

West Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113106
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	289511
Inspection date	18 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kaye Winsom
Headteacher	Susan Nield
Date of previous school inspection	28 January 2002
School address	Beech Park West Hill Ottery St Mary EX11 1UQ
Telephone number	01404 812599
Fax number	01404 813043

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

West Hill Primary School is a smaller than average size primary school. The vast majority of pupils come from a White British background. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is just above average. A very small number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Children start school with a good base of knowledge and skills.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

West Hill Primary is an outstanding school. Pupils achieve exceptionally well and attain high standards in many areas of the curriculum. Their personal development is outstanding. Parents are extremely happy with the care and education provided and are very supportive of the school. One parent summed up the views of many with the comment, 'I am delighted that my children attend this successful school'.

Outstanding leadership and management is a key factor contributing to the school's success. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and educational direction. She is extremely well supported by senior staff and subject leaders who all make a valuable contribution to the school's high performance. The school has an accurate view of how well it is doing and has taken highly effective action to bring about improvements where necessary. An extremely positive atmosphere pervades the school and there is a clear commitment from staff to maintaining high standards and providing a high quality education for all pupils.

Children in Reception get off to a good start because of effective teaching and the stimulating range of activities provided. Their personal and social development is particularly good and they have a very good base of skills in literacy and numeracy. Outstanding teaching and learning enable pupils to make exceptionally good progress as they move through the school. Teaching is enthusiastic and challenging, and tasks are well matched to pupils' different abilities and needs. Pupils respond very positively to the teaching and produce high quality work. By the end of Year 6, standards are exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science. However, the school identified that in 2006, Year 6 pupils had made better progress in English and science than in mathematics. Effective action was taken to tackle this. Pupils have received well targeted teaching and opportunities have been increased for them to use and develop mathematical skills through investigative work. There have been improvements and the school recognises that there is scope to extend opportunities for pupils to acquire and use problem-solving skills in different subjects. Since the last inspection, information and communication technology (ICT) provision has improved considerably. Standards are high in ICT and pupils use technology well to support their learning in a range of subjects. Provision for art and design is one of the school's many strengths resulting in a wide variety of high quality work on display. A good range of clubs, visits and trips enrich an excellent curriculum.

Excellent care, guidance and support contribute significantly to pupils' academic and personal development. In this positive school community, all pupils are valued. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected by their good attendance and their keen participation in all activities. High expectations by all staff and outstanding relationships lead to exemplary behaviour. Pupils show an exceptionally good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. Assessment is used well to set individual learning targets in English, mathematics and personal development. Pupils know what they are working on in order to improve. At West Hill, pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend opportunities for pupils to acquire and apply problem-solving skills in different subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Taking all subjects into account, pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children in Reception make good progress in all areas of learning. Children are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their learning. Standards in Year 2 are consistently well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. National test results for Year 6 in 2006 were well above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils achieved extremely well in science and well in English. However, pupils' progress from their starting point in mathematics in Year 2 was only satisfactory, but effective action has been taken to improve this. By Year 5 and 6, pupils' ICT skills are extremely well developed as they create multimedia presentations and solve electronic problems using controlling devices. Standards are well above expectations and pupils use ICT effectively to support their learning in a range of subjects. Pupils apply and develop their literacy skills well in a range of subjects. Higher attaining pupils are challenged and extended. Pupils with learning difficulties make outstanding progress because of the high quality support and guidance provided.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enthusiastically participate in all aspects of school life. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. High expectations, outstanding relationships, high quality teaching and a stimulating curriculum lead to extremely positive attitudes and behaviour. Pupils' excellent understanding of healthy diets and their keen participation in physical activities contributes very well to their healthy lifestyle. Pupils thrive on additional responsibilities. Those on the school council serve their fellow pupils well and have contributed to improvements to the outdoor facilities. Members of the gardening club make very positive contributions to the upkeep of the school's attractive grounds, and the 'eco action team' promote conservation and recycling. Pupils contribute well to the wider community by raising funds for a range of charities. Pupils are extremely well prepared for their future lives because, by the time they leave, they possess excellent skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. In addition to this, their personal and social skills are extremely well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Outstanding teaching and learning contribute significantly to pupils' remarkable achievement. Teaching in the Reception Year provides a good blend of direct teaching and opportunities for children to explore, be creative and work independently. Across the school, teachers make the purpose of lessons clear so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Teachers have high expectations of learning and behaviour and pupils respond extremely well to these. Teachers' demonstrations and explanations are of high quality and promote learning very well. Skilful questioning challenges pupils' thinking and checks their understanding. Assessment is used effectively to match tasks to pupils' different abilities and needs. As a result, pupils are challenged well; their interest is maintained and they make exceptionally good progress. Pupils produce high quality work and take great care and pride in their presentation. The marking of

work is positive and constructive. Written comments help pupils to improve. Teaching assistants are well directed and contribute extremely well to pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum enables all pupils to make exceptional progress and makes an outstanding contribution to their personal development. Good links between subjects add meaning, interest and relevance to pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Year 4 studied the parts of a range of flowers in science. They produced high quality still-life drawings of these and created striking glazed clay models of flowers such as campanula, iris and tulips. The school has increased investigative work in mathematics and is currently seeking ways to extend problem-solving activities across the curriculum. Popular clubs include art, chess, drama, dance, football, gardening, tag rugby and tennis. A successful residential visit for Year 5 and 6 provides challenging outdoor activities and effectively builds teamworking skills, initiative and physical fitness. Visiting artists enhance the provision for art and design. The impressive outdoor grounds provide a splendid learning resource, with an amphitheatre for drama and story telling, and a pond and woodland trail for scientific study. The many additional activities contribute to pupils' interest and enjoyment. Healthy lifestyles and personal safety receive very good attention. The curriculum for Reception children provides a good range of stimulating activities which promote good progress. Accommodation has been extended to improve provision for practical activities and there are good plans for further improvements to the outdoor learning area.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding pastoral care and support contribute exceptionally well to pupils' personal development. Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are effective so pupils are safe and secure at school. Staff know the pupils well and have established outstanding relationships with them and their parents. As a parent commented, 'All the teachers are very approachable. All matters are treated sensitively and dealt with promptly'. Assessment information is used well to set suitably challenging individual learning targets in English, mathematics and personal development. As a result, pupils know what they are working towards in order to improve their performance in these areas.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are successfully promoting high quality provision. This leads to outstanding educational outcomes for pupils. The experienced headteacher provides strong leadership. She has great educational vision and has empowered and developed other leaders. Leadership responsibilities are shared effectively among the teaching force. Expectations are high and there is a clear commitment to high standards and ensuring good quality educational provision. Teamwork is strong and staff morale is high.

School self-evaluation is outstanding and so the school has an accurate view of its performance and takes positive action to bring about improvements. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection. This, together with recent improvements to provision for ICT,

mathematics and accommodation for Reception children, demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity to improve further.

Administrative staff are very efficient and this enables senior leaders to focus on teaching and the curriculum and managing planned improvements. The governors are highly effective and provide considerable support and constructive challenge. The wide range of experience and expertise on the governing body is utilised very well.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Hill Primary, Ottery St Mary, EX11 1UQ

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school and showing me your work. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit and would like to tell you what I found out. West Hill is an outstanding school of which you can be very proud.

These things are strengths of the school:

- You clearly enjoy school and this is shown by your good attendance and keen participation in school activities.
- You get off to a good start in Reception .
- Teaching is outstanding, which is why you learn so much.
- You make exceptionally good progress in many subjects; the art work on display is very impressive.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you get on very well with others.
- You benefit from extremely interesting learning activities and a good range of additional clubs and visits.
- You show an excellent understanding of the importance of keeping healthy and safe.
- The staff know you well and you receive outstanding care and support from them.
- The school is extremely well led by your headteacher and other staff.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school and give it good support.

There is one thing the school has been asked to consider now:

- Teachers have been working on developing your investigative skills in mathematics and are keen to extend problem-solving opportunities in different subjects.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. I wish you all the best for the future.

With kind regards

Derek Watts Lead Inspector