

# West Row Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124542
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	340594
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nick Butt

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	124
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr R Taylor-Balls
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs G Ciantar
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 December 2006
<b>School address</b>	Beeches Road West Row Bury St Edmunds
<b>Telephone number</b>	01638 715680
<b>Fax number</b>	01638 515115
<b>Email address</b>	Ht.west.row.p@talk21.com

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, observed all teachers and spent the majority of the time observing learning. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a selection of documentation, including planning, evidence of monitoring such as lesson observations and analysis of pupils' work and other assessment information. Inspectors scrutinised inspection questionnaires returned by 29 parents or carers.

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

- the impact of measures to raise attainment by the end of Year 2
- how well teachers use assessment to plan next steps in pupils' learning
- how effectively leaders and managers monitor the work of the school to bring about improvement

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average sized school. It has its Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the Reception class. The majority of pupils on roll are of White British heritage. There are significant numbers of pupils from the United States, whose parents are stationed at the nearby Air Force Base of Mildenhall. The school also has pupils of Traveller heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. These are mainly for moderate learning and behavioural difficulties. The school has gained the Healthy Schools and Active Mark awards.

An independently run pre-school opened on the school site in April 2009, and was subject to a separate inspection in November 2009.

**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

West Row Community Primary is a satisfactory school. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the provision excites their interest and responds well to their needs. They make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 4, attaining standards that are broadly average by the time they move to middle school. Pupils enjoy the varied and relevant curriculum, which is enriched well with a good range of clubs, visits and visitors. Many aspects of pupils' personal development are good, and they get on well together. Most parents support the work of the school, the views of many summed up in the comment, 'The staff are very conscientious and professional and the children are well behaved and polite.'

Teaching is satisfactory; relationships in class are good and pupils are keen to learn. Teachers use new technology effectively to engage pupils. However, it is not always clear in lessons what steps pupils need to take to succeed in their learning, as this is not always spelt out to them. Sometimes learning is too directed, with not enough opportunity for pupils to explore ideas independently. In 2009, attainment dipped at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, partly because of a high number of pupils with particular needs in a very small cohort. The school has worked hard this year to track closely how pupils are doing, and to give additional support where necessary. There are inconsistencies in the extent to which assessment information is used effectively to challenge all pupils to do well.

The school works successfully with pupils who have complex needs, including behavioural difficulties. The calm caring atmosphere enables pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable to settle quickly. Good partnerships with other agencies and organisations have a positive impact on pupils' personal development. Pupils say they feel safe at school and adopt healthy lifestyles well. They contribute widely to the school and local community, and have established good links with the elderly.

The headteacher gives clear direction to the school, promoting its inclusive family atmosphere. Self-evaluation about the impact of leadership on standards and achievement has been rather generous because monitoring is not always rigorous enough. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection, but the school recognises rightly that the rate of improvement is not fast enough. While governors contribute to good safeguarding arrangements, their monitoring is too informal to enable them to fulfil the role of critical friend to the school as well as they should. There is a satisfactory capacity for sustained further improvement.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

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- Reverse the dip in attainment at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics so that pupils reach at least the national average by:
  - using assessment information more effectively to challenge all pupils.
- Ensure all teaching is consistently good by:
  - sharing with pupils the steps they need to take to succeed in their learning
  - giving pupils opportunities to develop their independence.
- Increase the rate of improvement by:
  - ensuring that leaders and governors rigorously and systematically monitor the work of the school.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

Pupils enjoy practical investigations when they can make their own decisions about learning. For example, Year 2 pupils considered what the optimum height would be for a ramp to make a toy car go the farthest distance. Year 4 pupils devised an experiment with balloons to show the capacity of their lungs. Year 3 pupils responded well to the challenge of building a house with seven rooms on a restricted space. At other times, pupils' progress is slower, when they are not clear exactly what is expected of them, or when the tasks they are given are not sufficiently challenging.

All groups of pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points, and some do better than that. Most pupils attend well, although Travellers and pupils from the United States sometimes miss school through family occupational commitments, and a few have longer periods of absence. The school works hard to support these pupils when they return to enable them to catch up with their peers. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory. Some pupils, whose circumstances make them vulnerable, improve rapidly in their attitudes and behaviour because of the good level of pastoral care they receive.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep safe, and promote safety through designing fire posters and writing to parents about parking their cars safely. Behaviour is good throughout the school, with effective management of pupils who have real difficulties. The school's achievement of Healthy Schools and Active Mark status points to pupils' good knowledge of keeping healthy and active lifestyles. Pupils grow their own vegetables for use in the popular healthy school meals. The school council represents pupils' views in school and in the wider community. Pupils take part in a wide range of fundraising activities, most recently for the Haitian Earthquake relief fund. Pupils acquire average basic skills so are ready for the next stage of their education. They learn about the world of work from visiting parents and visits to businesses such as a regional newspaper. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding about different cultures, and celebrate their different backgrounds

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and traditions. The classes are named after continents, enabling pupils to find out about countries around the world.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Imaginative teaching links subjects together well, as when Year 2 pupils plotted the results of their science challenge in bar charts on laptop computers. They could access an online tutorial to remind them how to compile the chart if needed. The good curriculum contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school and their positive attitudes to learning. One pupil said, 'We like to learn about things that we've not heard about before.' Good use is made of the rich cultures represented by the Traveller and United States communities to adapt the curriculum so that it is relevant and meaningful to pupils. For example, a storyteller related Traveller tales to pupils, while the whole school celebrated Thanksgiving and American Independence Day.

Teaching quality varies, because not all lessons maintain the high levels of pace and challenge required for pupils to make good progress. In particular, in some classes it is not clear to pupils how they will know if they have achieved an objective, and what

<sup>1</sup> 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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steps they need to take to reach it. Marking shows pupils how to improve, but assessment data is not always used effectively to plan activities that will challenge pupils sufficiently. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution in providing the good quality care pupils receive, especially for those with behavioural difficulties. The school promotes attendance well, doing all it can to minimise the impact of extended absence of a very few pupils, when they are away travelling, or accompanying their parents on leave.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders have been effective in embedding ambition to create a caring and positive environment in which pupils feel safe and enthusiastic about learning. The impact of driving improvement has been satisfactory in terms of raising attainment and accelerating progress. There is a monitoring cycle, but judgements about school effectiveness have been too generous in the past and gone unchallenged because the process has not been rigorous or systematic enough. Improved tracking of pupils' progress is showing more clearly where the gaps are, and regular meetings between staff put in place appropriate measures to raise achievement. Subject leaders contribute to assessments of progress, but the extent of their understanding of how to bring about improvement varies. Governors are supportive, but do not give a sufficient strategic lead because their systems for evaluating the work of the school are too informal. Minutes of their meetings do not report what went on in enough detail to show they are fulfilling their roles appropriately. Safeguarding arrangements are effective and all requirements are met.

Close partnerships with neighbouring schools give staff opportunities to train together and to share resources. There are good links with the local air base and the Traveller community, which build community cohesion well. Partnership with other organisations such as a project to promote ballroom dancing with the elderly, benefit pupils socially and widen their horizons. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory and the school is working hard to iron out any inconsistencies in the provision, such as marking. The school has established links with a similar school serving an air base in Yorkshire, and is looking to develop its global links further.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Reception class with a wide range of skills and abilities somewhat below those usually expected, especially in writing. Good provision ensures that early literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and that children make good progress from their starting points. The spacious classroom is an attractive and colourful learning environment, with plenty to delight children, so that they sustain concentration for extended periods of time. This was the case when children were doing observational drawings of the teacher's pet rabbits. Skilful planning ensures that children's interests are fully included, with topics on pirates and Bob the Builder appealing particularly to the boys. A wide and imaginative curriculum gives children a wealth of experiences, including celebrating festivals such as Mardi Gras.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a passion for her subject and has built a strong and enthusiastic team, linking very well with parents and carers. Accurate and thorough assessment means that children's 'learning journeys' give a clear picture of their progress, and are presented in ways that children and their parents can access. The outdoor area is still undergoing development so cannot yet be used to its full potential, and neither can the covered area because the canopy is too high to offer protection from the elements.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

The great majority of parents support the work of the school and value the close links they enjoy with staff. They believe their children enjoy school, are safe, and are taught well. Some feel that staff absence is unsettling for their children. A few would like to be more informed about their children's learning and believe that behaviour could be dealt with better. Inspectors found that the school communicates very well with parents and that behaviour is good.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Row Community 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 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 124 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	59	12	41	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	62	10	34	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	50	12	43	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	54	12	43	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	61	10	36	0	0	1	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	57	9	32	3	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	52	14	48	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)	12	48	13	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	55	11	38	2	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	43	12	43	3	11	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	50	14	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	54	12	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	57	11	39	1	4	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



1 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Row Community Primary School, Bury St Edmunds, IP28 8NY

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We did enjoy meeting you all. Yours is a satisfactory school. Here are some of the things about it does well.

You say you feel safe at school and know about making healthy choices.

Your behaviour is good and you are enthusiastic about your lessons.

You help around school and get involved with the local community.

You all get on well together and learn from one another.

The school makes learning interesting by providing exciting activities for you to enjoy.

There are plenty of clubs and trips for you to take part in.

The school cares for you well, especially when you have worries.

There are good links with parents and other partners.

Children in the Reception class get off to a good start.

We want you all to do as well as you can, so we have asked your teachers to make sure that they give you work that will really make you think. We have asked them to show you the steps you must take to succeed in your learning, so you are quite clear about what you have to do. We also found that you should have more opportunities to develop your own ideas about what you are learning. You can help by thinking of different ways of presenting your work. We have asked leaders and governors to check that things are going well on a regular basis, so that they can help the school to improve even faster.

Thank you once again for your help. Our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt

Lead inspector

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