



West Minster Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118438
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280316
Inspection dates 17 May 2006 to 18 May 2006
Reporting inspector Nigel Pett AI

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

Type of school	First	School address	St George's Avenue
School category	Community		Sheerness
Age range of pupils	3 to 9		Kent ME12 1ET
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01795 662178
Number on roll	293	Fax number	01795 581853
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr A Ian Bayford

Age group 3 to 9	Inspection dates 17 May 2006 - 18 May 2006	Inspection number 280316
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school. Many pupils come from homes which experience social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. When the youngest children start school their levels of knowledge and understanding are far below those expected. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is very high. A small percentage of pupils are from minority ethnic heritages. The school is now linking up with another school as a federation, with this school's headteacher responsible for both schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, in keeping with its own judgement. It works in very difficult circumstances and the way that it has maintained its provision and also improved since its last inspection is good. Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and children are making very good progress from their very low starting points on entry. Pupils make good progress throughout Years 1 to 4, but standards are still below average when they leave the school and are held back by the limitations in their language, reading and writing skills. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They enjoy school, and their attitudes and behaviour are good, although attendance is below average. Teaching is good, as are the assessment procedures. However, the work set in some lessons does not stretch pupils well enough. The curriculum is good and provides pupils with rich experiences. The school provides pupils with good personal care, support and guidance, but not enough parents support their children's learning. Leadership and management are good. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are good and have accurately highlighted the key priorities for improvement. The school evaluates itself accurately and has good capacity to improve further. It gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers plan work that consistently challenges pupils of all abilities in each class, and particularly the higher ability pupils.
- Work with parents to improve their involvement in their children's education and especially to improve attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. There is a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and only a small minority of more able pupils. Because more families move in and out of the area than in most schools, the education of a significant proportion of pupils is disrupted, and the learning of other pupils is hindered by their poor attendance. Attainment on entry in the Foundation Stage is very low and children have very limited language skills. Children make very good progress in the early learning goals, especially in their personal development, but by the end of the current Reception year standards are below the expected goals for learning for children of this age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well, even though standards by the the end of Year 2 are below average. The challenging targets set in the national tests in 2005 for Year 2 were met. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are making good progress but the limitations in their language, reading and writing skills still limit their progress. Overall, boys and girls achieve equally well. The pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress, as do those from minority ethnic backgrounds. The achievement of the small number of more able pupils is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have good attitudes and the majority behave well in this orderly school. They are proud of their school and feel safe in it. Pupils are very enthusiastic and enjoy their learning, although the attendance of a significant minority of pupils is unsatisfactory. Pupils are very keen to represent their classmates on the school council, and members take their responsibility very seriously. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe and healthy, being very aware of the dangers of the misuse of drugs and alcohol. They benefit from the school's fruit scheme and have access to water throughout the day. Pupils are developing satisfactory skills for their future economic well-being through numeracy, teamwork and in the use of information and communication technology (ICT), but are hampered by their limitations in literacy. They show pride in their school community, and contribute well to the wider community through projects such as helping to clear environmentally interesting sites.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good with outstanding features and children learn very well. In Years 1 to 4 teaching is generally good, but a small number of lessons are not effective enough because the work set does not meet the learning needs of all of the pupils. Teaching assistants generally do a good job but sometimes they are not involved in supporting pupils throughout lessons. At its best, teaching is lively and purposeful and matches the needs of the learners well. Very good use is made of ICT, and teachers especially make effective use of the interactive whiteboards. The new system of teaching for learning based on a 'creative curriculum' is good, and being well used. Pupils are already more actively involved in their learning, showing more independence in their work and improving their speaking and listening skills. Teachers are successfully encouraging them to give more detailed answers to questions, and the pupils enjoy working together in pairs and groups to discuss their ideas. Teachers use resources effectively to make learning exciting, although good displays are not always used to best advantage as a learning resource. Marking and assessment give an accurate picture of pupils' progress but the information is not always well used to set work. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported but more able pupils need stretching more.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides very well for all areas of learning. The recent introduction of a 'creative curriculum' in Years 1 to 4 is well designed to develop literacy skills and it is well structured to encourage pupils'

interest in their learning. The recently refurbished library and the appointment of a librarian are encouraging pupils to use books more readily, thus helping to improve their literacy. Focus weeks, visitors, links with local businesses and the arts are well used. The inclusion of French and German is good and supports pupils' speaking skills and self-esteem. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and 'circle time' effectively promote pupils' personal, social, moral and spiritual curriculum, successfully increase pupils' awareness of society and their roles and responsibilities within it as good citizens, and provide effectively for their well-being. The extensive grounds and facilities are well used as a learning resource. There is a wide range of popular clubs and activities which contribute well to developing pupils' skills and interests. Pupils report that these are a valuable and enjoyable part of their school life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are good and reflect how importantly every child matters. The school protects pupils very well, and child protection and health and safety procedures are well understood by staff and governors. Pupils are confident of support from all adults with their work, personal problems or when having a bad day at school. Pupils' personal development is well tracked and assessment gives an accurate picture of individual attainment. From Nursery onwards, children are involved in assessing their work. Older pupils access their profiles and, with their teachers, indicate how well they have met their targets. This process is giving pupils confidence and leading to improving the feedback to them and their parents about their progress. Pupils with challenging behaviour or learning difficulties and disabilities are very well supported. Instances of unsatisfactory behaviour are well managed and pupils fully understand the rewards and punishments used. Links with external agencies are extensive and include pre-school groups and those dealing with social difficulties. However, the school's good attempts to improve pupils' attendance are undermined because it has been unable to gain regular external support from a significant minority of parents and the local authority. Having said this, parents are very happy with the school and recent changes to consultation meetings have seen more parents and carers beginning to show better levels of interest in their children's education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Since the last inspection the headteacher has continued to give very clear direction and the overall provision has been well maintained in challenging circumstances. The support of the deputy headteacher is exceptional and the senior leadership team operates very well in the efficient running of the school. Along with the contribution made by the teaching and support staff, this ensures a cohesive approach to caring for the pupils. Self-evaluation is accurate and based on good monitoring and evaluation of the school's activities. This has led directly to good changes in the curriculum to stimulate pupils' interests and to give fresh impetus to learning and teaching. The school development plan addresses the key priorities for

improvement well but the checks to monitor progress are not always precise enough. Governance is strong. Parents are very happy with the school and the improvements taking place, and many community organisations and businesses support the school very well. Resources are extensive and effectively used. Under this effective leadership, the school has good capacity to improve still further and is to use its skills in the immediate future to link with another primary school to support improvement.

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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?	2	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	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	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?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	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	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	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	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

Dear Pupils Thank you for welcoming us when we came to inspect your school. We enjoyed the opportunities to talk to you and found that your school is a good school. What we most liked about your school:

- You enjoy school and make good progress.
- Your school helps you to behave well and gives you very good support when you have problems.
- The way that the youngest children are helped is outstanding.
- You have a new and exciting curriculum.
- Your headteacher and the staff work very well together.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Ensure that the work you are given in class helps all of you to make even better progress.
- Work with you and your parents to improve attendance and to involve your parents more in your learning.

Thank you for being courteous and very helpful to us during our visit. We hope that you will all continue to enjoy your learning and do your best. Yours faithfully Nigel Pett
Lead Inspector