

West Walton Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120890
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358870
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Gordon
Headteacher	Jill Davis
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2007
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspection team visited 25 lessons and observed nine teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, 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 analyses of pupils' work and other assessment information. The inspection team scrutinised inspection questionnaires returned by 80 parents and carers, and by staff and pupils.

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

- What is the school doing to secure more Level 3s by the end of Year 2?
- To what extent do leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, shape the strategic direction of the school?
- What is the impact of the school's many partnerships on pupils' progress and their personal development?

Information about the school

West Walton Primary is an average-sized school. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with only a few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is high. The school has National Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award.

The school's Nursery offers additional hours to fee-paying parents. The school also runs a breakfast club, after-school club and holiday club, and has a children's centre on site.

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 Walton is a good primary school. Features of its work are outstanding, including the extent to which pupils feel safe, their contribution to the school and wider community, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school provides an outstanding curriculum that is relevant to the pupils and based on what interests them. It also cares for pupils extremely well. A very wide range of partnerships makes a particularly valuable contribution to pupils' experiences through enhancing aspects of the curriculum and the care they receive. Pupils make good progress from low starting points because teaching is at least good and work is matched well to their levels of ability.

The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and has built a strong staff team who work together very well to drive forward improvement. This has resulted in good progress since the last inspection, with standards of attainment rising, especially in mathematics, and more good or better teaching. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 is below average. The school has put in place measures to remedy this, focusing on the key skills pupils need to write well and giving them opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in solving real-life problems. This is beginning to have a positive impact, with the present Year 2 on track to reach their targets for Level 3.

Pupils have an extremely good understanding of how to keep safe, including when using the internet. They write their own risk assessments before going on a trip, and the school council has produced a report on pupils' attitudes to safety in school. They behave well in lessons and around school and readily take on responsibilities such as house captains, buddies and monitors. Pupils help shape local council policy by making their views known, for example about parking, and build good relationships with a range of community groups, including the elderly. Pupils are well prepared for secondary school with good study habits, enterprise skills and increased aspirations, and their enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate as monitoring is thorough and systematic. A detailed tracking system enables leaders and managers to follow precisely how pupils are achieving and to intervene promptly if somebody is falling behind. Much of the work of monitoring the quality of lessons is done by the headteacher, although other leaders are being given opportunities to do more observations. While leaders and managers contribute to strategic plans, they are not as involved as they could be in shaping the direction of the school. The governing body is active in its support of the school, but does not always record monitoring visits. The school has been successful in many areas of its development and has a good capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment for more-able pupils by the end of Year 2 by:
 - ensuring the proportion achieving Level 3 reaches at least the national average
 - developing pupils' awareness further of how to improve their writing through building on their basic skills
 - sustaining gains in mathematics by giving pupils plenty of opportunities to apply their skills through a range of real-life problems.
- Build on work to strengthen leadership and management by:
 - widening opportunities for leaders and managers at all levels to help shape the strategic direction of the school
 - ensuring the governing body keeps full records of its monitoring activity.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy learning because the curriculum is exciting and tailored to their needs and they are actively involved in lessons. Pupils in Year 5 imagined through role play what it must be like to land on Mars and then used powerful verbs, adjectives and adverbs to write about the experience. One pupil said, 'I like learning more about things I already know.' Pupils in Year 6 took measurements of a snowman they had built and estimated how much volume the water would have when it melted.

Children join the Nursery with skills and abilities that are often well below those expected, but make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and this good achievement continues throughout the school. Standards of attainment at the end of KS2 national assessments in 2010 were above average in English and well above average in mathematics, with particularly strong results at Level 5 in reading and mathematics. Current standards of attainment in KS2 year groups are broadly in line with national expectations. In the past, more-able pupils have not done so well by the end of Year 2 because they have not been sufficiently aware of how to get their writing to the highest standard, or had sufficient opportunity to practise their numeracy skills in solving real-life problems. The school has started to tackle this, with signs of improvement in the present Year 2. In line with the national picture, boys have tended to do better in mathematics and girls in writing, and this is something that the school has been addressing, so that the gap in performance is closing. Pupils in Year 6 make outstanding progress, especially in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress well because their individual education plans are very specific about the support they require and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to their learning.

The award of Healthy Schools status and the Activemark point to pupils' good appreciation of healthy lifestyles, with many taking part in sports clubs. The school council plays an active role, interviewing companies to decide which should provide playground equipment and a new bicycle shed. Pupils raise money for a range of different charitable causes. Pupils excel at singing, and the choir shares its talents with the local community in the church and at a home for the elderly. Pupils' participation in music contributes to their outstanding spiritual development, combined with their very good understanding of different faiths. They have a very strong sense of right and wrong, and resolve conflicts

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among themselves at the school's 'peace tree', an innovation pupils devised. Pupils have a good appreciation of the different cultures and traditions that make up the United Kingdom, and learn about life in foreign countries.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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

How effective is the provision?

Most of the teaching is good and a small amount is outstanding. There are good relationships between adults and pupils, and technology is used well to promote learning and to engage pupils. Teachers use assessment well to plan work that is suited to the needs of all pupils, and increasingly are helping them to assess their own work and that of others. Pupils know their targets, although these are not always linked to National Curriculum levels of attainment. Marking is consistently good and shows pupils how to improve. Lessons proceed at a good pace and involve pupils well, contributing to their enjoyment of learning, and developing their independence. Pupils in Year 5 enjoyed making three-dimensional shapes to furnish a space pod. In Year 6, pupils did some excellent work on pumpkins, pursuing their own interests, which enabled them to apply their skills in a wide range of subjects. For example, they drew graphs of the pumpkins' measurements, wrote stories about them, sketched them and observed them decay.

The excellent curriculum motivates pupils because it takes into account their interests and aspirations. It is very well enriched through an outstanding range of clubs and extra-curricular activities, all of which are free. Consequently, the participation rate by pupils is

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high. All pupils learn the flute in Year 4. Pupils have won competitions for their high standards in music and sport. The curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are gifted and talented. Very good use is made of outside partnerships, such as with the local high school, to enrich the curriculum further. Pastoral care is an outstanding feature of the school's work, as pupils are known as individuals and specific support is provided to help them to make good progress, including lunchtime clubs to foster social skills. Programmes to boost performance are particularly successful, including early morning tutoring for pupils in Year 6. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, resulting in them achieving well. The school's breakfast and after-school clubs provide a friendly and stimulating environment where pupils of all ages mix well together, something parents and carers particularly value.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 provides outstanding leadership in setting out her vision for the school and building an effective team committed to rapid improvement. Key roles have been delegated and other leaders and managers are playing an increasing part in shaping the strategic direction of the school, although they have, as yet, little experience of observing lessons. The school improvement plan has identified the correct priorities and sets out clearly how these will be tackled, with specific criteria to measure their success. The monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and has led to improvements in pupils' attainment and progress. Leaders manage the many serious deficiencies in the school's accommodation well, even though only pupils in Key Stage 2 actually occupy the main building and only half the class can do physical education at any one time. The governing body makes good use of its expertise and provides effective support and challenge, although its record-keeping is not sufficiently systematic.

The schools has excellent links with the children's centre and with other nearby schools, and takes a lead in supporting learning across the community, such as the consultancy the headteacher offers to another local primary school. The school is fully inclusive, and enables all pupils, particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, to take a full part in its activities. It promotes equality of opportunity well, and is working hard to narrow the gap in performance between boys and girls in writing and mathematics. Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and meet all requirements. Training of staff is particularly strong. The school enables pupils to have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe, and involves them in assessing risk. The promotion of community cohesion is good, with outstanding local links and a growing appreciation of the different cultures and

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traditions of people who make up the United Kingdom. Pupils have benefited from meeting visitors from other countries, including a church leader from Papua New Guinea.

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

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because teaching is good and tailored well to their needs, providing exciting and stimulating activities, and a good balance of tasks led by adults and those chosen by the children themselves. They join the Nursery with skills and abilities often well below those normally expected, especially in communication, language and literacy. The rich curriculum offers many opportunities for speaking and listening and an effective programme to teach phonics (the sounds letters make) in Reception helps develop their early literacy skills. The activities help children to become independent, as when Nursery children prepared their own snacks. Planning is a particular strength in the Nursery; in Reception there is not enough detail about the purpose and delivery of adult-led tasks.

Children are free to learn either within the classroom or outside and both environments provide activities for them to enjoy in all areas of learning. Nursery children enjoyed finding ways of moving through the snow. Good assessment results in informative 'learning stories' that give a clear summary of the children's achievements. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well, with staff all taking key roles in developing children's learning.

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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

While most parents and carers are supportive of the school's work a small minority have concerns, especially about the way unacceptable behaviour is managed. Inspectors found pupils' behaviour to be good and a consistency in the staff's approach to managing it. The majority of parents and carers strongly agree that their children enjoy school, that the school keeps them safe and that teaching is good. Other individual concerns were raised that inspectors brought to the school's attention. The inspection found that the school was dealing appropriately with the concerns it received.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Walton 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 80 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 227 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	61	26	33	4	5	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	44	55	32	40	2	3	2	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	40	37	46	10	13	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	41	33	41	12	15	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	45	56	32	40	2	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	50	35	44	2	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	46	39	49	0	0	1	1
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)	31	39	46	58	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	51	29	36	8	10	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	36	32	40	11	14	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	38	42	53	3	4	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	35	44	34	43	9	11	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	60	27	34	3	4	1	1

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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 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.



3 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Walton Community Primary School, Wisbech, PE14 7HA

Thank you very much for making us so welcome at your school and sharing your views with us. West Walton is a good primary school. Here are some of its particular strengths.

You have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe.

You make a very valuable contribution to the school and wider community.

Your singing is excellent.

You have a strong sense of right and wrong and get on well together.

The school makes sure that lessons are fun and that you find them really interesting.

You are cared for extremely well, especially if you have any problems.

The school makes very good use of outside organisations to support your work and enjoyment of school, such as the sports partnership.

Most of you make good progress, but we have asked your teachers to make sure that more of you reach the higher levels by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. We have asked them to make sure you know how to improve your writing and to have plenty of opportunities to use your numeracy skills when solving problems. We have also asked the school's leaders and managers to take a full part in checking how well the school is doing and planning ahead, and for the governing body to keep better records of its work.

You all can help by telling your teachers what you enjoy most about your learning and doing your best.

Our best wishes for the future,

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt

Lead inspector

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