

West Ewell Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124961
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	340690
Inspection dates	27–28 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Peter McGregor

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	319
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clive Smitheram
Headteacher	Lindsay Handcock
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 15 lessons and observed 12 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils, and spoke to parents. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation such as samples of pupils' work, analysis of the tracking of pupils' progress, school policies and procedures, and school leaders' monitoring. The team analysed questionnaires from 111 parents and carers and 25 staff.

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

- what the school is doing to raise standards in reading and writing, and the current levels of attainment in English and mathematics
- the effectiveness of attendance procedures in reducing absence
- what strengths in teaching lead the school to judge teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes as outstanding
- how well leadership and management have maintained the high quality of provision since the last inspection.

Information about the school

West Ewell is larger than most infant schools, and is part of a local federation of schools. A large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportions of pupils who speak English as an additional language or have special educational needs and/or disabilities are above average. Their needs are mainly in the areas of speech, language and communication, moderate learning and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school has a speech, language and communication needs centre. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in Nursery and Reception classes. The school has achieved a number of awards including Healthy School and International School status.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Pupils at West Ewell are highly motivated and make exceptional progress. They build on an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and attain above-average standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils speak with confidence and great pleasure about what they learn at school. Numeracy, literacy and computer knowledge are good and so are their creative, physical and problem-solving skills. Their enjoyment is palpable and their behaviour excellent. Parents have an exceptionally positive view about the quality of education provided for their children.

Outstanding teaching is a key cause of pupils' academic success. Teachers prepare lessons exceptionally well so they meet the needs of the wide range of pupils. Support staff work very closely with teachers to ensure that pupils of all backgrounds receive equality of opportunity. Teachers achieve excellence by challenging pupils to respond to their high expectations, which are apparent in assemblies, clubs and during the break and lunch periods, as well as in lessons.

Among the school's many strengths, the breadth of curricular opportunities provided is exceptional. All start to learn computer skills and to swim in the Nursery and many visitors and visits to places of interest are carefully integrated into planned work. Reading, writing and numeracy pervade all aspects of work and opportunities for participation in music and art activities are excellent. The breakfast club and after-school care provided by the school are outstanding, meeting the needs of the community. Systems to promote high attendance are clear and detailed and are resulting in improvements, but are not yet as effective as other aspects of school life. As a result, attendance remains broadly average.

The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, provides high-quality leadership and management. All staff, without exception, take great pride in the school and its achievements. Staff training is highly valued and successful, with a focus on coaching one another to enhance skills and knowledge. Governors are very knowledgeable and supportive, as well as demanding and challenging, holding staff to account for the progress made against the school's development plan priorities. Monitoring and self-evaluation are accurate and highly effective in guiding the drive for continuous development. Based on this, and the many strengths sustained over several years, the school's capacity to improve further is excellent.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rigorously implement and monitor procedures and practice to raise attendance rates above 96%.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Children enter the school with skills below those expected, particularly in personal development and in communication and language for thinking. They make rapid progress because of consistently high expectations throughout the school. Their achievement is outstanding. The school's rigorous monitoring programme shows clearly that standards in the current Year 2 are above average in English and mathematics. Boys' writing and reading have improved, following a drive to make work interesting and relevant to them and their attainment is now as high as in mathematics. Attainment in other areas of the curriculum, such as music and physical education, are high because of the quality of the curriculum and teaching, and the substantial time allocated to each area of learning. In the centre for speech, language and communication difficulties, specialist teaching and support staff enable pupils to be highly successful. These pupils, and those with moderate learning or behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, make excellent progress because teachers plan lessons effectively to include tasks focused on their particular needs. All pupils for whom English is an additional language are equally well supported and successful.

Pupils know they are taught and looked after in an extremely caring environment. They feel completely safe and secure, confident that staff listen to their views and take action on points of concern raised through class and school councils. Pupils are involved in writing 'charters', which guide their behaviour and approach in class and around the school. Their participation in energetic activities, such as sport sessions with specialist coaches and swimming and physical education lessons, results in fit and healthy pupils, reflecting the impact of the school's national award. They are extremely keen to take on responsibilities, for example as active 'eco-warriors' promoting environmentally friendly practices or playground buddies. Pupils of all ages and backgrounds play and work very well together, showing outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; an exceptionally high degree of trust exists among all in the school community. A few pupils show a pattern of irregular attendance, which detracts from their ability to make the most of all that is provided.

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.

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers work together on one afternoon each week preparing their lessons for the following week. This excellent cooperative work enables the best teaching techniques to spread quickly throughout the staff. Teachers use modern technology very skilfully to produce easy-to-read text on screen and interesting pictures which motivate pupils to learn. They provide pupils with many opportunities to discuss their work in pairs, enhancing their understanding and knowledge. Frequent assessment using, for example, 'thumbs up and down' and 'show me' boards, enables teachers to build well on pupils' prior knowledge. Grouping by ability for teaching of mathematics and aspects of literacy is very helpful in generating an appropriate pace and level of work for high- and low-attaining pupils alike. Many aspects of the curriculum contribute outstandingly well to pupils' personal and social development and to their enjoyment of learning. For example, teachers and other staff provide a sleepover in the school hall for Year 2 pupils, which boosts their confidence in being away from home and in sharing experiences. Pupils learn to respect one another and value the contributions of peers of differing ages when they mix across year groups on one afternoon each month, selecting tasks from a range of learning activities.

In an outstanding and well-cared-for learning environment, staff show great respect for pupils. This is reciprocated, generating excellent relationships where all see themselves as members of a large family. Highly effective parent support workers and a family links parenting group contribute to this outstanding picture. Most effective use is made of guidance from a large number of outside agencies involved in supporting pupils, to extend the skills and understanding of school staff. This has a positive impact on all

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pupils' learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has maintained and built upon the many outstanding aspects identified at the time of the last inspection. Her ambitious vision and drive for excellence, shared and appreciated by colleagues and governors, is built upon high-quality procedures thoroughly understood and implemented by all. Responsibilities of staff are skilfully and successfully delegated so that when they leave or are absent, for example on maternity leave, deputies take over, ensuring highly effective succession. The whole staff team 'teaching, support, administrative and caretaking' works as an extremely capable and cohesive unit, contributing complementary skills to pupils' experience of school life. All are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that bullying and discrimination are not tolerated. Teachers welcome constructive criticism provided by senior leaders and subject coordinators, and are keen to improve all aspects of their work. The partnership among the staff extends to the parents, with paper and electronic weekly newsletters, daily information on the school board and a very welcoming approach. Governors and the headteacher ensure that pupils' health, safety and well-being always have the highest priority and that safeguarding procedures are rigorously followed.

Strong links with schools in the local federation result in enhanced opportunities, for example specialist teachers visiting to help with music and physical education. The School's International Award is recognition of contacts with a school in Uganda, an orphanage in Kenya and, more recently, with a school in China, are providing an excellent breadth of understanding of cultural diversity. Visitors representing many local faith groups, celebrations of cultural and religious festivals and a highly inclusive approach are indications of the outstanding manner with which community cohesion is promoted. The school provides excellent value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1

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	
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Very helpful relationships are established with parents in the Nursery so that they become willing partners in their children's learning. This has a highly beneficial impact upon children's self-esteem and motivation to learn. Reception classes build extremely successfully upon this enthusiasm so that by the time the children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, they are at or above the levels expected in all areas of learning.

The excellent, colourful and word-rich environment, indoors and outside, engages children's interest, developing their imagination extremely well. The high-quality creative curriculum has an appropriate balance of child- and adult-led activities. Teachers and support staff show a deep understanding of how children learn as they use resources to stimulate their involvement. Children's different cultures are valued and those with any additional needs enjoy excellent support. Assessments are regular and accurate, so that activities are carefully planned for children to extend their existing skills and acquire new ones.

Leadership and management are outstandingly effective in providing an inclusive, exciting environment that enables children to make excellent progress. All staff work together extremely well, focusing on the areas of communication and language and personal and social development which facilitate other learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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Views of parents and carers

Comments such as a 'brilliant school' and 'I have been overwhelmed by the dedication of the staff and the support for my child' reflect the large number of extremely positive comments from parents and carers. They have no major areas of concern. The inspection team endorses the parents' views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Ewell Infant 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 111 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 341 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	83	75	28	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	78	70	33	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	75	68	35	32	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	70	63	37	33	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	80	72	29	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	75	68	33	30	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	72	65	36	32	2	2	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)	62	56	38	34	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	69	62	38	34	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	52	42	38	3	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	59	53	46	41	3	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	71	64	37	33	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	78	70	33	30	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



29 April 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of West Ewell Infant School, Epsom, KT19 0UY

Thank you all very much for the welcome you gave us and for your help when we visited you recently. We agree with you and your parents that your school is outstanding. You and all the staff are like a large, very happy family.

You really enjoy coming to school and make excellent progress in your work. This is because your teachers are extremely good at their jobs. They make tasks exciting and give you many opportunities to get involved in interesting activities. They question you very well so they know what you need to do next. Work is just right, not too hard or too easy, so it meets your differing needs. You work very hard, are kind to each other and behave very well indeed. The school staff work together very well and care greatly about your welfare; they make sure you are always safe. Those of you who have special responsibilities such as being 'eco-warriors' and members of the school council take your roles very seriously. There is one area where you could help yourselves to be even more successful and that is by making sure you are not absent unless absolutely necessary. Attendance is improving but it remains average overall when almost everything else about the school is excellent.

Your headteacher, with the help of the deputy headteacher and the support of the school governors, is an excellent leader who is helping everyone to be very successful. She checks carefully that everything is done well and makes changes if things are not quite good enough. I am sure that you will want to continue to play your part and help the school to get even better.

Yours sincerely

Peter McGregor

Lead inspector

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