

# Weston Park Primary School

Newtown Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9HX

**Inspection dates** 12–13 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good or outstanding. As a result, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is not good.
- Pupils' progress in writing and mathematics, though improving, is less than it should be in some year groups as a result of earlier staffing difficulties.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement. The behaviour of the great majority of pupils in lessons and around the school is good but the behaviour of a minority of pupils leads to low-level chatter in some lessons.
- The safety of pupils requires improvement. While the school makes sure that pupils are kept safe, some procedures are not as good as they could be.
- There is some dissatisfaction among parents and staff in the way incidents of bullying are perceived to be dealt with.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Not all staff share the vision of the headteacher and governors for the school's future.
- The governing body has good intentions for the school's improvement but has had insufficient training to carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- A recent thorough external review of governance has made clear to governors how they need to improve, especially in holding school leaders to account, but it is too soon to see the impact of the changes they are making to their work in the light of this.

### The school has the following strengths

- The great majority of pupils are happy to come to school and enjoy learning. In particular, most pupils have developed a love of reading and some read a high number of books per term.
- Teaching in some year groups is outstanding and results in almost all of those pupils making excellent progress.
- Almost all children make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The individual attention and care shown to vulnerable pupils is outstanding.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons and part lessons. All teachers present during the inspection were observed teaching. Three of the lesson observations were observed jointly with a senior leader.
- The inspectors talked with pupils, looked at samples of their work and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were also held with teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, the executive headteacher, headteacher, and other senior leaders. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority to discuss the extent and impact of support provided to the school.
- In planning the inspection, the inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, the views of 26 parents who spoke with them during the inspection, and 50 questionnaires returned by school staff.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at many documents including minutes of governing body meetings, the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school's development plan, performance management documentation, planning documents, monitoring and assessment information, school policies, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safety.

## Inspection team

John Collins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Worgan

Additional Inspector

Una Maria Stevens

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school became Weston Park Primary School in January 2013 following the closure of Weston Park Junior and the expansion of Weston Park Infants to create Weston Park Primary
- When its predecessor schools, Weston Park Junior School and Weston Park Infant School, were last inspected by Ofsted, the junior school was judged to be satisfactory and the infant school was judged to be outstanding.
- The school is a much larger than average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British and speak English as their home language.
- About four in 10 pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which is well above average. This provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A large proportion of pupils join the school partway through their primary education.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has experienced significant changes in staffing due to the long-term absence of teachers, including the executive headteacher. Among the new staff recently appointed is an inclusion leader who also shares responsibility for special educational needs with the current headteacher.
- The school's senior leadership team is made up of an executive headteacher who is a national leader of education, a headteacher, a deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher together with the inclusion leader.
- The school has received strong but reducing support over the past year from the nearby Portswood Teaching School Alliance.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - raising expectations of what pupils are capable of in all subjects and improving their levels of achievement
  - giving pupils clear guidance about how to improve their writing
  - improving spelling and punctuation, especially of frequently used words requiring pupils to act upon advice given and make any changes necessary to their work, especially in mathematics
- Improve pupil's behaviour so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - making sure any reported bullying incidents are dealt with consistently and swiftly as required by the school policy
  - reducing low-level chatter among pupils.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - rigorously and regularly checking the quality of teaching and providing training to meet individual staff needs when appropriate
  - uniting the entire staff behind a single vision for school improvement
  - making sure that governors carry out the recommendations of the review of governance, especially in holding school leaders to account for the school's improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment and rates of progress by the end of Year 6 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2013. This can be attributed mostly to disruption in their education due to the merger of the infant and junior schools that resulted in difficulties in leadership, extensive teacher absence and temporary teaching inadequacies, most of which have since been put right.
- School information and inspection evidence confirm that the current attainment of the great majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is at or above that expected for their ages.
- A further factor in pupils' slow progress in reading and writing is the high proportion of pupils who join the school partway through their primary education and have not had the benefit of learning to sound out words they cannot pronounce (phonics). Phonics has now been introduced in all year groups to remedy this and to improve the reading and writing of all pupils.
- The progress of pupils through the school is inconsistent. Children join Reception with skills that are very much below those expected in most areas. Children make outstanding progress during the Reception year and almost all reach a good level of development. This is because the teaching is consistently good or better.
- In Years 1 and 2, progress slows because teaching is not as strong in some classes. However, by the end of Year 2 most pupils have made the expected progress.
- In Key Stage 2, progress varies. It is not as strong in Years 3 and 4 as it is in Years 5 and 6. This is because of earlier weaknesses in teaching that have since been remedied.
- Pupils' writing skills, especially that of boys, are weaker than either their skills in reading or mathematics. Most pupils are writing below the level expected for their age. This is because insufficient emphasis is given to correcting pupils' errors in spelling and punctuation and teachers do not make sufficiently clear to pupils what they must do to improve their writing.
- However, some more-able pupils produce very good pieces of writing. In writing a poem inspired by a Barbara Hepworth sculpture, one Year 4 pupil wrote: 'pinching corners as sharp as holly, silky but sharp it stands frozen as ice'.
- Most pupils have good recall of number facts such as multiplication tables and can apply these correctly to everyday calculations. They enjoy solving problems involving shapes and measures and most tackle these confidently and correctly.
- At the end of Year 6 in the 2013 national tests, pupils supported by the pupil premium were more than 12 months behind their classmates. Current information shows that the gap has almost closed for both English and mathematics and in some cases eligible pupils are ahead of their classmates. This is because of the improved tracking of their progress and the high quality support they receive.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is less than expected. However, improvement is at a faster rate this term than in the previous two terms. This is because pupils' progress is more closely tracked than previously and support is more closely targeted to their individual needs.
- Pupils who join partway through their primary education are also provided with effective support. This enables them to settle quickly and achieve well in relation to their often low starting points, even though their attainment is below average.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good throughout the school and there remains some weaker teaching.
- Most teachers mark pupils' written work regularly, accurately and with clear guidance to help pupils improve. However, some teachers give insufficient emphasis to correcting spelling and punctuation errors in pupils' writing. In mathematics, pupils are often not required to act upon

the advice given in marking. As a result, their progress is not as good as it should be.

- More-able pupils are often well challenged by the tasks they are set but in some lessons pupils say they find the work too easy and this restricts the levels they attain.
- Teachers and teaching assistants plan and work well together so that learning experiences are interesting but demanding. As a result, pupils are typically keen to learn. Skilled extra support is provided for those who find the work too hard and this enables them to make better progress.
- School records and external reports indicate that teaching has improved during the past year. This is partly due to the appointment of new, high quality teachers but also through the strong efforts to improve the quality of teaching using the expertise of external consultants and support from experienced good teachers within the school.
- Teaching in Reception classes is typically good or better and effective use is made of indoor and outdoor learning activities. One teacher suggested to the pupils that they mix up powder paints using the puddle water outside – they agreed enthusiastically. The enthusiasm for learning that Reception teachers generate in the children leads to the good levels of development they achieve.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because the good behaviour mainly seen during the inspection is not always typical.
- The great majority of pupils are friendly and polite. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. However, school records indicate that this has not always been so and that great improvements have taken place this year.
- Parents, through Parent View, and teachers have very mixed views about the improvements, which reflect both their own experiences and the short period in which the new behaviour policy has been in place. Some still consider behaviour to be an issue.
- The school is very inclusive and a small number of pupils have particular behavioural difficulties. Their behaviour is very well managed by skilled teaching assistants.
- The vast majority of pupils are keen to learn. However, in a small minority of lessons, where the teaching is weaker, pupils indulge in low-level chatter. This is the main reason why behaviour is not good.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and this is evident in the steadily improving attendance, which is now closer to the national average than it has been for some time. Inspection evidence and school records indicate that punctuality is mostly good.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Some procedures are not as good as they could be. Pupils say they feel safe in school. They told inspectors that bullying is rare, mostly name-calling, and that any kind of bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively by teachers. Not all parents and school staff agree that the school policy is followed when bullying incidents are reported.
- Pupils are very aware of the need to keep safe, for example in road safety and in using the internet.
- The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Pupils are tolerant of differences in others and know that if they are worried they can talk to an adult.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because the senior leadership team, staff and governing body do not all share the same vision for the school and its improvement. This means they are not united in driving improvement.
- The senior leadership team consists of individuals who are making significant improvements to the school. For example, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, vulnerable pupils, and pupils who give cause for concern because of their behaviour or lack of attendance

are well known and supported and this has enabled them to make greater progress this year.

- The new approach to tracking the achievements of individual pupils and groups is carried out exceptionally well and most teachers are using this information effectively to improve pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This has produced an impressive gain in the achievements of pupils supported by the pupil premium.
- The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in many ways. For example, through its assemblies, by encouraging pupils to work together in lessons, teaching about the school's values, and learning about different cultures. Pupils from different year groups learned about the celebration of Chinese New Year in various ways that involved them in reading about it, writing descriptions of what happens, making Chinese lanterns, and learning about China.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has considerable impact in that almost all children make remarkably good progress, often starting with skills that are well below those expected, and reach above average levels of development in nearly all areas by the end of the Reception year.
- The local authority has funded a significant amount of support from external consultants and also for guidance from nearby successful schools. Much of this has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and to the curriculum. This makes sure that pupils do not have gaps in their learning in any subject and what they learn is relevant to their needs, is exciting, and links to their lives.
- The school's own checks on its strengths and weaknesses are accurate. Pupils' progress is checked systematically and rigorously and appropriate remedial action taken where standards fall. School records and inspection evidence indicate this is effective in securing improvement.
- The management of teachers' performance is systematic but sometimes does not result in training relevant to their needs.

■ **The governance of the school:**

Although most governors have received training for their role, they understand that they need additional support and training in order to fulfil their responsibilities well. They wisely commissioned a thorough audit from a National Leader of Governance consultant but have yet to acquire help to carry out the recommendations made. Governors are aware of many of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are supportive of the school's senior leaders. However, they have not always held the school to account and have not made sure that all leaders and staff unite behind a single vision to drive improvement forward. They know how sports funding is being used and its impact on pupils' development. They use safer recruitment procedures and are involved in decisions regarding teachers' pay. They are aware of the outcomes of the management of teachers' performance and do not permit unjustified promotion or salary increases. Safeguarding of pupils is high on their list of priorities. They do their best to meet all their statutory requirements and have managed the school's finances skilfully.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116112
<b>Local authority</b>	Southampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	430665

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	521
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tim Hyde
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Simpson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	023 8044 8962
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