Teachers include pupils with additional needs in their planning and in a minority of lessons these pupils also benefit from effective learning support assistants. However, many lessons do not contain sufficiently challenging activities to motivate the most able pupils. Teachers mark work regularly, offer helpful diagnostic comment and set targets for improvement. Progress is being made in enabling pupils to develop the skills necessary to analyse their own work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum provision is satisfactory and this confirms the school's evaluation. Statutory requirements are met. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 is broad and the time allocated is appropriate. A wide range of options is provided in Years 10 and 11. Information and communication technology and personal, social and health education are timetabled as discrete subjects throughout the school and religious education is a core GCSE subject. Vocational courses are offered but few pupils take up this option. The time allocated to these courses is insufficient in Year 11, but sufficient in Year 10. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Literacy support strategies help a significant number of pupils in addition to those with special educational needs. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and extension work to meet their needs is being developed. The work-related curriculum in Year 10 is identified in various subjects but work experience is limited to one week. A wide range of extra-curricular opportunities is provided and participation is high. Extended provision gives extra support through mathematics 'booster' classes and through a 'booster' week near to examinations.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good and this confirms the school's evaluation. Health and safety are taken seriously and risk assessments involve specialist staff. The school has appointed a welfare officer who is a trained nurse. Child protection arrangements are in place and all staff have been trained in correct procedures. Tutors are developing the monitoring of pupils' progress; they hold regular interviews, monitor progress and agree targets for improvement. A learning mentor acts as a counsellor to provide confidential help to individual pupils. A new government initiative involving a behaviour improvement programme is effective in reducing pupils' exclusions and also improving attendance. Good support is given during lessons to pupils with additional learning needs. A learning support group involving external and internal staff manages support for vulnerable pupils. Guidance on curriculum options and careers is good in Years 10 and 11 and is under development in Years 7 to 9 through personal, social and health education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and this confirms the school's evaluation. The leadership of the headteacher is exemplary. The leadership group works well with staff and pupils to raise standards and expectations. The development plan is clear and detailed and ensures consistency across departments. The governors and the leadership group set a clear strategic and operational direction for staff. Inspectors agree with most of the school's self-evaluation judgements. Considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection. The school has the capacity to continue to improve and to embed its policies across all areas. Managers monitor performance effectively through performance management reviews. They intervene rigorously to resolve issues of concern and to support staff to improve. However, non-teaching staff do not yet participate in such a scheme. Teachers' reviews include the results of lesson observations. However, lesson observation outcomes are not rigorously analysed or moderated across the school. The governors are effective and committed to improving the school. They challenge senior staff appropriately and request evidence to support judgements. Their composition by gender does not however represent the staff, pupils or the communities the school serves. The governors meet their legal obligations except for the provision of a daily act of worship. The equality and diversity and race relations policies are satisfactory, but action plans to implement and monitor the policies are not in place. Since the last inspection major improvements have been made to accommodation, facilities and resources. Most staff are appropriately qualified and engage in relevant staff development. Value for money is satisfactory. Links with other stakeholders are effective. Improving links with primary feeder schools and community organisations are in place.

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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	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?	2	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	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for the friendly welcome and the help which many of you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you, seeing how you worked with your teachers and finding out how you made progress at the school. We think that you are part of an improving school which wants all of you to progress well and to be successful. Most of you enjoy school, feel safe and secure there and work hard during lessons. Your behaviour is good and you treat each other and the adults in the school with respect and courtesy. Some of you are distracted from learning in a minority of lessons by the occasional interruptions of a small number of pupils. Most of you are pleased with the care, guidance and support which your teachers and other staff provide. You also like the wide range of opportunities for you to join in activities outside lessons. Most of you progress satisfactorily and achieve reasonable results in Years 9 and 11. We believe, and so do the staff in the school, that you could improve further. Whilst many of your lessons are good, some could involve you more and could contain more varied activities to interest you. We are pleased that you have representatives on the School Council and the Focus Group and that your ideas are often taken up by the school. You think this could be even better if the meetings were scheduled so that you knew when they were to take place. We are also pleased that so many of you join in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and work as mentors with other pupils and also with local primary schools. We think that your school is well led and managed and that the governors and staff all believe that they can improve your education. We think that they should do the following things: Improve your attainments in Years 9 and 11; Continue to spread the good practice in mathematics to other areas of the school; Make sure that equal opportunities issues are promoted and monitored; Improve the lesson observation systems; Improve the vocational courses in Years 10 and 11. Best wishes for your future.