

Inspection of a good school: Western Road Community Primary School

Southover High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1JB

Inspection dates:

25–26 February 2020

Outcome

Western Road Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy school where all staff want the best for pupils. Pupils love learning because teachers plan lessons that are interesting and challenging. Pupils work hard to meet teachers' high expectations. They achieve very well, especially in reading and mathematics.

Pupils behave well. They follow teachers' instructions and listen carefully. There is occasional calling-out. However, this is because pupils are enthusiastic and want to make the most of their learning. Classrooms are calm and busy places.

Pupils are polite and well mannered when moving around the school. They open doors for people and say 'thank you' when others do the same for them. Pupils are similarly well behaved on the playground and at social times, such as in the dining hall. Pupils are kind and friendly to each other. As a result, there is very little bullying. When disagreements or differences arise, pupils are usually good at sorting these out for themselves. However, adults will always help anyone who needs it.

Parents and carers appreciate the school and the overwhelming majority would recommend it. One parent echoed the views of many when describing it as 'a nurturing and supportive place with a real sense of community'.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

There have been many changes in staffing in the last year. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have both taken up their posts this academic year. These changes have been managed smoothly so that pupils have been unaffected. Staff are a happy, united team. Senior leaders know the school in great detail. They are fully aware of its strengths, as well as the things that need to improve.

The curriculum is mostly planned with care and thought. Pupils find learning enjoyable and challenging. There is no room for disruptive behaviour. Lessons are memorable and

provide a strong foundation for future learning. For example, in science, pupils in Year 6 remember when they learned about the digestive system in Year 4. They describe the digestive process, using technical words such as 'colon' and 'villi'. Pupils have built on this by learning how blood works in the human body.

Leaders are still improving the curriculum in history and geography so that lessons are taught in a logical order. Teachers sometimes lack the skills and knowledge to help pupils to remember their learning in these subjects. This has left pupils with some gaps in their knowledge.

Leaders and staff rightly see reading as a vital skill. Pupils achieve very well in reading. The reading curriculum helps children to learn to read right from the time they start school in Reception. When children are in the early stages of reading, teachers make sure that they have books that match their learning in phonics. Pupils regularly practise sounding out words and become fluent readers.

Teachers also help pupils to develop a love of books and reading. Teachers read stories and books to pupils, who become absorbed and interested. By the time they reach Years 5 and 6, pupils are knowledgeable, opinionated readers. They read a great deal and can discuss favourite authors and books.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. They are fully involved in lessons in all subjects. Staff make sure that any pupils who start to fall behind receive help promptly so that they keep up with the curriculum. Teachers check that pupils have remembered previous learning before starting something new. Teachers know exactly what pupils must learn by the end of each block of lessons.

Staff nurture pupils' wider personal development well. Pupils take various positions of responsibility in the school. They enjoy a range of clubs and activities outside the school day. Disadvantaged pupils have every opportunity to participate in these. Pupils visit places such as a Hindu temple and the Globe Theatre and the Imperial War Museum in London. This helps pupils to gain an understanding of life in Britain beyond the school. They also visit interesting places in the local area.

The early years curriculum helps children to get off to a strong start. Staff know children well and understand what each one needs to take the next step forward in their learning. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities to help children to grow in knowledge and develop important skills. Children love learning, both indoors and in the outdoor area. They behave well, take turns and cooperate with adults and their classmates.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand the importance of keeping pupils safe. The headteacher explains, 'If children are not safe, they do not learn.' Staff have all had up-to-date training. They are quick to report and record their concerns if they see signs that a pupil may be at risk.

Pupils feel completely safe in school and trust adults to look after them. They learn to stay safe in a range of situations, including on roads and when online. Pupils are keenly aware of the risks that they face online and have regular lessons to help them avoid them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced. Pupils have some gaps in their learning. This is particularly true in history and geography. Senior leaders understand this. They have an in-depth, accurate assessment of the curriculum and know its strengths and weaknesses. Plans are already in place to make sure that these weaknesses are addressed so that the curriculum will be fully in place for the start of the next academic year. Their plans are precise, detailed and realistic. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is consistently well planned and sequenced across all subjects.
- Not all teachers are well equipped to teach history and geography. This is leaving pupils with gaps in their learning. Senior leaders should ensure that staff receive the training and support needed to teach the curriculum in these subjects effectively.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 21–22 March 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	114406
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10127921
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tom Jeffery
Headteacher	Irèna Wooler
Website	www.western-road.eschools.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post in September 2019. The deputy headteacher started at the school in January 2020.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher and leaders regularly throughout the inspection. I also met with the special educational needs coordinator. I held meetings with five governors, including the chair and vice-chair of governors. I spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone to discuss its support for the school. I met with several parents on the playground at the start of the school day.
- I conducted deep dives in reading, mathematics and science. These deep dives consisted of linked activities to gather evidence about how well pupils are helped to gain knowledge and skills. I had a discussion with the headteacher and meetings with the leaders of each of these subjects. I visited lessons in all classes. I spoke to pupils and teachers from these lessons and looked at their work with curriculum leaders.
- I also met with pupils from Years 3 and 5 to find out how much they had learned and remembered in a range of subjects during their time at the school.

- I spoke to pupils and staff throughout the inspection. This was in addition to a meeting with the headteacher to discuss how the school keeps pupils safe. Safeguarding was also discussed at the meeting with governors. I looked at various documents relating to safeguarding, including the school's single central record.
- I considered 79 responses to Ofsted's confidential questionnaire, Parent View, and 13 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Bruce Waelend, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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