

# Weston Mill Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113269
<b>Local Authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	311184
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Denise Morris

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	321
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dave Wills
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynn Smith / Colin Randall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Ferndale Road Plymouth PL2 2EL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 365250
<b>Fax number</b>	01752 351013

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school has a higher than average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It serves an area of significant social and economic disadvantage. There are two co-headteachers who share the headship role. Each headteacher works part time and one is new this term. There is a funded Nursery on site.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school with many strengths. The personal development of the pupils is good because of the high quality of support and guidance provided by the school. Pupils behave well and are safe and secure at school. They have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy school life. They know how to keep fit and healthy. Pupils work well with the local community and are satisfactorily prepared for their futures. There is a clear ethos of care in all areas of the school, resulting in polite and helpful pupils who enjoy their activities. 'Weston Mill is a school which has great values' commented a parent.

Standards in Year 6 in the 2007 tests were broadly average in English and science. Pupils made satisfactory progress in these subjects throughout Years 3 to 6 although girls achieved significantly better than boys. Standards in mathematics were below average and pupils, particularly boys, did not achieve well enough. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieved as well as other pupils. In Year 2 in the 2007 assessments, standards were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils made satisfactory progress, however, throughout Years 1 and 2. Pupils' achievement across the school is satisfactory. When the children start in the Nursery they show levels of personal skills and attributes that are below, and sometimes well below, those expected for their age. Children make satisfactory progress throughout the Foundation Stage.

Satisfactory, and sometimes good, teaching results in satisfactory learning. Teachers manage pupils well and relationships are strong resulting in harmonious lessons. Lesson planning, however, is inconsistent. It does not always provide activities that meet the needs of all groups of pupils particularly boys. Activities are not always relevant to boys' learning because there are not always enough practical experiences planned. However, this is beginning to improve. The satisfactory curriculum provides many additional experiences for the pupils that help to develop their social and cultural awareness well.

The new co-leadership team is beginning to develop a good working partnership resulting in overall satisfactory leadership and management. Approaches to data analysis have improved recently so that leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have already identified the issues for improvement that are confirmed by this inspection. They have just begun to put new procedures in place to improve standards in mathematics and to engage boys more fully in their learning. Monitoring has improved so that self-evaluation is now good and has resulted in more challenging targets being set for 2008. Governors are supportive of the school and there are good links with parents. There has been good improvement on the issues identified at the last inspection. The school, therefore, has good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is satisfactory with some good features. There is a good number of staff, which results in high levels of individual attention. This helps children to settle quickly. Satisfactory, and sometimes good, teaching results in children making at least satisfactory progress during their time in the Foundation Stage. As a result, when they enter school in Year 1 many have achieved the goals for children of their age in physical development and personal and emotional development. However, attainment on

entry to Year 1 is below, and sometimes well below, average in the other areas of learning. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Analysis of children's achievements and progress has improved recently and is now helping leaders to know how well children are progressing.

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

- 
- Improve the achievement of all pupils in mathematics.
- Improve teaching and the curriculum to ensure that they fully meet the needs and interests of all pupils, particularly boys.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted Inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6 in English and science and pupils achieve satisfactorily in these areas. Girls achieve better than boys. Standards in mathematics are below average. In the 2007 tests standards were below average because of the high number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the class. However, pupils did not achieve well enough in mathematics. This was owing in part to the underachievement of boys who did not achieve as well as girls, or as well as other boys nationally. Standards in Year 2 in 2007 were below average in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils made the progress expected of them in Years 1 and 2. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes also make satisfactory progress in their areas of learning. All pupils, including children in the Foundation Stage, make particularly good progress in their personal and social skills.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This results in positive attitudes, good behaviour and high quality relationships. For example, in an assembly pupils showed pride in their own and others' achievements in a musical performance. Pupils grow in confidence and maturity as they progress through the school and enjoy school life, taking on many responsibilities. Their understanding of their own and other cultures is deepened by links with a school in Ghana and through participation in local music festivals. Pupils say they are treated fairly. Staff deal firmly with any bullying behaviour and pupils appreciate the support of playground buddies.

Pupils feel safe and have a good understanding of keeping themselves safe. They feel able to turn to adults if they are worried or upset. They make a good contribution to the school community. Pupils share ideas well through the good school council and its members have made improvements to the school environment, for example by improving the playground equipment and working on the school Travel Plan. The good range of sporting activities and emphasis on healthy living successfully encourage pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils' preparation for life beyond the school is satisfactory. Rates of attendance are slowly improving and are now broadly average. However, too many parents are taking their children on holiday during term time which means pupils are missing important learning opportunities.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Because of satisfactory and some good teaching in almost all areas of the school most pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons. Careful thought and organisation have resulted in changes in the way pupils are grouped in lessons after the dip in the 2007 standards. This is helping to promote the learning of vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through small group support. Relationships are strong and lessons are harmonious. Lesson planning, however, is inconsistent. It does not always provide appropriate activities for all groups of pupils, particularly boys. The new focus on raising the attainment of boys is beginning to have an impact and some satisfactory new approaches are developing. Learning in mathematics is not always sufficiently practical and day-to-day marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. In a few classes it clearly tells pupils how they can improve their work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and the wide range of opportunities to learn about other cultures have a positive impact on their personal development. The school makes good use of specialists and coaches, for example to teach French and sports, in order to develop pupils' skills. Staff are developing good links with other local schools to provide opportunities for gifted and talented pupils. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning. The school provides a good range of visitors and visits. For example, a trip to an aquarium was used effectively to develop writing and art. A good range of extra-curricular activities, including clubs, productions and participation in music festivals, successfully enriches learning and enhances pupils' personal development. Concerns about the underachievement of boys are beginning to be addressed by adapting the curriculum to include more relevant topics such as 'super heroes' and 'adventure'. However, planning of the curriculum does not yet fully meet the wide range of interests and abilities of all learners, particularly boys.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

There is a strong ethos of care in all areas of the school resulting in pupils being safe and well cared for. 'The teachers are caring and there is extremely good pastoral care' commented a parent. Systems for identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils are good. Statutory requirements for health and safety are met fully. Child protection arrangements are robust and regularly reviewed. The school makes good use of external support agencies. There is good provision to support and improve healthy lifestyles. Academic guidance is good although marking of pupils' work is more helpful in some classes than in others. Monitoring of pupils' achievements has improved recently and is now good. Effective, new tracking systems have been introduced and are beginning to show how well each pupil is doing as they move through the school. This is helping targets to be more challenging than in the past. Pupils know their targets and are involved in setting them.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The two co-headteachers are forming a good partnership together to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses. Self-evaluation has improved recently as a result of increased monitoring. It is now good and the school knows what it needs to do to improve. Leaders have already identified the areas for improvement that are confirmed by this inspection, resulting in more challenging targets being set this year. However, not enough has yet been done to improve standards, particularly in mathematics, and to improve the achievement of boys. Leaders accept that more needs to be done in these areas. They have introduced procedures to do this by beginning to improve the curriculum. Governors are supportive of the school's work but they could be more challenging in their approach. Good links have been established with local schools and these are helping to improve opportunities for the pupils. Links with parents are good. They have improved the way progress is tracked as pupils move through the school.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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**

Thank you very much for your help in our recent inspection visit to your school. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you about your school. This letter is to tell you what we found.

We think that your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. You behave well in and around the school and you are polite and helpful. You told us that you enjoy school and we were pleased to see that you are coming to school more often now so that your attendance is beginning to improve. You are well cared for by your teachers and they give you good support and keep you safe.

You are taught soundly and you make satisfactory progress in your lessons. You achieve satisfactory standards in English and science but some of you, particularly boys, do not achieve well enough in mathematics. You make good progress in your personal development. Children in the Foundation Stage also make satisfactory progress.

Your leaders and managers help you by setting clear targets to help you improve. They keep you safe and secure at school. There are two things that we are asking the school to do to help you improve. You can help with these by working hard in your lessons.

- To make sure you all do better in mathematics
- To make sure boys do better by making work more interesting for them

Thank you again for your help and good luck for the future.