

West Huntspill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123696
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	327969
Inspection date	4 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	78
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Kelsall
Headteacher	Helen Wainwright
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2007
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	New Road West Huntspill Highbridge TA9 3QE

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	4 March 2009
Inspection number	327969

Telephone number
Fax number

01278 783842
01278 794429

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	4 March 2009
Inspection number	327969

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

West Huntspill is a small, village primary school where pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. The overall proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average. Their needs relate to autism and speech, language and communication difficulties. The school has a small resource base for autistic pupils, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and none are at the early stages of learning English. The school holds the Activemark award. Since its last inspection the school has become part of a federation with East Huntspill Primary School and they share a governing body. The West Huntspill Playgroup shares the school site. This is privately run and did not form part of this inspection.

The school was given a notice to improve when it received its last Section 5 inspection in October 2007 and an inspector visited the school in June 2008.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

West Huntspill provides a satisfactory standard of education. It has successfully addressed all the issues identified in its last inspection report. In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The headteacher provides good direction for the school's work. With the effective support of the local authority and governors, this has led to important improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress despite the lengthy absences and high turnover of staff. Teamwork amongst staff has improved considerably, with a shared commitment to developing provision further. As a result, teaching and learning are now securely satisfactory. A consistent approach to lesson planning in all classes and a greater sense of purpose in lessons mean that pupils enjoy the activities provided and achieve what they are capable of. However, on occasions the pace is slow, and marking does not always indicate how pupils can improve. In addition, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to undertake open-ended tasks to promote greater progress. Comprehensive systems for keeping a check on how well pupils are doing now allow staff to quickly identify when progress has slowed and provide suitable support to help pupils catch up, and more effective academic guidance for pupils is in place. Pupils are set suitable targets in English and mathematics, and know what they need to do to reach them.

As a result of these improvements, standards have risen and continue to do so. Current tracking data indicate that suitably challenging targets are being achieved and in some cases exceeded. Achievement is satisfactory, including for pupils with learning difficulties in the main school; as a result of high quality individual programmes of work, pupils in the autistic resource base make good progress. Standards on entry are around the level expected for this age. Reception children get off to a secure start, and progress has improved especially well in Years 1 and 2, where it is now good; here, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. By Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are average and improving.

The curriculum provides a suitable range of activities to meet the needs of the pupils. The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is good, but the school recognises that it does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to consolidate their writing skills in other subjects, or to apply their mathematical skills in solving problems and investigations. The accommodation for Reception children is somewhat limited. In particular, children do not have access to outdoor activities when the weather is wet or cold.

The caring ethos of the school and good pastoral support help pupils to enjoy school and to work hard. Parents appreciate this, and one wrote, 'It is a lovely encouraging environment that brings out the best in everybody.' As a result of these strengths, pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy school, behave well and get on well together. They take their responsibilities to others seriously and are thoughtful and reflective young people. Parents fully recognise the outstanding care and support provided for resource base pupils, resulting in their excellent personal development. The school has forged successful partnerships with other schools and agencies which benefit pupils' education and welfare. Community cohesion is good as a result of the school's especially good relationships with local organisations and businesses, the growing partnership with East Huntspill Primary School, and links with a Kenyan school. Governors have supported the school well over the past few years and continue to do so. Mutual benefits from the school's federation with East Huntspill are evident in the improved quality of teaching and

the curriculum. The support provided by the local authority has been very good, especially in helping the school to put in place effective management systems so it can keep a rigorous check on its work. As a result, self-evaluation is accurate and areas of weakness are being successfully addressed. The school is securely placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The Early Years Foundation Stage is soundly managed and teaching is satisfactory, with some good features. Induction is good and children are helped to settle well into routines and enjoy their learning. They make steady progress in most areas of learning, and develop their personal and social skills particularly well because they are well cared for and have positive relationships with the staff. Children share resources and relate well to each other. A suitable range of activities cover all areas of learning. Good emphasis is placed on basic reading and writing skills so that children make good progress in these areas. In this the classroom assistant also provides good support. Children enjoy discovering things for themselves, particularly concerning the world around them. However, in other areas of learning there is not always a good balance between adult-led activities and those where children explore and work independently. This is partly because the size and arrangement of the accommodation are limited and restrict opportunities for creative and physical development. In particular, in adverse weather outdoor activities are restricted by the lack of covered areas, although plans are well underway to address this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to extend their writing in different subjects and to apply their mathematical skills in problem solving and investigations.
- Ensure that lessons are consistently well paced, that more open-ended activities are provided and that marking indicates what pupils need to do to improve.
- Improve the use of the outdoor environment to support learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The vast majority of pupils make satisfactory overall progress during their time in the school, and there are no pockets of underachievement. Standards on entry, although broadly in line with expectations, are lower in some key literacy skills. Nevertheless, by Year 1, children have made satisfactory progress and standards are around average. Pupils progress well in Years 1 and 2 and standards are above average, although in last year's national tests no pupils reached the higher levels in writing. This has now been rectified, with the more able pupils doing well in all aspects of English. In Year 6, standards are average, with more pupils reaching the expected level. In English and science a greater proportion also reach the higher levels, and the school is now focusing on achieving similar improvement in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils clearly enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. This is reflected in their keen participation in lessons and above average attendance. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, in assembly they reflect on how people are different and how we should respect others' views. Pupils are well behaved in class and around the school and relationships are good. Pupils are well aware of the importance of healthy eating and taking regular exercise and recognise a good range of ways in which to keep safe. Their good contribution to the school and to the wider community is evident in the effective work of the school council and pupils' support for charities and the Kenyan school with which they have links. Pupils develop a suitable range of skills to prepare them for their future life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Classes are well organised, with good relationships between staff and pupils ensuring pupils are keen to learn. Instructions and explanations are clear and informative, although sometimes teachers spend too long talking when pupils are ready to get on with their task. Work is suitably matched to the level at which individual pupils are working. However, pupils are not always provided with activities which allow them to extend their learning. Pupils know what they should achieve and are clear about what they have to do in lessons. Marking clearly indicates what pupils have achieved, although it does not consistently show how they can improve. Skilled teaching in the resource base helps pupils with autism to do well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Improved planning effectively supports pupils' good personal development and has brought about better academic progress, especially in English, mathematics and science. More opportunities in literacy sessions for pupils to write in different styles and for different purposes have helped raise standards, although there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects. Activities for investigative work in science have improved well and the school is now focusing on extending investigative and problem solving activities in mathematics. A good range of visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning and enjoyment, although the number of after-school clubs is limited. The activities for pupils in the resource base meet their needs especially well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Comprehensive and rigorous systems for checking on pupils' attainment and progress allow staff to set pupils improvement targets in English and mathematics, although not all classes have science targets. This process is beginning to encourage pupils to work hard to achieve their targets, although the full impact on their progress is not yet evident. Pastoral care is a strong feature of the school and links with outside agencies such as social services are good. Effective procedures ensure that pupils are protected, safe and secure at all times. As a result,

pupils feel well cared for and safe in school. The care and support for the few pupils in the resource base are outstanding.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Over the last 18 months the school has benefited from effective leadership by the headteacher, who has gained the confidence of staff and helped them develop the expertise to move the school forward. A culture of self-evaluation is now well established, giving a secure base for development planning which is effectively linked to performance management. The school is well aware where still more needs to be done and is working hard to achieve this. There is now a more settled staff team in place and subject leaders are beginning to contribute to school improvement, although some are new and still developing their roles. Governors provide a good level of challenge and support for staff. The move towards a federated governing body with East Huntspill Primary School has been managed well. Although parents were consulted about this process, a few reported they would have liked to have been better informed about developments.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

5 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of West Huntspill Community Primary School, Highbridge TA9 3QE

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly and helpful. I particularly want to thank the school council, who gave up their time to speak to us. We think your school has made a lot of improvements since it was last inspected and provides you with a satisfactory standard of education.

- Here are some of the things we liked best about the school:
- Standards have improved, particularly in Years 1 and 2.
- You do well in your personal development. You are friendly and thoughtful young people. Your behaviour is good and you get on well together.
- Staff take good care of you. As a result, you feel safe and happy in school and your attendance is above average.
- You do lots of things in your local community and we were especially impressed by the links you have with a school in Kenya.
- You have a good headteacher, and together with staff and governors she is working hard to make your school even better.
- Here are some of the things we have asked your school to improve:
- You need more opportunities for writing in subjects other than English, and for solving problems and carrying out investigations in mathematics.
- Teachers should make sure that you do not spend too long sitting listening in lessons, allow you to explore things further, and show you clearly how to improve when they mark your work.
- Make sure there is an outdoor area which Reception children can use when it is wet or cold.

You can help by always trying to do your best, and by making sure you follow your teachers' advice. Thank you again for all your help and good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

D Wilkinson

Lead inspector