

Inspection of a good school: West Borough Primary School

Greenway, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8TL

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 October 2022

Outcome

West Borough Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders expect all pupils to behave well at all times. Pupils respond to these high expectations. They are polite and respectful and really care for each other. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Pupils know that staff quickly sort out any problems and do not tolerate bullying.

The school's community code, 'Be kind, be safe, be responsible and embrace challenge!', is at the heart of everything staff do. Older pupils enjoy making a positive contribution to the life of the school. As 'ambassadors', they encourage others to follow the school's code.

Leaders promote pupils' personal and academic development well. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils are highly motivated. They like to work hard and achieve well. Children in the early years are enthusiastic about their learning. Children start to learn to read, write and work with numbers as soon as they join the Nursery.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent, typical of many, said of the staff, 'They make lessons exciting. They genuinely care and want the best for all children.'

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

Leaders make sure that the effective curriculum meets all pupils' needs. Many pupils arrive at the school with little or no English. Trained staff support these pupils well and adapt resources to help pupils to learn. Staff use specific programmes to help pupils learn to read and write in English. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) also benefit from tailored support. Leaders make sure that all pupils with SEND follow the full curriculum. These pupils are fully involved in lessons with their peers. When necessary, teachers provide one-to-one support, which focuses specifically on pupils' individual needs. Leaders make effective use of other professionals from outside agencies to train staff and support pupils with specific needs.

A love of reading permeates across the whole school. All staff read to pupils daily. Pupils enjoy regular visits to the school library. Staff are keen to ensure that pupils become confident, fluent readers. In the early years provision, children regularly hear and repeat songs, stories and rhymes. This helps them to develop their speaking and listening skills and enrich their vocabulary. Leaders have implemented a new phonics teaching programme. All staff are well trained in the delivery of this programme. Staff model sounds accurately and identify pupils' misunderstandings quickly. Pupils who struggle with their phonics get the extra help that they need to catch up. The books pupils read match the sounds they are learning.

The mathematics curriculum is carefully sequenced to support pupils to know and remember key facts. Vocabulary is well developed and used appropriately. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise what they have been taught. Pupils use these new skills in other subject areas, such as using scale and proportion, to construct accurate timelines in history and algebra to support coding in computing. This helps pupils to remember their learning. Teachers check pupils' understanding carefully and correct misunderstandings quickly. Leaders know that checks on pupils' learning in some other subject areas are not as strong. This means that some pupils are not learning as well as they could across the wider curriculum.

Leaders are highly committed to supporting pupils' wider development. Pupils learn how to maintain healthy lifestyles, keep safe and get help if problems arise. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They talk respectfully about different faiths, cultures and lifestyles. Staff are keen to ensure that they provide pupils with a broad range of experiences that help to expand all pupils' understanding of the wider world. Pupils benefit from opportunities to learn beyond the classroom and the local community. Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities and benefit from a variety of extra-curricular activities.

The headteacher has worked successfully with senior leaders to create a dedicated staff team. Morale is high. Leaders take positive action to make sure that everyone's workload is manageable. All staff are fully committed to the school and share the headteacher's dedication to supporting the pupils and their families. The headteacher and governors have a very clear vision. They know the strengths and areas for development. Together, leaders are determined that all pupils achieve well. Governors provide appropriate support and challenge for the headteacher and leadership team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Leaders make sure that staff are well trained and follow safeguarding policies and procedures consistently. Staff share the responsibility for keeping children safe. They know the signs that could indicate a pupil is potentially at risk of harm. They know what to do when safeguarding concerns arise.

The headteacher and the safeguarding team act quickly to protect pupils. They work effectively with external agencies to gain support for families. They are tenacious in seeking help. The records of actions taken in response to concerns are systematic and thorough.

Leaders carry out appropriate checks on staff before they are allowed to work at the school. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to identify and respond to risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, teachers do not accurately capture what pupils know and can do. This means that, at times, teachers attempt to move learning on before pupils are ready. Leaders must continue to develop and implement a consistent approach to assessment in every subject so that next steps in learning are successfully supported.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	118568
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10241726
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	497
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair of governing body	Katherine Atkinson
Headteacher	Ashley Crittenden
Website	www.west-borough.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- There are three classes in the current Year 5. Otherwise, the school is a two-form entry primary school.
- There is an on-site breakfast club and an after-school club managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, looked at samples of pupils' work and listened to a range of pupils read from different year groups.

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, teachers and support staff. The inspector also met with a range of leaders who are responsible for the school's pastoral and personal development programmes.
- The inspector met with four members of the school's governing body. She held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at lunchtime. She spoke to pupils about their views on behaviour across the school.
- The inspector examined information about safeguarding and met with the designated safeguarding leaders.
- The inspector met with parents at the start of the school day and took account of 44 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector met with staff to discuss their well-being and workload. The inspector considered the 62 responses from Ofsted's staff survey and the 103 responses from Ofsted's pupil survey.
- The inspector scrutinised a variety of documentation, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation and minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Jo Lakey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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