



# West Row Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 124542  
**Local Authority** SUFFOLK  
**Inspection number** 293026  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Andrew Matthews

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Beeches Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		West Row, West Row
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9		Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk
			IP28 8NY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01638 715680
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	111	<b>Fax number</b>	01638 515115
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Alison Nelhams
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Geraldine Ciantar
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 July 2001		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
4–9	6–7 December 2006	293026

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

West Row Primary is a smaller than average rural first school which is close to a United States Air Force base. Although the majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, a significant minority come from American families and 10% of pupils come from Traveller communities. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities has increased in recent years and is now just below average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is low. Pupils' attainment is very varied when they start school but is generally in line with national expectations. The school has recently had a big turnover of staff including a new headteacher who started in September.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

West Row Primary school is satisfactory with good features. It is improving quickly. The school believes its effectiveness is good overall but there are some important issues to address before that is the case, particularly in relation to developing the role of subject leaders. Several significant improvements have been made since the new headteacher arrived, particularly in developing the role of governors and strengthening links with parents. Both of these were issues from the last inspection which, until recently, had not been fully addressed. The role of subject leaders is now clearly defined but there are weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching and learning. Recent improvements have yet to impact on standards but nevertheless, leadership and management is sound and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Pupils make good progress through the school and standards at the end of Year 4 are slightly above average. They are very high in reading, good in writing and average in mathematics. Last year there was a dip in standards in mathematics and science, mainly due to a lack of rigour in the way pupils' progress was tracked through the year. The very good quality of education in the Foundation Stage ensures that children get off to a good start. The good curriculum is very well supplemented by a very wide range of visits, visitors and out of school clubs.

Children from Traveller and USAF families are integrated successfully into school life and achieve well. Skilled and effective teaching assistants do much to help this integration. Pupils who have learning difficulties and those with complex emotional needs receive good support and sensitive encouragement. As a result, they progress at a rate comparable with their peers. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use questioning techniques well to promote learning. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are given suitably challenging work and achieve well. Teachers' feedback is encouraging but marking does not always help pupils to know how to improve. Pupils' personal development is good. They behave very well, work hard, greatly enjoy school and get on very well together. They show a strong commitment to eating healthily, understand the importance of personal safety and enjoy playing a part in school life, such as through the school council. The school tries to dissuade families from taking holidays in term time and while attendance and punctuality are broadly average attendance figures have dropped recently.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and is now in a firm position to make necessary improvements. Governance is satisfactory. Good initiatives are in place to improve the effectiveness of the governing body further. School self-evaluation is satisfactory but the school rightly recognises that greater input is needed from governors, parents and pupils in the self-evaluation process. Nevertheless, the recent short-term plan drawn up by the headteacher and senior leaders gives an accurate picture of the school's strengths and the main priorities for improvement.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Develop a more robust tracking system to ensure pupils meet their end of year targets.
- Ensure teachers' marking clearly informs pupils how they can improve their work.
- Develop the role of subject coordinators, particularly in relation to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.
- Introduce strategies to reverse the dip in attendance rates.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

There has been a steady improvement in standards in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. Children start school with attainment that is broadly in line with the expected level and make very good progress, particularly in language work. Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 because pupils feel valued and want to do their best for their teachers. Progress in Years 3 and 4 is best in reading and writing. However, standards in mathematics are catching up fast because it is now a focus in the school development plan. The targets set for the current Year 4 are ambitious but improved monitoring of pupils' progress has the potential to help pupils to get very close to them. Standards in information and computer technology are satisfactory and pupils are increasingly using computers to aid their learning. The progress of children from Traveller communities and pupils with specific needs is good. The quality of singing in the school is high as are swimming standards for Year 4 pupils.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop into sensible, well-mannered and confident young people. Some pupils arrive with limited experience of life beyond the home and the school is particularly effective in extending their knowledge of the wider world. Pupils quickly grow in self-confidence because teachers encourage them to take responsibility around the school, such as being monitors and members of the school council. Pupils are particularly excited about helping to develop the new garden area.

Parents are extremely pleased and appreciative of the school's work in fostering in their children high levels of motivation and commitment to learning. Pupils respond very well to the interesting range of lessons. They behave very well overall, and the school acts very quickly to resolve any issues that arise. Attendance has fallen since the last inspection so that attendance rates are below average but this is due to an increase in the number of families taking holidays during term time. Pupils' awareness and understanding of how to keep safe and healthy are good. Pupils are keen to help others through their charity collections. The school equips pupils well for the future and life within the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good overall and sometimes very good as in the Early Years class. Teaching is underpinned by improved planning and great attention to ensuring the needs of all pupils are met. As a result, the inclusion of pupils from different backgrounds is exceptional, and enables these pupils to play a full part in the life of the school and achieve well. Pupils behave very well because they are interested in learning. The pace of learning in lessons is good and teachers make good use of their interactive whiteboards to hold pupils' attention. The tracking of pupils' progress towards their end of year targets lacks rigour resulting in some pupils not making the expected progress. Regular marking of work praises pupils for their efforts but does not consistently inform them how to improve. The work of the experienced teaching assistants is well planned to meet the varied needs of pupils and particularly those with specific needs.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is well planned and meets pupils' needs effectively. Children in the Early Years class enjoy a good balance of opportunities to choose activities for themselves or be guided by staff. In all years, there is a strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Relevant links between different subjects are now increasingly well planned. These deepen pupils' interests in their learning as was clearly seen in a Year 4 numeracy lesson that made good use of pupils' computer skills and geographical knowledge. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of visits, visitors and activities outside the school day. Pupils in Year 4 swim regularly and sports teams successfully compete against other schools.

A programme of personal, social and health education provides clear information about staying healthy and keeping safe. It enables pupils to build skills, understand the importance of diet and exercise, and helps them to become responsible citizens. The school's determination to improve its provision further is evident by its application for 'healthy schools' accreditation.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides very good care for all its pupils. It does an excellent job of including pupils with a wide range of abilities and backgrounds into a harmonious and happy community. Teachers are quick to identify pupils experiencing particular difficulties and use external agencies effectively to ensure appropriate specialist help is given. Robust procedures are in place to ensure pupils' safety, security and health, consequently pupils feel safe and very well looked after. Procedures for child protection, risk assessment and first aid are comprehensive. The monitoring of pupils' personal

and academic progress is not fully developed. Pupils confirm that targets set for them provide a clear focus for their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The new headteacher is leading the school well. She has made some important and necessary changes to gel the newly formed team together, ensure standards do not dip again and move the school forward. She has quickly developed effective relationships with parents who are very enthusiastic about the increasing role they are expected to play in their children's education. Similarly, the role of governors has improved. For example, they now have links with individual classes and do 'learning walks' with subject leaders. However, both developments are at an early stage and it is too soon to evaluate the contribution they make to the school's goals and values. The school traditionally has particularly strong links with local schools and works closely and successfully with them to improve its curriculum and overall provision.

Weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection have been satisfactorily addressed, but too much has been done relatively recently. The role of subject leaders still has weaknesses, particularly in the monitoring of teaching and learning and in the analysis of assessment and test data. However, there is a strong commitment to staff development. The school rightly recognises that all the adults need appropriate training in order to carry out their new roles successfully so that the school can maintain its current strengths and remedy weaknesses. The school's self-evaluation procedures have improved recently but do not consistently take account of the views of governors, parents and pupils.

The new interim plan recently drawn up by the new headteacher correctly identifies the pressing priorities which are correctly focused on raising standards and ensuring all pupils achieve as well as they can.





## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Leadership and management

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

8 December 2006

Dear Children

West Row Primary School, Beeches Road, West Row, Mildenhall, Suffolk. IP28 8NY

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to visit your school recently. I really enjoyed meeting your teachers and seeing you at work in your lessons. It was also good to join you for your Nativity play and meet some of your parents. Your singing gave me 'goose bumps', it was so good. A special thank you to the children who talked to me about their work and also to the members of the school council who shared with me the exciting ideas they have for making West Row an even better school.

Here are the things that I really liked about your school:

- you thoroughly enjoy coming to school because you really like your teachers and the exciting work they plan for you to do
- your behaviour is very good and you get on really well together in lessons and at playtime
- you work very hard in lessons and your reading and writing are really good
- your new headteacher is doing a good job. She knows how to make the school even better for you
- those of you who find work difficult, get the right sort of help and you use it well
- your teachers and teaching assistants look after you well and help you do the best you can
- your parents are very happy that you come to this school.

There are some things I have asked the school to do to help you make even more progress:

- teachers could check how well you are doing even more often and write more comments in your books to help you improve your work
- other teachers could come into your classrooms to see how hard you are working
- your parents could be encouraged not to take you away on holiday in term time as some of you are missing some important lessons.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Matthews

Lead inspector