

West End Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119139
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339363
Inspection dates	8–9 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Marie Hunter
Headteacher	Mr Steve Wetherill
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and held meetings with the headteacher and senior leaders, governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school assessment and tracking data, teachers' planning, records of attendance, risk assessments, records of pupils joining and leaving the school, and considered the comments of 18 questionnaires that were completed by parents and carers and returned to the school.

- the impact of the high mobility of pupils, poor attendance and the high proportion of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language upon the school's performance in national tests and the attainment of these different groups of pupils
- the effectiveness of the school's strategies for inducting new pupils and reintegrating poor attenders in securing continuity in their learning
- how well assessment pinpoints the risk of underachievement, and how effectively planned support and intervention helps pupils to succeed.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. While the majority of pupils are of white British heritage, almost 25% are of Eastern European heritage, mainly from Poland. There are very few pupils from other ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very high. The school serves an area of high economic disadvantage, as reflected in the much higher than average proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the average, so too is the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The numbers of pupils moving in and out of the school throughout the year is exceptionally high, and is usually around 40% of the school population. The school provides out-of-school care for pupils through the breakfast club and after-school provision.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

West End is a good school; some aspects of its work are outstanding. The school has improved rapidly since the previous inspection because of the determined and inspirational leadership of the headteacher, who is ably supported by a strong leadership team and a highly committed team of staff and governors. The school's good improvement is firmly rooted in rigorous systems for monitoring its work so that senior leaders and all staff are well aware of the challenges and barriers that must be overcome in order that pupils make good progress. There is a relentless search for new ways of managing the complex needs of the school's population and no stone is left unturned in supporting the many different needs of pupils. Staff morale is very high, because they are fully involved and included in all areas of the school's development. Given the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation and the school's proven record of successful improvement since the last inspection, it is well placed for further improvement.

The attainment of pupils, especially those who form the stable part of the school and attend from Year 1 to Year 6, is broadly average. This represents good and sometimes excellent progress for these pupils given their very low starting points when they join the school in the Reception class. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 show the negative impact of the high mobility of pupils and the poor attendance of some pupils, which in some years reduce the school's performance in national tests to well below average. Effective action taken by the school since the last inspection has seen standards rise in both English and mathematics in national tests at the end of Year 6, though the proportion gaining the higher level remains stubbornly below average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress, and while the provision is satisfactory overall, provision for outdoor learning is inadequate, because children do not have access to enough exciting and enticing activities.

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress for many reasons. They are eager and hardworking learners, who enjoy lessons and delight in any success they achieve. They are well taught, and sometimes lessons are outstanding, moving at a brisk pace with everyone fully engaged in interesting tasks. The curriculum is carefully adapted to meet the needs of all groups in each class, taking good account of pupils' needs, age and their interests. This is because teachers make very good use of assessment information to plan learning, and because they know the pupils very well, personally as well as academically. Pupils make good progress because they feel safe, secure and happy in school and are able to build on each success because they know that they are valued. In the Early Years Foundation Stage the use of assessment is not sharp enough to ensure

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that children make the best possible progress in all areas of learning.

Staff provide excellent care, guidance and support for pupils, giving them a strong sense of themselves as individuals and a belief that they will be supported to succeed no matter what. The school has devised excellent systems to help pupils who join the school in term time, or have irregular attendance, to be integrated and make a contribution to the life of their classes. Learning mentors play a key role in supporting new pupils and their parents and carers, and pupils who have high levels of absence, to settle into school routines and access learning quickly and smoothly. Excellent links with a wide range of external support agencies ensure that pupils who need support to learn English as an additional language, those who are vulnerable or have special educational needs, are all given the precise help they need to become successful learners. Care and welfare in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory; risk assessments on various activities are carried out, but are not routinely recorded or displayed.

Pupils are happy and say they feel safe in school. They make good gains in their personal development because of the many opportunities they have to learn about themselves and the wider world. Pupils relate well to each other regardless of ability or background. Together, they create a tolerant and harmonious community, where all are welcome and encouraged to join in. Behaviour is excellent. It makes lessons run smoothly, so time is well used for learning; out of lessons it ensures that pupils care for each other and follow the excellent example set by adults in giving support when it is needed. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. In school, they relish taking on responsibility and welcome the improvements they make to the school through the active school council. They perform for the wider community and take part in regular fundraising for local charities. Pupils know how to stay safe and try hard to lead a healthy lifestyle. They are especially good at taking plenty of vigorous exercise. By the time they leave the school in Year 6, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education, with good personal skills, tolerant and caring attitudes, and a belief that they can succeed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Improve the attendance of those pupils whose rate of absence gives cause for concern.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - - planning more thoroughly for all areas of learning, especially outdoors
 - - using information from observations of children's development more sharply to plan activities that follow their interests and challenge them more to develop new skills
 - - ensuring the deployment of staff notes in planning who will lead, support and monitor which activities throughout the day
 - - ensuring that all risk assessments are recorded and displayed appropriately in the Early Years Foundation Unit.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

While the attainment of pupils varies from group to group, nearly all pupils make good or better progress from their starting points. This includes pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils who are vulnerable, the high proportion of pupils who join the school 'in year', and the many pupils from the Polish community who speak English as an additional language. The school's tracking data shows that pupils who have poor attendance records tend to make less good progress than others and are most likely to miss the targets set for them. However, all pupils seen during inspection clearly enjoy school and show a real love of learning, no matter what their background or ability. This is because they are provided with interesting and challenging tasks and there is always support on hand to make sure they succeed. The idea of support goes well beyond adults helping pupils; in all classes pupils are seen helping each other and themselves by working together and using the many resources for self-help that teachers have prepared. School records, and work seen in classes during inspection, show that for the most part attainment is broadly average, especially in reading, mathematics and science. In some classes, attainment in writing is lower because of the high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Nevertheless, these pupils are very well supported through well-targeted intervention programmes and support from external specialists to make the same good progress from their starting points as others.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle and how to stay safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is one of their personal strengths. Pupils show excellent care and concern for each other, both in and out of the classroom. They welcome newcomers and quickly make them feel at home. Among the many comments in the pupils' questionnaires were: 'I am proud to be in this school since I moved here,' and, 'My school is very nice and as soon as I started I felt happy and safe.' Pupils are tolerant of differences and show great respect for each other's feelings and viewpoints. They know about the customs and beliefs of cultures other than their own and accept these as enriching their own school community. Pupils from both language groups work hard to break down barriers to communication and develop friendships. Pupils of all ages seize opportunities to be involved in running the school and helping it to improve. They readily take on responsibility as monitors, playground pals and members of the school council.

The vast majority of pupils attend school regularly and on time. However, attendance figures are well below average. Some of this is attributable to persistent non-attendance in a small number of families, but a proportion is related to the mobility of pupils whose absence is recorded for some days after they have been withdrawn without notifying the school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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	1
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Excellent teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants allows them to work seamlessly to provide support and success for every pupil. Lessons are well organised, with each adult clear about their role and those pupils for whom they have responsibility. This gives pupils a strong sense of security and confidence, so they quickly develop independence and the desire to prove they can work unaided. Teachers and teaching assistants make very good use of accurate assessment of pupils' learning to provide the correct level of challenge and questions during lessons, which keeps the pace of learning brisk. Pupils are aware of their targets and are given good feedback on how they can improve. Older pupils are able to evaluate their own and others' work and identify for themselves where improvements could be made. Pupils develop speaking and listening skills well, sometimes from a low base or overcoming the barrier of language, because teachers are careful in how they present information and persistent in encouraging pupils to respond.

A significant strength of the curriculum is the way it is adapted and presented to meet the needs and interests of all pupils. Provision in literacy and numeracy lessons is well matched to the needs of individuals and groups so all make good progress. There are regular opportunities for pupils to develop information and communication technology skills which they use for learning across a range of subjects. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is tailored to the needs of pupils, either by age or by specific need. It gives pupils a good understanding of how and why to stay healthy and safe, and of the importance of caring, supportive relationships. Special nurture groups provide additional curriculum time for vulnerable pupils, or those who have

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recently joined the school, to help them integrate fully with their peers. The curriculum is well enriched through the school's many links with external providers and through the after-school clubs and trips that are organised regularly throughout the year. The exciting opportunities for residential adventure weekends and theatre visits are much appreciated by pupils; so too are the after-school clubs, which are well supported.

All pupils succeed at West End school because of the rigorous systems used to keep them safe and to identify and support their specific needs. These enable every pupil to make the best of every opportunity the school offers. Caring and dedicated staff have detailed knowledge of pupils and their families; they establish excellent relationships with them and make every effort to remove any barriers to pupils' learning or well-being. The development of the role of learning mentors since the last inspection has created another layer of support for pupils. Excellent links between learning mentors and classroom staff ensure that any problems or changes in mood or performance in individual pupils are picked up quickly and investigated. Sensitive and expert support is provided through individualised work and behaviour programmes. These ensure that pupils succeed in their learning and develop 'coping' skills which ensure that they are able to continue working alongside their peers. The efforts of the learning mentors in tackling persistent non-attendance have been relentless in the last year. Strategies such as first day calls, followed up with home visits, as well as accompanying children to school, are beginning to reduce the proportion of persistent non-attenders.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

<p>The quality of teaching</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</p>	<p>1</p>

How effective are leadership and management?

The school is moving from strength to strength because senior leaders, staff and governors are ambitious for all pupils to do their best. The challenging targets that the school sets and meets in the face of many and complex barriers are a credit to the determination and skill of those who work there. The school is not complacent and is constantly looking for ways of improving provision and outcomes for pupils even further. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection because of the constant focus on refining assessment and tracking procedures. Staff have increased their skills well, through working closely with the local authority and sharing their own good practice. Senior leaders are skilled and robust in their evaluation of the school's work. They have identified the correct priorities for improvement and have clear strategies for tackling known weaknesses. They and all staff are constantly looking for

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ways to promote further the well-being and confidence of pupils. The school is very effective in promoting equality and tackling discrimination, and in linking with external agencies to provide specialist support for individuals. Safeguarding procedures are good, reflecting the value the school places on the health and safety of pupils and adults alike. The school promotes community cohesion well and uses all of the cultural differences in its own community to promote tolerance and understanding. Action plans for future development include links with schools overseas and evaluation of its current provision. Governors are knowledgeable about the school's work and involved in evaluating and setting priorities. They consult with parents and carers, staff and pupils and are eager to support the school in involving parents and carers with the work of the school. Partnerships with other schools and agencies are excellent; they make a significant contribution to enriching opportunities for pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception class) is satisfactory overall. Children join the Reception class with skills that are well below the levels expected for their age. Their language and communication, and social and emotional skills are at especially low levels. Many have not attended Nursery or any other pre-school provision so need more support to settle into the Reception class than is usual. They gradually develop independence and curiosity, but the school needs to develop clearer routines to develop their confidence at the early stage of starting school. Children generally play harmoniously and their behaviour is good, though sometimes

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they need reminders about the needs of others. Planning for all areas of learning is adequate and allows children to make satisfactory progress by the end of Reception. However, because of their low starting points the majority do not reach the expected level in all areas of learning by the end of Reception and children's attainment is very low at the start of Year 1. Despite having a spacious, well-resourced outdoor area, provision for learning outdoors is inadequate. This is because not enough activities are planned for outdoors, so that children who wish to learn in the open air find themselves limited in what they can do. Provision for the care and welfare of children is satisfactory. The class teacher and Nursery nurse are aware of the different needs of the children and make provision to ensure that they feel safe and secure. Regular observations of children's progress give staff a clear idea of what children need to learn next, though this is not always sharply used, which is one reason why provision is satisfactory rather than good.

Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Staff are suitably trained and know what action to take to protect the safety and security of children. Risk assessments are made of activities but these are not recorded or displayed to reassure parents and carers that all precautions are being taken to care for their children. Links with external agencies provide good support for children who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language and for those children who have speech difficulties.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Those parents and carers who returned questionnaires about the school were overwhelmingly positive about the school's provision for their children. Parents and carers are convinced that the school cares well for their children, that their children make good progress and that the school is well led and managed. A tiny minority raised concerns about the school's help to support their children at home, whether their children are making enough progress and whether they are kept sufficiently informed about their children's progress. The inspectors found that the school has good links with parents and carers at all levels and that the progress of all groups of pupils is good, with the school overcoming considerable barriers to ensure that this is the case.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West End 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 inspector received 18 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 142 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	63	5	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	69	5	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	56	6	38	1	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	56	6	38	1	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	63	5	31	1	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	44	8	50	0	0	1	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	69	5	31	0	0	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)	8	50	7	44	1	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	56	5	31	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	50	8	50	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	31	9	56	1	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	44	8	50	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	63	6	38	0	0	0	0

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.



Dear Pupils

Inspection of West End Primary School, Morecambe, LA3 1BW

Thank you for the lovely time I had with you all when I came to inspect your school recently. Your excellent behaviour and friendliness are a credit to you, your families and your school. Please pass on my thanks to your parents and carers for returning the questionnaires, which told me what they think of your school. Like them, I think your school is a good one and here are some of the reasons why.

- You all work hard, enjoy your lessons and make good progress in your learning, so that you reach the standards expected by the time you leave the school.
- Those of you who have joined from other schools or another country settle very well and do as well as others in your learning.
- Those of you who are learning to speak English are making great strides so your teachers are very proud of you.
- You are happy and feel safe in school because adults care, support and guide you exceptionally well.
- The teaching you receive is good, and sometimes it is excellent; you and your teachers have a very good idea of what it is you need to learn next.
- Your teaching assistants do a very good job in helping you to do well and they make your learning fun.
- The way the curriculum is planned and organised gives you plenty of opportunities for success and plenty of new experiences.
- Your headteacher, senior leaders and all staff are very keen for you to do well and are constantly looking for new ways to help you succeed.

There are a few areas where I think your school could be even better, so I have suggested the following.

- Help more of you to reach the higher grades in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Improve the attendance of those of you who do not learn so well because you miss school quite often.
- Improve the learning activities for children in the Reception class so that they make the same good progress as other children in the school.

I now know why one of you wrote in your questionnaire, 'Why would anybody want to go anywhere else? This is a happy school.' I completely agree that it is. My best wishes

for a happy and successful year to you all.

Yours faithfully

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