

West Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125826
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315318
Inspection dates	25–26 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	196
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Rowe
Headteacher	Debbie Gregory
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	West Green Drive Crawley RH11 7EL
Telephone number	01293 526679
Fax number	01293 538336

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

West Green is a relatively small primary school. Previously a first school, it began catering for older pupils in September 2004, although it was not until two years later that there were pupils in all year groups from Reception to Year 6. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, many of whom speak English as an additional language, is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, covering learning, behavioural, communication, physical needs and autistic spectrum disorders, is broadly average, although much higher in some year groups. A higher than average proportion of pupils join or leave the school partway through their primary education, especially in the older classes. The school holds the Activemark award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

West Green Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education. It is an improving school, with strengths in some important aspects of its work. An outstanding feature of the school's success has been the creation of a cohesive community where pupils from different backgrounds, races and religions thrive and gain a very good awareness of the diversity of the local and wider community. The school's successful partnerships with parents and a number of other schools and agencies benefit pupils' welfare and education well.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although there are strengths in some areas. Progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2 is good, and standards by Year 2 are above average. Standards in writing and in calculation skills have improved in all year groups. Strong support for pupils who need to learn English and for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures that they have full access to the curriculum. Last year more pupils reached the higher levels in the Year 2 and Year 6 national tests, although the school recognises that still not enough are reaching their potential. In Years 3 to 6, where a high proportion of pupils have learning or language needs and a considerable number have joined the school since Year 2, progress has improved over the last 18 months. It is now satisfactory and standards are broadly average in Year 6. Although progress in science is satisfactory, standards remain below average as the school has been slower to address the weaker aspects of this subject, especially in investigation skills. This is a very caring school, with many parents writing in praise of the support given to their children. Rigorous attention is paid to pupils' welfare and safety. The family atmosphere helps pupils to feel happy and confident, to enjoy school and to work hard. As one parent wrote, 'My child likes school a lot. She feels that the teachers are very encouraging and supportive.' Throughout the school, relationships between all pupils of different nationalities and religions are very good as a result of the school's excellent attention to encouraging this. Pupils work well together and develop independence and confidence. There is little poor behaviour and pupils are confident that any bullying is always sorted out by adults. Although pupils are fully aware of how they should behave, they often get overexcited or noisy in lessons. Nevertheless, staff are very good at controlling this. Teaching is satisfactory. It has improved in Years 3 to 6 over the past 18 months, but in these year groups inconsistencies still remain. Teaching supports learning well in Reception and in Years 1 and 2. Strong features in all lessons are the effective way teachers explain new things and use computer technology to help pupils learn. However, on occasions, activities do not challenge the more able pupils sufficiently and in the older classes, marking does not always help pupils to improve their work. Pupils' progress is tracked well in English and mathematics and the information is used to set improvement targets, although not all staff refer to them regularly. Progress in science is not checked so rigorously. Partly as a result of this, support to help pupils improve their progress in science is not as good. The curriculum takes good account of the needs and interests of the pupils, including Reception children, providing a range of opportunities for pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. However, planning does not always identify different tasks to help the more able pupils to do their best.

Senior staff and governors have made a major contribution to developing West Green as a primary school and managed the ongoing building work especially well, with minimal disruption to pupils' learning. Good steps have been taken to include new class teachers into the existing staff team. This has had a positive effect in driving forward improvement in whole-school initiatives, most notably in writing and mathematical calculation. However, not enough attention

has been paid to specific weaknesses in different phases of the school, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and this has limited the effectiveness in addressing them. In addition, partly because of staff turnover and lengthy absences, subject leaders do not always carry enough responsibility for the monitoring of pupils' progress, and ensuring that it is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The good teaching, along with activities which meet children's needs and interests well, supports their good progress. Standards on entry are below expectations, especially in terms of literacy and numeracy skills. Children make especially good progress in these areas, and by Year 1, standards are average in all areas of learning. There is a sense of fun and purpose in the classroom that helps children enjoy learning and try their best. There is an effective emphasis on developing early reading, writing and number skills and a good balance between activities where children work with an adult and those where they work independently or in groups. Adults' effective assessment of the rate at which children are progressing helps them to plan well for the next stage of learning. In particular, staff are working especially hard to improve some aspects of children's personal and social development where weaknesses have been identified. The provision is led and managed well, with good attention being given to ensuring children have access to outdoor activities during the building work. Liaison with parents regarding their children's learning is good and staff are extending their links with the local nursery and pre-school providers.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make better use of assessment information in science to set improvement targets and to plan challenging activities, especially in investigation work.
- Build on and extend the procedures put in place to improve the progress of more able pupils.
- Give greater priority to addressing specific weaknesses in different year groups and ensure that subject leaders are fully involved in monitoring pupils' progress in all classes.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged 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

Progress is good in the younger year groups. By the end of Reception, standards are average, and they are above average by Year 2. Standards in writing were lower than in reading, but have risen well this year in all classes. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Standards in English and mathematics have improved well and are around average. In these subjects the school achieved its targets and reached the national averages for the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 in the Year 6 national tests. However, this is not yet the case for the targets set for the more able pupils. Standards in science have improved this year, although they are still lower than in other subjects. Pupils who have learning, language or behavioural needs achieve as well as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children in Reception do well in this aspect and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. An outstanding feature is pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wide range of other pupils' backgrounds and the diversity of the local and wider community. This creates an especially good ethos of respect and tolerance for different cultures and beliefs, and relationships throughout the school are very good. As a result, the school is an especially harmonious community to which pupils enjoy coming and where attendance is above average. Pupils willingly accept responsibility and work well together or independently, and they are suitably prepared for their future life. Through the school council, pupils' views contribute well to school improvement, especially for the new building. Pupils develop a good awareness of how to eat healthily and the importance of regular exercise. They feel safe and secure in school and know a good number of ways in which to help keep safe, especially in school during the building work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The good teamwork established throughout encourages staff to share good practice. However, there has not been enough focus on areas needing development in specific classes so that some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain. Teachers are especially good at behaviour management and in using computers and interactive whiteboards to support learning. As a result, pupils are attentive and are very clear about what they have to do. Teaching assistants support pupils well in group activities, although occasionally in whole-class sessions they do little to support the learning of groups or individuals. In most lessons tasks are suitably challenging for most ability groups. However, staff place too much reliance on open-ended activities, which more able pupils sometimes find too easy, rather than setting them different tasks that provide a higher level of challenge. Although in the younger classes marking is very good, the quality varies in other year groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers' planning ensures that lessons provide relevant, practical and interesting activities. This, together with the chance to learn Spanish and other enrichment opportunities, including residential visits, helps pupils to enjoy school and work hard. A topic-based approach ensures pupils have many opportunities to use their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in other subjects. For example, in an excellent history activity, Year 6 pupils completed very effective job applications as 'Ancient Egyptians'. Planning has been adapted well to ensure weaker elements in pupils' progress in English and mathematics are addressed. However, this is not done so well in science, where insufficient attention is given to developing the investigation skills of the more able pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Comprehensive systems are in place for tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics, and this helps staff to set individual improvement targets. Although these have helped to bring about improvement, they are not always referred to or revised regularly enough, and the practice has not been extended to science. Rigorous attention is paid to securing pupils' safety and welfare. The school fully complies with government requirements on the safeguarding of pupils. Pastoral support is very good. The supportive ethos ensures that all staff know and respond to pupils' needs very well. Parents are very appreciative of the way staff work closely with them to sort out any problems their children may have.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The success of senior leaders and governors in ensuring the school's growth into an all-through primary school and providing suitable accommodation for pupils' needs is evident in parents' positive views and the school's growing popularity. Its capacity to create a cohesive community for pupils, their parents and also the local area is excellent. This has also been extended further afield through links with schools in Spain and Ghana. Satisfactory systems are in place to monitor the school's work and self-evaluation is accurate. Partly as a result of changes in staffing and long-term sickness, some areas of weakness still remain. In particular, less attention has been given to focusing on the weaker aspects in different year groups than to whole-school issues, although development planning is now suitably targeted at these. In addition, not all subject leaders are fully involved in regular tracking of pupils' progress, and this has contributed to the school being slower in improving achievement in science. Nevertheless, the school's success in improving progress in writing and numeracy this year gives confidence that it is securely placed to improve further. Governors are hardworking and supportive and are currently increasing their skills in monitoring and development planning.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
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 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?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Green Primary School, Crawley RH11 7EL

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly and helpful. I particularly want to thank the school council pupils who gave up their lunch time to speak to us. We think your school is satisfactory, but it is improving and some things are already good.

- Here are some of the things we found out were good about the school.
- Staff are excellent in helping you to understand about the differences between people's different backgrounds, cultures and religions and to be able to get on very well with one another.
- You enjoy school, work hard and attendance is above average.
- Those of you in the younger classes make good progress and all of you are making better progress in writing and number work this year.
- You get lots of opportunities to do interesting activities like learn Spanish and go on residential visits.
- Staff take very good care of you and help you to do well in your personal development.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors have worked very hard to help your school become a primary school and to improve the buildings for you. Here are some of the things we would like to see improved.
- Improve progress in science by regularly checking on how well you are doing and setting you targets to help you do better. We have also asked staff to plan investigation activities that help all of you to do your very best.
- Provide more challenging work for those of you who learn quickly so that more of you can reach the higher levels in tests, especially in Year 6. You can help by trying really hard, even when work is difficult.
- Make sure that things that need improving in just a few classes get attention as well as those things that need improving in all year groups.

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

Yours faithfully

D Wilkinson

Lead inspector