

West Ewell Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124961
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	293151
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2007
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr C Smitheram
Headteacher	Ms L Handcock
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2002
School address	Ruxley Lane West Ewell Epsom KT19 0UY
Telephone number	0208 393 2417
Fax number	0208 786 8059

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

West Ewell is a larger than average infant school. The pupils predominantly come from mixed accommodation in an area identified as having the highest deprivation for children under five in Surrey. Around a quarter of the children, including those in the nursery, currently have educational difficulties or disabilities. The proportion of children with statements of specific need is high. This is because the school has a speech, language and communication needs centre (SLCN) as well as a pre school centre for these needs. The number of pupils with English as a second language is above the national average; at least 20 different first languages are spoken at home. Over the past 3 years the school has achieved Naacemark (2005), ICT Mark (2006), Healthy Schools Award (2005), Parents in Partnership (2004), Investors in People (2005) and the Artsmark (2006).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

West Ewell Infants offers its pupils a high quality education based on excellent teaching and an exciting curriculum. From a below average starting point, national tests in Year 2 show the pupils to be attaining above average results overall and achieving outstandingly well. One parent summed up their general satisfaction by saying, 'Overall we couldn't have asked for a better start to schooling for our children.'

Right from the start, the children in the Foundation Stage become enthusiastic learners who enjoy all that the school provides. They make brisk progress especially in their personal and social development. The rapid pace continues in the rest of the school where teaching and learning are excellent. Lessons are very well organised with outstanding use of high quality facilities and resources. Planning is detailed and assessment is used very effectively to make sure all pupils are challenged and interested. Marking is always very helpful, and the increasing use of pupils' self-assessment means they always know what they need to do to improve their work.

The progress made by different groups of pupils, such as those learning English as an additional language or those with learning difficulties is also excellent due to the outstanding support of specialist teachers and teaching assistants. The provision for those pupils in the SLCN centre is exceptional. Their every need is very well provided for, and they make excellent progress. In particular the way they not only have focused support in the centre but are also included in so many activities in the main school is outstanding.

Pupils' personal development and well being are outstanding. Their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in their exemplary behaviour and friendly relationships. All pupils are enabled to flourish and by the time they leave, pupils are excellently equipped for the future to cope with academic and social challenges.

The rich curriculum covers all subjects very well and is enhanced by an exceptional range of additional activities. Pupils are cared for outstandingly well and all of them, including the most vulnerable, feel safe and secure and want to come to school. Parents, who enjoy a close relationship with the school, are very pleased about this. As one wrote, 'Since starting full time in September he has not missed a single day.'

The headteacher provides first-rate leadership. She is very ably supported by all staff and developments are driven forward at a very good pace. Teamwork is excellent. Strengths and weaknesses are speedily identified because the school has excellent systems for monitoring its work. The governors are very supportive of the school and have a very good knowledge of its strengths and areas for development. Although strenuous efforts are being made to recruit new governors from the parents and local community, there are many vacancies on the governing body and the burden on those currently serving is heavy. The staff's determination not to rest on their laurels is evident and the school has an excellent capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Work closely with the parents and the local authority to ensure that the vacancies on the governing body are filled so that there are more people to share the responsibilities involved in the school's governance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

When children start school their standards are generally below those expected for their age, especially in social and mathematical development. By the time they enter Year 1 they have made very good progress and achieved very well. Standards are close to what is usually expected for children of their age. Progress is especially good in personal development as children learn to get along very well together and develop a thirst for learning. National assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 show that standards in writing and mathematics are well above average. The number of pupils who reach the higher levels in writing and mathematics is well above that normally seen. Standards in reading are not as high. This issue has been identified by the school and many strategies have been put in place, including planning explicitly for raising boys' achievement and having an exceptional teacher dedicated to teaching reading skills to those at risk of not achieving well. Consequently, standards in reading are above average and improving and the high standards in writing and mathematics have been maintained. All pupils, whatever their ability, achieve exceptionally well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants know and value all pupils. In turn they respect and are considerate towards one another. The school places a high emphasis on building pupils' self-esteem, and the impact is seen in their outstanding behaviour, good attendance and excellent relationships. Vulnerable children and those with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those in the centre, make excellent progress, because their needs are met exceptionally well through such measures as sensory learning classes and lunchtime clubs. The youngest pupils make particularly good progress in their personal and social development and show mature consideration towards one another. This is built on in the rest of the school and results in pupils having a sophisticated understanding of the world around them. Pupils feel safe in the school and protected, not only by adults, but by playground buddies. They embrace a healthy lifestyle with enthusiasm, and the school council is keen to encourage all pupils to eat healthily. Pupils make an exceptionally strong contribution to the school community and also to the wider community through their strong links with a Ugandan school. The formal nature of the school council provides a highly effective introduction to 'workplace' skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Lessons move at a brisk pace with challenging work for all. Very good use is made of the thorough assessments made on all pupils so that work is planned to meet the needs of all abilities within the classes. The purpose of each lesson is clearly explained so that every child knows what they are learning, and what their teachers expect to see. This is achieved through the excellent use of resources, including the interactive whiteboards and puppets, which capture the pupils' attention and keeps them focused on learning. Teaching and special needs assistants work outstandingly well so that all pupils have full access to all available opportunities. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning because activities

are interesting and relevant to them. As one parent wrote, 'My daughter is achieving well in all subjects and shows a passion for learning that the school has really helped to generate.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides a very rich and varied curriculum and every opportunity is taken to make learning relevant to the pupils by providing many extra activities. Each half term the school has a 'special week' that enables pupils to look at a subject in depth. One such week enabled pupils to experience the food and customs of various countries around the world. Other weeks have focused on art and music, religious education and history. There are many clubs for the pupils to attend and very good links with local and international schools that provide sporting and musical activities as well as a very good understanding of other cultures. The school offers Spanish and Russian classes to pupils and many attend these extra opportunities to learn outside of lessons. Many lunch time clubs offer pupils a haven where they can learn social skills and develop a good understanding of mixing with others in school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support given to the pupils is excellent and pupils know that there is always someone they can go to if they have a problem. Child Protection procedures are robust and all staff, including mid-day meal supervisors, are involved in discussing or alerting others to children who may be a cause for concern. The very detailed assessment procedures are used extremely well so that pupils make excellent progress. Each half term assessments are made on all pupils in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The information gained from these tests is used to identify pupils who may be falling behind and not making the expected progress. Very good support is put in place to ensure that these pupils catch up with the others and achieve as well as they can. Assessments made in the Foundation Stage are used very effectively to predict what each child is capable of achieving by the end of Year 2. Most pupils achieve these challenging targets, and some exceed them because expectations are so high in the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. The acting deputy head and all staff and governors provide high quality support. Teamwork is outstanding and everyone helps in moving the school forward. Management at all levels is excellent with effective systems in place to monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. The school's self evaluation is accurate and effective. As a result there is a clear understanding of strengths of the school and areas that need more development. The school improvement plan provides clear guidance on relevant issues for raising standards and takes into consideration support and initiatives from all sources.

The governors are very supportive of the school and are fully aware of its strengths and areas that they wish to develop. However, there are many vacancies on the governing body and the many responsibilities involved fall to the few members.

The opinions of parents and pupils are valued and frequently acted upon. The school has developed good links with a range of other schools and organisations, to promote a high quality

education. Within the school there is a high commitment to include all pupils in all activities and the care and concern for all pupils is a high priority. Parents value this and see it as an important feature of the school. The school is very well placed to build on its successes and has an excellent capacity to improve.

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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	1
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	2
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 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of West Ewell Infant School, Ruxley Lane, West Ewell, Epsom, KT19 0UY

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school. You were all very friendly and helpful. We thought you would like to know that we agreed with what you told us - West Ewell is an excellent school. It was obvious from talking to you that you really enjoy lessons and have great fun at all times. You get on very well together and we were impressed by how you care for each other. You were all very polite and we could see that your behaviour is excellent.

These are the other things we liked about your school and what pleased us most:-

- you all try hard in lessons and want to improve
- your teachers take very good care of you and work hard to make sure you are all safe and happy
- the youngest children in the Nursery and Reception classes are doing well with their reading, writing and number work
- you all make very good progress and achieve well
- your parents are very pleased with the school and like to help in school.

The governors who look after the school also work very hard on your behalf. We have asked your teachers to try to see if they can get some more volunteers to work with the staff as governors of your school to make their job less difficult.

We hope that you continue to be happy and hard working at school and wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

David Marshall

Lead Inspector