

West Kidlington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123004
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	340256
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Patricia Potheary

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	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Darren Rochford
Headteacher	Philip Marples
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and observed breaks and lunchtimes. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at data on progress, pupils' work, monitoring reports, policies and planning. Inspectors also considered the views of pupils and those of 50 parents expressed in questionnaires.

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

- pupils' progress in writing and science, especially for the less able and those with special educational needs
- consistency in the quality of teaching, particularly in the use of assessment and targets in providing pupils with sufficient individual challenge
- the role of leadership at all levels, including governance, in securing sustained improvement to pupils' progress.

Information about the school

West Kidlington is a large primary school with pupils from a wide range of different backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a few pupils from a variety of other ethnic groups. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes. The school has several awards, including the Inclusion Quality Mark, and Values Kite Mark. The substantive headteacher is currently taking a sabbatical year and an acting headteacher has been appointed for two and a half days per week from September 2009. During the rest of the week, the school is led by the two substantive deputy headteachers. There is a privately run Nursery on site which was not part of this inspection.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to ensuring that all the government's requirements relating to the safeguarding of children are met.

Pupils say that they are safe and the majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire are positive about their child's well-being. However, the school has not ensured that all policies and procedures relating to keeping children safe meet statutory requirements.

The school has a happy and welcoming environment which pupils appreciate very much. As one wrote, this is 'a lovely caring school and I am very lucky to be here'. Children arrive in Reception with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. By the time they leave Year 6, their attainment is average, demonstrating satisfactory academic achievement. They also leave with a wide range of good personal skills.

Children in Reception make good progress which is an improvement on previous years. Progress for pupils of all abilities from the ages of five to eleven, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is broadly satisfactory. It is good in reading for the younger pupils and for older more able boys in mathematics. Progress in writing and science has been slow throughout the school, but, due to some effective strategies being introduced, is now satisfactory. Staff recognise that there are still not enough opportunities provided for pupils to practise their writing skills in many different contexts and subjects. In addition, science lessons lack a sufficiently practical dimension.

The school has pioneered an education based upon core values such as trust, co-operation and friendship. This permeates the curriculum and is the very first thing pupils say they like most about school. It has led to an outstanding spiritual, moral, and social awareness among pupils where they show significant care, respect and consideration towards others. They contribute well to the work of the school, eagerly taking on responsibilities such as running the healthy snack shop, acting as play leaders and helping with the local flower festival each autumn. Pupils generally behave maturely and are keen to be successful in all their work.

Pupils enjoy their lessons which are often lively and usually have an interesting range of activities to motivate and engage them. Good subject knowledge means that teaching provides a wealth of information for pupils to absorb. Teaching is still not leading to good progress overall, partly because lessons are often not practical enough to

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encourage pupils to explore for themselves or in groups. In addition, although assessment of pupils' attainment is accurate, the targets set for individuals are not always used well in planning to meet their different needs. As a result, pupils are not sufficiently involved in how to improve their work and so they do not always move from one level to the next fast enough.

School leaders have robust information about the progress pupils make which they use to judge what is going well and what needs to be improved. This has led to better teaching and increased progress in mathematics and writing in all age groups, including Reception. Their view, however, is not always critical enough, which is one reason why the capacity to improve is satisfactory rather than good. In addition, not all teachers or governors have been sufficiently involved in looking at data to ensure that everyone works closely as a team to increase progress. Therefore the actions taken are not yet fully effective at all levels. There is a keen sense of urgency among everyone involved to raise standards and improve progress more rapidly, which is beginning to take effect.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure, as a matter of urgency, that the school complies fully with current government requirements for safeguarding and that governors take a strong monitoring role in this.
- Improve teaching and learning so that more pupils make consistently good progress, particularly in writing and science by:
 - giving them substantially more opportunities to write in a range of contexts and subjects
 - emphasising practical experiences, explorative learning and group working
 - involving pupils more closely in what they need to do to improve
 - ensuring that pupils' individual targets are used so that lessons meet the needs of every pupil.
- Improve the capacity of leaders at all levels to drive improvement by:
 - ensuring all staff and governors use the information about pupils' progress very regularly to see where improvements are most needed
 - being more self-critical of outcomes as a team so that actions to increase progress are more effective at all levels.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are polite and hardworking in lessons and show considerable confidence in answering questions. Achievement is satisfactory for all age groups but is most secure in Key Stage 1. Although in writing progress over time has been satisfactory, in current lessons it is often good for pupils of all abilities. In one English lesson where pupils made really good progress, they were inspired to use some beautiful words to describe a snowy scene. Pupils with special educational needs progress well in their special

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lessons, and make similar progress to their peers in all age groups. In a few lessons, those of lower ability do not make enough progress as the work set does not meet their needs. Increased, and now satisfactory, progress in science is evident in books. In one lesson, pupils remembered lots of information about micro-organisms, showing considerable wonder and curiosity. Their skills in investigating and exploring practical science are less well developed. This is the same in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), where although progress is satisfactory and improving, more limited problem solving and practical application prevents faster progress being made.

Pupils feel safe and behave safely in school and incidents of unkind behaviour are rare. Their good behaviour is seen in lessons, where they listen carefully and confidently answer questions. They clearly enjoy learning. Pupils understand how to stay healthy and many eat more fruit and vegetables and take more exercise as a result, relishing the many sports available. They willingly take on many responsibilities, for example acting as play leaders, running a healthy tuck shop and helping to decide how the curriculum is organised. A significant air of empathy and appreciation of the world around them, including respect for those who are different from themselves, pervades the school. They have a well-rounded cultural experience and enjoy enormously the musical instruments they are learning to play. Pupils' preparation for the future is satisfactory. They develop some good teamworking skills and most attend regularly but their attainment in basic skills is only average.

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	3
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

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 extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the rate of learning is beginning to improve, especially in writing and science. There is an increasing proportion of good and outstanding teaching. Teachers have a good rapport with pupils and usually make lessons interesting. In some lessons, pupils are inspired by lively knowledgeable discussions. Writing is improving as teachers focus more on active learning. Not enough lessons, however, encourage exploration or teamwork in real-life situations. The use of assessment is variable. The school has a suitable system for setting targets and staff accurately assess pupils' attainment. In several lessons, however, work is not adapted well enough to ensure all the different groups make enough progress. This is because pupils' individual targets are often not specific enough to each lesson and pupils are not clear about what they personally need to do to move to the next level.

The curriculum is suitably planned to build learning from year to year and to meet pupils' needs, including the particular interests of boys and girls. There is some strong provision for gifted and talented pupils and plenty of opportunity for pupils to learn a musical instrument or take part in a wide range of sports. Key skills such as literacy, numeracy and ICT are supported in several subjects but this is not planned systematically. Therefore these skills are not practised regularly enough in different contexts to improve progress further. The curriculum is enhanced through collaboration with the 'Change School Project' and other partnerships which have invigorated creativity, enthused pupils and contributed to very strong and memorable spiritual and cultural experiences.

Care, guidance and support are inadequate because safeguarding procedures do not meet requirements. Policies and the associated paperwork that are required by law are not fully in place. Pupils are well cared for on a day-to-day basis and parents are positive about their child's wellbeing while at school. As one pupil commented, 'This is a second home to me.' Pupils with special educational needs and other difficulties are well supported, with strong links to other agencies to ensure that they thrive and make progress. Arrangements when pupils move classes or on to the next school are good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support

4

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders have worked effectively as a team recently to increase progress in key areas. New strategies and systems have raised expectations and so improved the quality of teaching and assessment. Previous inspections issues have been addressed. The acting headteacher, well supported by the assistant headteachers, has a clear and accurate idea of strengths and areas for development, based upon a comprehensive evaluation of data. This understanding is not yet shared by all staff or by governors, although they are becoming more involved and aware and show a strong commitment to improve. School targets are suitably challenging and are largely being met. The school continues to be particularly successful, especially through good partnerships, in enabling pupils to develop a wide range of good personal skills.

As the governing body does not fulfil its duties to meet statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding pupils, governance is inadequate. Governors recognise that they have not held leaders sufficiently to account by providing challenge in meetings and in supporting increased improvement. They offer a good range of expertise and are highly committed to rectifying this situation. Although safeguarding procedures do not comply with requirements in several respects, there are strengths. Staff training is up to date, health and safety issues are incorporated well in the curriculum and arrangements for interagency work are effective in protecting pupils.

The school is committed to providing equal opportunities and has been awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark, and there is no evidence of discrimination. All pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity or background, have the same sense of belonging and of making progress. The school promotes community cohesion to a satisfactory level. It is good within school and internationally, but there is little involvement at a national level and the impact of such work is not fully evaluated. Pupils show considerable respect for each other regardless of their many differences, which is why it is such a harmonious community.

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	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
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

Children are helped to a smooth start in Reception, following strong links with parents and pre-school providers. They currently make good progress in all areas of learning, which is an improvement on prior years. They enter Year 1 with skills which are average, and sometimes better, for their age. Leadership is good, with improved teaching and a skilled and dedicated staff. Staff recognise that the way information about children's progress is used is not yet developed well enough to ensure increased progress. Relationships are excellent, with children and adults working together in a productive learning partnership. The environment inside and out is delightful, with a host of engaging areas, such as Cinderella's kitchen and Santa's workshop to fire children's imaginations. This challenges children to do well and they thoroughly enjoy their learning. Sessions are planned around topics where activities are set up to help children explore their ideas and discover things for themselves. In one lesson, for example, children were making tea for Santa with glitter porridge, while those outside were turning crates and tyres into Santa's sleigh. All the while, they are encouraged skilfully by staff to develop their language skills and become enthusiastic about writing, with one boy exclaiming 'I want to write!' Teaching is planned well to make sure that children of different abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. In this atmosphere, children become increasingly independent; they write their own rules, for example, and embrace each day with many smiles.

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

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They particularly appreciate their children's enjoyment of school and the quality of teaching. They also like the way their

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children are helped to understand how to keep healthy and also to move between year groups and on to the next school. They are happy with the progress their children make and think the school provides good support for those with particular needs. A very small minority expressed concerns about the level of supervision on the playground. This was not evident during the inspection, but inspectors are reassured that this concern is being followed up by the school. There were many positive comments, including, typically, 'West Kidlington is a lovely place and always makes you feel welcome at any time.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Kidlington 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 375 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	76	12	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	56	21	42	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	50	25	50	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	56	21	42	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	70	15	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	50	25	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	58	19	38	2	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)	32	64	16	32	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	58	21	42	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	40	25	50	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	42	27	54	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	56	22	44	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	70	13	26	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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 pupils' 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.



10 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Kidlington Primary School, Kidlington OX5 1EA

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons. Your school is a happy and welcoming community. It has been given a notice to improve because some papers about keeping you safe, which must be filled in by law, are not fully in place. However, you are very well looked after by staff. The school is improving with many interesting things going on, just as you described. Senior staff work hard to keep developing the school and, for this reason, your work is getting better. We would like governors, leaders and teachers throughout the school to use information on your progress more regularly so that they can have a much clearer idea of where improvement is needed and how to go about it.

Enjoyable teaching helps you to make at least satisfactory progress in your lessons and this is increasing. You told us that teachers make lessons fun and interesting. As a result, you make secure progress in reading and mathematics and always try to do your best. We have asked your school to help you make even more progress, through improved teaching, especially in writing and science. To do this we would like them to help you more with writing in other subjects and to plan more practical activities, and group work where you explore for yourselves. We would also like to see more use made of your targets so that you are all challenged enough and know how to improve in many more lessons. We are sure that you will talk about this with your teachers and help them by working hard and sharing your ideas.

You have many opportunities to contribute well to school life and the community. Your behaviour is good, especially in the way you value learning. The values you learn mean that your spiritual moral and social awareness are excellent. You usually show good respect and understanding towards others, including those who have different beliefs and ways of living. The responsibilities that you take on are heartening, particularly in the school council, and the way you help each other on the playground. You were keen to tell us that the school keeps you safe and looks after you very well. It is therefore impressive to see just how well you are helping yourselves by taking plenty of exercise and eating such a healthy diet.

We think that this, alongside your mature attitudes to working with others, helps you to be suitably prepared for your next school and future lives.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Potheary

Lead inspector

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