

Widey Court Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 113305 |
| Local Authority | Plymouth |
| Inspection number | 338141 |
| Inspection dates | 17–18 March 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Peter Thrusell |

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

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 600 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | D Torbuck |
| Headteacher | Patrick Marsh |
| Date of previous school inspection | 26 November 2008 |
| School address | Widey Lane Crownhill Plymouth PL6 5JS |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. All class teachers were seen and 26 lessons were observed. Meetings were held with the headteacher, governors, other senior staff and a group of pupils. Inspectors looked at documents, including the school improvement plan, monitoring files, data on pupils' progress, documents relating to safeguarding, and the results of questionnaires returned by staff, pupils, and 129 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' attainment and their progress, and how well teaching contributes to their learning, especially in Key Stage 1, in writing, for more able pupils, and for the few pupils who are new to learning English
- the effectiveness and use of assessment and the support systems to drive improvement
- the role of leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, in securing and sustaining improvements
- the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, given their starting points, and why this appears to have improved.

Information about the school

Widey Court is a large, three-form entry primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small proportion is from minority ethnic backgrounds, and some with English as an additional language are at an early stage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, the main difficulties being speech, language and communication, and social and behavioural. The school has a number of awards including Healthy School, Activemark, and 'I Can' accreditation for speech and language development in the Early Years. The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Since the last inspection, the school has made steady progress in addressing the areas for improvement, and is now a satisfactory and improving school.

Improvements to leadership and management, better use of assessment and progress in writing are contributing to this success, and show the school's satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

In 2009, assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that attainment rose significantly from the low point in the previous year, especially in writing, and was broadly average. In the same year, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science was above average. This was a more able year group than in previous and subsequent years. Currently, pupils in Year 6 are on track to meet challenging end of year targets, and indications are that attainment is likely to be broadly average. Given their starting points, pupils have made up lost ground and are achieving satisfactorily. Progress throughout the school is improving, especially in writing. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress due to an improved, well organised and stimulating learning environment.

Improvements in learning are largely the result of the careful tracking of pupils' progress and developments in the provision for writing. Regular assessments are made throughout the year and any underachievement quickly identified. Well-targeted interventions are helping pupils to catch up and challenging them to do even better. Teachers are now making fuller use of assessment information to plan work for all abilities, including the more able and the few who are new to learning English. Greater accountability for pupils' progress means that teachers also have a keener eye on how well pupils are doing. This is especially evident in the monitoring of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who, as a result, are achieving well. A structured approach to writing has been introduced, which effectively encourages pupils to evaluate the content and accuracy of their work in order to make improvements.

Aspects of pupils' personal development, including their behaviour, are good and contribute effectively to their learning and progress. They are keen to take on responsibility around school, show a strong concern for the environment, and willingly participate in the local community. However, opportunities for them to take responsibility for their learning are not as fully developed. Older pupils are aware of their predicted end of key stage levels and respond well to their individual curriculum targets. Although the setting of individual targets in reading, writing and mathematics has been

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established throughout the school, younger pupils are not as aware of their purpose in helping them to improve their work, and teachers do not always remind them of their targets when setting work in lessons. Marking does not consistently provide constructive comments that show pupils how well they have done, especially with reference to their targets and the presentation of work. Furthermore, pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to discuss and evaluate their own work. Introductions to lessons are sometimes too long and teachers' questions fail to develop pupils' understanding. As a result, the pace of learning slows and the time for independent work is restricted.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of learning by:
 - ensuring that introductions to lessons are concise and well focused, allowing more time for pupils to work independently on planned activities
 - ensuring that all pupils are involved in discussion and evaluation of their work, particularly at the end of lessons
 - reminding pupils of their targets in lessons and ensuring that they respond to them in their work
 - providing constructive comments in marking that relate to pupils' targets and show them how to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Achievement is satisfactory for all groups of learners, including more'able pupils, apart from those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who achieve well. Standards seen in lessons and pupils' books were broadly average, although the presentation of work seen in a few books lets pupils down. Pupils feel safe in school, enjoy lessons, want to do their best and make satisfactory progress. This enjoyment was clearly evident in a lesson for a Year 5 class on decimals. Excellent relationships, pupils' enthusiasm and the teacher's humour, along with a practical demonstration using chocolate bars, contributed to the success of the lesson and the good progress made by pupils. The expectations for different ability groups were made clear, so that all pupils were fully challenged and quickly knew what to do. A full discussion and evaluation at the end of the lesson enabled pupils to judge for themselves how well they had done and to consider the next steps in their learning. In a Year 2 lesson on explanation texts, learning and progress were satisfactory. The introduction was challenging for some, but too much so for others. Lower'attaining pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties, relied on the effective support of a teaching assistant, as questions were not sufficiently targeted to their level of understanding. Some pupils started to lose concentration and 'switch off' from learning as the introduction lost focus. As a result, activities were not fully understood and some pupils were initially unsure of what to do. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Although fully aware of their own community and its culture, their understanding of communities and cultures beyond

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their locality is less well developed. Pupils have many opportunities for sport and understand the importance of a healthy diet. Consequently, they are well on the way to adopting healthy lifestyles, recognised in national awards. Given their good personal development and adequate grasp of core skills, including the use of information and communication technology (ICT), pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future life and learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 3 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 3 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well managed and good relationships ensure that pupils quickly settle to work. Assessment is used well to plan work for different abilities, but questioning does not always take enough account of the range of ability within classes, so that some are not fully involved or appropriately challenged and the pace of learning slows. However, care is taken to go over previous learning so that pupils are aware of how lessons build on what has gone before. Good use is made of resources to support pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are well deployed in lessons and provide effective support for the individuals and groups they are working with.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The move towards a more creative, skills-based curriculum is adding further interest and purpose to pupils' learning by making links between subjects. This was seen in Year 3, where pupils were retelling the traditional story of Jack and the Beanstalk against the background of their historical work on Ancient Egypt. They were using ideas from this topic in their writing and so reinforcing their learning in history. Effective partnerships with schools, universities and local businesses, and specialist coaching in sport and tuition in music, provide additional enrichment opportunities. However, the provision for gifted and talented pupils through these links is not fully developed. A good range of visits and visitors, and after-school clubs, provide further enrichment, which effectively supports pupils' personal and social development. The introduction of a curriculum in Year 1 which takes account of the approach to learning used effectively in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is helping to ensure a better continuity of learning for younger pupils.

The school provides a safe and secure learning environment for pupils and ensures a high level of pastoral care, including in the breakfast and after-school club. Good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that they make good progress. Specialist support for those with particular difficulties, such as speech, language and communication, and physical needs, enables these pupils to meet the targets set for them. The few vulnerable pupils, for example those with social and behavioural needs, and their families, are well supported, effectively drawing on the work of the school's parent support advisor.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 3 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and the senior team are clear about the actions needed to drive school improvement. Actions taken are carefully planned and based on accurate self-evaluation, but need further time to be embedded and fully ensure their success in bringing about sustained improvement. Subject and year leaders now have a much clearer understanding of the school's performance and are playing a greater part in monitoring progress and leading on improvements in their particular areas. The school, through its own observations and monitoring of pupils' progress, has an accurate picture of strengths in the quality of teaching and how this needs to be improved. Further professional development, for example in the understanding and use of assessment, has started to bring about improvements. Governors have been effective in challenging the

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school on its performance. They also ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fully in place and adhered to. The school works closely with parents and carers and encourages them to be involved in their children's education. Meetings have been held with them to show, for example, how assessment is being used in school. Contact books provide a channel for parents and carers to make comments and express any concerns. The school is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils. This is demonstrated by the careful tracking of progress to identify where pupils need additional support or challenge, and the efforts made to include pupils, whatever their special educational needs and/or disabilities, in a residential trip to Tintagel. The school's promotion of pupils' understanding of, and respect for, different communities is effective in the immediate locality. Close links with Florida contribute to pupils' growing awareness of global communities. The school is less effective in promoting an awareness of the diversity of cultures and communities in Britain, although it has started to make plans to remedy this.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 3 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 3 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good induction arrangements, including home visits, help to establish good links with parents and carers, and ensure that children settle quickly into school, behave exceptionally well and make good progress, particularly in their personal and social development. When they join Year 1, most are working securely within the different areas of learning. Good free-flow provision between the three classrooms and outdoor areas has been developed, ensuring that children become very confident and

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cooperative learners as they move between a wide variety of carefully-planned activities. All staff work closely together as a team. They contribute to children's learning by talking with them and helping them to develop their knowledge and understanding in the different areas of learning. This effectively helps all pupils, including those who are new to learning English, to develop their spoken language and vocabulary, recognised in a national award. This was seen when children were excitedly timing and recording their bike rides to find the quickest rider, and when planning their role play of the story of the Three Little Pigs. The leader has recognised that a closer evaluation of these activities could be used to develop them further and extend children's learning even more. Independent activities are balanced by good directed learning, for example in number work. These take full account of children's developing abilities, ensuring that they are fully engaged and attentive to what is being taught. Children's learning and development are carefully assessed and recorded in their 'learning journals'. Staff are keen that children themselves should have a greater say about the content of these journals and what they want to include. Children are set weekly 'I Can' targets, which are recorded by children and accessed using 'sound buttons'. They eagerly refer to these and receive and manage the stickers they receive for their learning and personal development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |

Views of parents and carers

A large majority of parents and carers have positive views of the school and are happy about their children's experiences of school. A few are concerned about the leadership of the school, and the progress their children are making and whether this is good enough. The inspection finds that pupils are making satisfactory progress, which is improving due to the effective actions being taken by school leaders. A few concerns were also raised about behaviour, but the inspection finds this to be good and well managed. The team found no evidence to substantiate any individual concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Widey Court Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 129 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 600 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 65 | 50 | 51 | 40 | 10 | 8 | 3 | 2 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 56 | 43 | 61 | 47 | 9 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 30 | 23 | 77 | 60 | 20 | 16 | 2 | 2 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 37 | 29 | 66 | 51 | 17 | 13 | 6 | 5 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 38 | 29 | 67 | 52 | 15 | 12 | 2 | 2 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 31 | 24 | 75 | 58 | 15 | 12 | 3 | 2 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 43 | 33 | 78 | 60 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 36 | 28 | 72 | 56 | 8 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 34 | 26 | 71 | 55 | 17 | 13 | 3 | 2 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 35 | 27 | 67 | 52 | 15 | 12 | 7 | 5 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 24 | 19 | 78 | 60 | 18 | 14 | 4 | 3 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 27 | 21 | 68 | 53 | 15 | 12 | 12 | 9 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 44 | 34 | 63 | 49 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 5 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 39 | 58 | 3 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 13 | 50 | 33 | 4 |
| Secondary schools | 17 | 40 | 34 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 18 | 43 | 37 | 2 |
| Special schools | 26 | 54 | 18 | 2 |
| Pupil referral units | 7 | 55 | 30 | 7 |
| All schools | 15 | 49 | 32 | 5 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



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19 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Widey Court Primary School, Plymouth, PL6 5JS

Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We spoke with some of you during our visit and found you interesting to talk to, and very polite and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about enjoying school and all the things you take part in. Widey Court Primary is a satisfactory school, which means that some things are good but some things need to be improved.

These are the things that the school does well.

- Children get off to a good start in Reception.
- The school looks after you well, includes you all, and supports those who need extra help.
- You behave well and work hard in lessons.
- The school encourages you to eat healthily and keep fit.
- The school provides many additional activities for you. You benefit from a number of clubs and educational visits to places of interest.
- The school encourages your parents and carers to support you in your learning.
- The governors support the school well and have helped it to move forward since the last inspection.

We have asked the school to work on the following things.

You need to do even better in school and all make good progress in your learning. Teachers should involve you more in the introduction to lessons and ensure that you all get to answer questions on your work and discuss your understanding. Introductions need to be quicker so that you all get more time to work on your own. You need to make more use of the targets that teachers set for you, and use these in lessons to guide you when working. Teachers also need to refer to these targets when marking your work and showing you how well you have met them. Some of you also need to make sure that your work is neatly presented.

Thank you again for your help. You can do your bit to help by working hard in lessons and continuing to enjoy all that you do in school.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell

Lead inspector

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