

25th October 2013

Dear Parents/Carers

Ofsted Inspectors visited the school on 1st and 2nd October and have rated Western as Grade 3, Requiring Improvement.

This change from our previous Grade 2, Good, is largely as a result of a new framework that Ofsted now uses to judge schools. This framework has been implemented since our last inspection in 2011. The framework places an emphasis on the achievement data relating to the children's progress as determined by their performance in the Year 6 SAT tests. Whilst the school's 2011, 2012 and 2013 results in these tests were higher generally than the national average and many pupils made good progress over an extended period, this was not the case for all groups of children. The change since our last inspection is that it is not possible to achieve a Good grade unless all groups of children in the school make good progress.

In informal feedback and throughout the written report, the inspection team acknowledged the many positive aspects of our school. It was disappointing that the grade does not reflect these comments fully. Inspectors recognised, for instance, that pupils' attitudes towards learning are "positive and enthusiastic", teaching is "effective", the curriculum "comes alive", and children "have respect for each other". Most significantly, "the children are a credit to the school and their parents" – Ofsted.

However, in line with the new framework, we must focus on the areas that have been identified for improvement, specifically:

1. Improve the impact of teaching on all pupils' learning so that their achievement in reading writing and mathematics in particular is consistently good or better throughout the school;



2. Improve the efficiency, impact and strategic leadership and management in the school so that the quality of education improves to at least Good by the next section 5 inspection.

As the report acknowledges, the Leadership Team was aware already of these areas and has been working hard to address them. The Action Plan will now be reviewed by the Leadership Team and Governors to ensure we meet Ofsted's requirements quickly. We are committed fully to achieving at least a Good status at our next inspection whilst maintaining our diverse curriculum that enables children to enjoy learning and be fulfilled in all aspects of their education.

As part of their inspection, Ofsted asked parents to complete an online questionnaire. We were delighted to see such positive results: 96% of parents who responded would recommend Western to another parent, 96% strongly agreed or agreed that children are well taught, and 100% stated that their child was happy at the school. The survey is available to view at <http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>.

A full copy of the Ofsted Report is available on our school website, hard copies are available in the school office and please find a set of frequently asked questions attached to this e-mail.

We were very proud of the behaviour of children and the dedication of staff throughout the inspection period. Thank you to all who contributed.

Yours sincerely

Cheryl Smith, Headteacher and Teresa Brooke, Chair of Governors



Ofsted Inspection Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why has Western been graded as Grade 3: Requiring Improvement when it has been Grade 2: Good previously? What has changed?

This change from our previous Grade 2: Good is largely as a result of the new framework that Ofsted now uses to judge schools, and which has been introduced since our last inspection in 2011. The framework places an increased emphasis on the Achievement data relating to the children's progress as determined by their performance in the Year 6 SAT tests. Whilst the school's 2011, 2012 and 2013 results in these tests was higher generally than the national average, this was not the case for all groups of children and so an overall "Good" could not be awarded by Ofsted. This also has an effect on the grade that can be awarded for Leadership and Management of the school and the effectiveness of teaching over time.

2. What expectations does Ofsted have for the pupils' "progress" under the new framework?

At Western, the average data shows that our pupils start with average to slightly higher attainment than the national average in Foundation Stage and finish with slightly higher attainment in Year 6 based on their SAT test scores and not teacher assessment. Ofsted consider this to be an average journey through the school and require us to do better.

Ofsted uses the data from the pupils' end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) SATS and the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) SATS to see how much progress pupils have made between the two sets of tests. For example, if a pupil achieves a level 2c in Year 2 and a level 4c in Year 6, they would have achieved two levels of progress which is the average expectation nationally.

Although many children have better rates of progress than this, some groups of children with specific needs have not. This brings our overall average down and this is not considered sufficient progress under the new Ofsted framework.

3. What differences will we see in school?

There will be an enhanced focus on writing, reading and maths, with a particular emphasis on calculations and spellings. The staff will continue with their commitment to deliver a diverse and engaging curriculum that motivates all students. The high quality Inclusion provision will continue at Western.

4. Who is responsible for making the changes?

The Leadership Team under Headteacher, Mrs Smith, is responsible for making these changes. They will be supported by the Governing Body to ensure that the Action Plan is implemented.

5. How does this affect my child?

Most children will not be aware of any changes. They will continue to enjoy the fun and interactive style of learning that Western provides. A greater number of focused numeracy and literacy tasks will be introduced to help to prepare Key Stage 2 pupils for the Year 6 SATS.

6. When will the next Ofsted Inspection be?

Schools that have been given a Grade 3 will be re-inspected within 2 years of the most recent inspection. In the meantime, we will work with HM Inspectors to follow through our Action Plan.

7. What is the school going to do to improve its Ofsted rating?

As the report acknowledges, many measures that Ofsted require are in place already. The school's current Action Plan is subject to regular review but will be scrutinised by the Leadership Team and Governors to ensure we meet the outcomes that Ofsted requires.

8. What needs to improve at Western?

Essentially, Ofsted would like to see an improvement in the rate and consistency of pupils' progress – even though our school results are higher generally than the national average. This will be judged by Year 6 SATs results. The Report has stated that the school must:

- a) "Improve the impact of teaching on all pupils' learning so that their achievement in reading writing and mathematics in particular is consistently good or better throughout the school;
- b) Improve the efficiency, impact and strategic leadership and management in the school so that the quality of education improves to at least good by the next inspection".

9. Does this mean that Western is a 'bad' school?

No; we are all disappointed and frustrated that the grade does not reflect the many positive comments that were made by the Inspectors, or our belief that the school is thriving and provides an excellent education for all pupils. This belief is borne out of our experience of Western children's love of learning and ability to make a good transition to secondary school. A school that is judged to Require Improvement is not an inadequate school.

Inspectors recognised, for instance, that pupils' attitudes towards learning are "positive and enthusiastic", teaching is "effective", the curriculum "comes alive", and children "have respect for each other". Most significantly, "the children are a credit to the school and their parents" – Ofsted.

In addition, we were delighted to see the overwhelmingly positive support from parents in the Ofsted Parentview Survey: 96% of parents who responded would recommend Western to another parent, 96% strongly agreed or agreed that children are well taught, and 100% stated that their child was happy at the school.

