

Inspection of West Hill Primary School

Beech Park, West Hill, Ottery St Mary, Devon EX11 1UQ

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

West Hill is an aspirational school. Leaders set out to teach pupils ambitious vocabulary. Staff and parents celebrate pupils' success when they use new words correctly. Pupils use language to powerful effect. For example, they write eloquent poetry, and persuasive letters to local businesses.

Older pupils support children in the Reception Year. Year 6 pupils look forward to and enjoy this responsibility. Leaders encourage six 'learning behaviours', including resilience and cooperation. As pupils move through the school, they can become librarians, technology leaders or members of the school council, or take on leadership roles in the house system.

Pupils develop an interest in the natural world through the outdoor learning environment. They learn how to be safe and confident. Pupils sustain their respect for the environment as they grow older. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 champion causes such as reducing plastic pollution.

There are well-established routines which help most pupils to behave well and feel secure. Pupils rarely experience bullying. Those that have say that staff are usually good at stopping it. Pupils hold one another to high standards of behaviour. Occasionally, when behaviour is not positive, this places a strain on friendships.

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

Children make a strong start when learning to read. Leaders have implemented a well-sequenced curriculum. They adapt the curriculum to make the sounds of the English language memorable. Pupils experience success straight away because the books they read reinforce the sounds they already know. Alongside learning to read, pupils learn to write and spell. There is a well-designed programme for developing pupils' handwriting year on year.

Leaders check how well pupils are learning the phonics curriculum. They provide extra practice for pupils who need it. The staff involved in teaching the youngest pupils to read have the subject knowledge to do this effectively. However, as pupils move through the school, their teachers are less familiar with the school's phonics programme. Consequently, some pupils who still require help to read fluently do not receive the precise support they need to read unfamiliar words correctly.

Children in the Reception Year are well prepared for future learning. Leaders provide additional mathematical resources to support learning at home. These ensure that children develop their mathematical language well. Pupils learn about key concepts such as time and place. They build on this learning as they begin to learn history and geography in Year 1.

Teachers use assessment to help pupils to remember the curriculum. For example, in mathematics, pupils demonstrate what they have learned in Friday Challenges.

Teachers use this information to identify areas where learning is less secure. Leaders check that pupils remember what they have learned over time. They notice topics where teaching has been less effective and adapt their curriculum to make them better next time.

Leaders quickly identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Support for pupils' speech, language and communication skills begins as soon as pupils join the school. Leaders work closely with parents to put in place support to meet pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND follow the curriculum successfully and achieve well.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity. For example, in art, pupils work in a range of media, from lino print to watercolour. They experiment with the processes used by different artists. Pupils enjoy being part of the school choir. They experience live classical music through concert trips.

Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. They develop respectful attitudes and understand issues such as discrimination. Most interactions between pupils are harmonious. However, some pupils do not think enough about how their behaviour affects others. They do not try to see things from another's point of view. When staff help pupils to resolve such issues, some pupils do not feel that their perspective has been considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure the school is safe. This includes ensuring the appropriate checks are made on staff before they work in the school. Governors and the local authority monitor the school's safeguarding arrangements effectively.

Training helps staff to recognise when pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders keep detailed records of any concerns about pupils. Senior staff involve professionals where appropriate. Leaders are quick to use the school's resources to support vulnerable pupils.

Leaders use the curriculum to teach pupils about how they can keep themselves safe. Pupils learn to respect boundaries and learn that they have a right to say no.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers in key stage 2 have not developed sufficient expertise in teaching phonics. This slows the progress of some pupils who still need to become fluent, accurate readers. Leaders should ensure that pupils in key stage 2 continue to benefit from consistently effective phonics teaching.
- Relationships between some pupils are not as strong as they could be. A few parents and pupils do not have confidence in the way that staff respond to behaviour incidents. Sometimes pupils do not feel they have been listened to. Leaders should help pupils to socialise with others and to resolve conflict more effectively.

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.

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	113106
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10211818
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Graham Harry
Headteacher	Cheryl Boulton
Website	www.west-hill-primary.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 June 2007

Information about this school

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below average.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and the senior team, a group of governors, including the chair of governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, English, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to

teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also considered pupils' work and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Inspectors scrutinised the single central record of adults working within the school and held discussions with the designated safeguarding lead, staff and groups of pupils in order to consider the school's work to safeguard pupils.
- Inspectors held discussions with leaders and pupils to inform their evaluation of the behaviour, attitudes and personal development of pupils.
- Inspectors considered 155 responses to the pupil survey, 14 responses to the staff survey and 118 responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents.

Inspection team

Lydia Pride, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Favager-Dalton

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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