



West Down School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113172
LEA Devon
Inspection number 279110
Inspection dates 25 May 2006 to 25 May 2006
Reporting inspector Diane Wilkinson AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	West Down
School category	Community		Ilfracombe
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Devon EX34 8NF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01271 863461
Number on roll	80	Fax number	01271 863461
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	31 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Sandra Clement

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 25 May 2006 - 25 May 2006	Inspection number 279110
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

West Down is a small village school where all three classes have more than one year group. Pupils come from a wide area and the school is oversubscribed. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and all pupils speak English fluently. Standards on entry vary, but are average overall. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average, but varies significantly between year groups. The school holds the Artsmark and Investors in People awards and is closely involved in initial teacher training.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

West Down is an outstanding school. This is the school's view of itself and it is confirmed by the inspection. Excellent leadership and management mean that the school is continually striving to improve further. The school has improved exceptionally well since the last inspection and its capacity to improve further is outstanding. It gives excellent value for money.

The school's excellent commitment to inclusion results in all pupils making very good progress in both their personal and academic development. The curriculum is very well adapted for individual pupils' needs and learning is enhanced by consistently high quality teaching. Children make an excellent start to their education and the quality and standards in the Reception Year are outstanding. Achievement throughout the school is very good and standards are high. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive excellent support and achieve as well as their peers. Relationships are outstanding and pupils enjoy school very much. As a result, they do their very best for their teachers, continually striving to reach the challenging targets set for them. The attention to pupils' health and safety is excellent. Behaviour is very good and the school is a very happy and safe place to be. Excellent procedures for checking on how well pupils are doing help staff to give them very good advice and support to improve. Attendance by the majority of pupils is good. However, despite the school's efforts, a small number of pupils do not attend regularly enough.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on and extend the systems put in place to encourage good attendance

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding and the school consistently reaches the very challenging targets it has set itself for its performance in the national tests. Children in the Reception Year achieve very well. Nearly all reach the standards expected at the start of Year 1 and a considerable number exceed these. Since the last inspection, test results at the end of Years 2 and 6 have been consistently well above the national average although they do vary from year to year, depending on the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities in the year group. Last year a considerable number of pupils who took the tests had learning difficulties in English, especially in Year 6, and this led to a decline in the test results for this subject. Although the school still reached its targets senior staff identified that there was scope for some improvement in writing standards. This has been successfully addressed. Standards are well above average for current Year 2 pupils and exceptionally high in Year 6. Due to the excellent support given to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, they make the same very good progress as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, particularly their moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. This is underpinned by the very good start made in Reception. The school is a very happy and harmonious place where relationships are excellent and pupils behave very well at all times. Pupils love school and work very hard because, as one child commented, 'we have caring, generous and kind teachers'. Pupils have very many opportunities to take part in music and drama activities and excellent opportunities to learn about other cultures through, for example, video conferencing with schools in multi-ethnic areas. Spiritual development is good. In particular, pupils' capacity to reflect on issues such as loss of home and family is very good. The vast majority of pupils attend school regularly and arrive promptly. However, poor attendance by a small number of pupils leads to below average attendance levels.

Pupils feel safe and secure in school and their knowledge of how to maintain a healthy and safe lifestyle is excellent. They say, 'There are no bullies because the headteacher will not tolerate them'. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school and the community. Through the suggestion box and the work of the school council, pupils' views are regularly sought and acted on. The school council organises fund-raising and helped set up the playground monitor system. Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part in community events, particularly the drama production they present at the theatre in Ilfracombe. Pupils develop an excellent range of skills to help them in future life. In particular, they experience some of the roles they might undertake in the working world.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is outstanding throughout the school. The school's commitment to meeting the needs of each pupil is fully realised in classroom activities. These are very well planned to match the ages and abilities of pupils in each class. There is a very good emphasis on practical activities that engage and motivate pupils as well as helping them to understand easily. Occasionally activities are rather noisy, although this is because of enthusiasm rather than poor behaviour. Reception children are provided with a range of very interesting and stimulating activities so that they learn effectively by discovering things for themselves. Teachers question pupils very effectively, not only to help them understand, but also to encourage them to reflect on their work and recognise how they could do better. Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers set very challenging targets, based on outstanding assessment information, and they regularly refer to these in lessons and in marking. Pupils respond to this very well, rising to the challenge to make very good progress. Very well qualified classroom assistants make an excellent contribution to learning, especially for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Homework is given an

important emphasis and through this parents make a significant contribution to their children's learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Throughout the school the outstanding curriculum meets the needs of all pupils particularly well. All teachers fully recognise the importance of developing the whole child. The result is that children get every opportunity to develop their mental, physical, emotional and social skills both within and outside the classroom. National Curriculum requirements are fulfilled with a strong focus on basic literacy and numeracy skills. These are effectively taught across a range of subjects and pupils get many opportunities to use computers. The recent focus on writing has had a very positive impact on standards. Pupils also have many opportunities to be creative and to undertake practical work. They enjoy these immensely, for example when designing logos for community activities. To make the curriculum even more interesting the school provides a wealth of opportunities for visits and visitors and the many clubs are very well attended. Personal, social and health education is outstanding and is especially enhanced by the school's citizenship award.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Parents speak very highly of the care that their children receive. Procedures for child protection are well implemented. Pupils feel that they can go to anyone if they have a problem and know all about the need for risk assessment for trips. The result is that pupils feel happy, safe and secure. Early identification and close tracking help pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make the best possible progress. Parents also appreciate the way that the school works closely with them to ensure that pupils' academic progress and their personal development are constantly improving. Exceptionally good systems and procedures to support pupils' personal development underpin the excellent progress they make. The school works closely with families where children's attendance is a concern, involving outside agencies where appropriate. Strategies for assessing pupils' academic progress are outstanding. All pupils know their own targets and what they have to do to reach them. Pupils also help to judge how well they are doing. These are key factors in ensuring pupils' outstanding achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management at all levels are outstanding. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and, with the governing body and staff, shares a strong commitment for developing every aspect of each child. The result is a happy, safe, secure and high achieving school where consistently high standards are maintained and pupils are very well taught. Relationships are exceptionally good. Leaders set a

clear example in the way that they work together and this is followed by all pupils who are equally courteous and considerate. Consultation with parents is very good and parents make a very valuable contribution to their children's education.

Throughout the school teamwork is excellent. The headteacher, teachers, classroom assistants and other adults have a very clear understanding of what the school does well. They underestimate their success to some extent because they have a strong healthy conviction that there is always room for improvement. Consequently the school is continually looking for areas where it feels it could do better to build on and extend its high quality provision. For example, since the last inspection, the school has further enhanced its already highly creative curriculum. The headteacher and subject leaders monitor teaching and learning closely, setting targets to maintain the high quality lessons. Governors know the school very well and are very supportive. They challenge leaders and managers well when they need to do so. As a result improvements are carefully planned and successfully implemented, with governors regularly monitoring their progress. Resources are good and used effectively to maintain high standards.

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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	1	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	1	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	3	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?	1	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	1	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	1	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

Thank you for welcoming Mr Mikdadi and myself to your school and being so friendly and helpful. I particularly want to thank the members of the school council who gave up their lunch time to talk to me. We very much enjoyed visiting your school. We think it is excellent and it is clear that you and your parents agree.

What we liked most about your school

- Your headteacher, staff and governors are very good at making sure your school is an excellent one and they keep on looking for ways to make it even better!
- The tasks teachers plan for you and the way that they teach you are excellent.
- Teachers and classroom assistants are very good at giving extra help to those who need it.
- You love coming to school, work very hard and make very good progress so that the standards you reach are very much higher than in most schools.
- Adults look after you very well and give you very good advice and support on how to improve.
- You behave very well, get on especially well with each other and are very good at the jobs you do such as being playground monitors.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Carry on trying to improve attendance figures. You can help by making sure that you all attend school regularly.