

Westover Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116194
Local Authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	357902
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2010
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Derek Good
Headteacher	Annie Gunthorpe
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. During the inspection 19 lessons and 13 teachers were observed. Discussions were held with staff, members of the governing body, parents and carers, and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including the school's improvement plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, provision for those pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities and minutes of governing body meetings. In addition, questionnaires from 73 parents and carers, and others from staff and pupils were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How effective are the school's strategies for assessment, and what do they say about pupils' achievement, especially the more able?
- How successfully are the school's measures enhancing pupils' personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?
- How well are modifications to the school's curriculum meeting pupils' individual needs and contributing to their higher achievement?
- How successfully has the leadership and management at all levels responded to the review of their roles and responsibilities, including the governing body, and enabled continuity and improvement?

Information about the school

Westover is a larger than average, oversubscribed, school. Most pupils live in the immediate area and are of White British heritage. There are a very few pupils speaking English as an additional language. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A larger than average number of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These needs include behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There are nine pupils with statements of special needs. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

Westover is a good school. It has a considerable number of strengths. Since the last inspection, the headteacher, with the senior staff, has initiated a number of changes and steered the school forward very effectively. The school's view of itself is accurate and its track record of raising achievement and implementing change shows it is well placed to build on its strengths and has a good capacity to improve. One parent summed up the views of many by writing, 'My child left another school very unhappy. I can honestly say that Westover has given her confidence back and she is now a very happy little girl, willing to learn. Full credit to the teachers!'

Although it has varied, pupils' attainment has been above average at the end of Year 6 since the last inspection. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. As a result of very effective organisation and extremely careful early assessments, pupils begin to make very good progress immediately. The latest national test results in Year 6 were above national averages and those in 2009, and were in line with the school's own carefully formulated targets. Achievement is good throughout the school due to the rigorous systems to track the progress of each pupil and to identify where additional teaching will be most beneficial. There was, however, as the school recognised, a difference in pupils' achievement in mathematics when compared to that in other areas. Good programmes were put in place to address this, and this year's higher results show how effective these were, especially for the more-able pupils.

The quality of teaching varies throughout the school, but overall it is good. Teachers' planning is thorough and in most classes is based on the use of careful assessments. This ensures that tasks are generally pitched at the right level for all pupils. In the best lessons, activities move at a good pace and pupils are given the maximum opportunities to reinforce their skills and learning in English and mathematics, with exciting and relevant activities that are linked across subject areas. However, these features are not always present in all teaching. The whole-school approach to curriculum planning is not implemented consistently, and pupils are sometimes not provided with sufficiently challenging work. In less effective lessons, the pace of learning is too slow and day-to-day assessment is not being used to help pupils understand the next steps needed to improve their work.

The pastoral support, guidance and care provided for all pupils are excellent, and as a result, by the time pupils leave the school, they are mature and thoughtful young adults, who make a very effective contribution to the school and the local community. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and feel very safe, reflecting the staff's high expectations and their very effective level of care and moral guidance. They acquire a good awareness of how to live a healthy lifestyle. One particularly notable aspect of the school's care for individual pupils is the work of the special educational needs team. The

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very effective learning support assistants ensure that those pupils with specific learning needs are very well supported through identifying their needs early so they make consistently good progress.

The school does much to promote its place in the local community. The contribution of the Friends of the School association is greatly appreciated by all involved. The many displays in the school show that while these links with the local community are strong, those with schools and communities abroad are still being developed. The pupils' awareness of, and preparation for, living and working in a culturally diverse United Kingdom are not developed sufficiently well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that by the end of the current academic year, the school's monitoring systems raise the quality of teaching and learning in all lessons to that of the best by:
 - making sure the planning offers the right challenge for pupils in all lessons
 - extending opportunities for staff to observe best practice in the school
 - ensuring in all lessons that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve.
- Enhance pupils' understanding of their place in a culturally diverse United Kingdom, and global community, and extend the provision for community cohesion by: implementing the plans for twinning with schools in other localities.
 - building on the findings of the recent analysis of community cohesion
 - making sure the planning offers the right challenge for pupils in all lessons

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The inspection findings confirm the school's monitoring that, although there are many strengths, outcomes are good rather than outstanding. Although there are variations from year to year, over the time they are in the school, all groups of pupils achieve well. However, there are aspects of learning still to be embedded in some year groups in order for pupils to make maximum progress. When implemented with enthusiasm the curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' all-round development. This was clear in the literacy lessons observed in the Year 5/6 classes during the inspection. The variety of activities and the opportunities for pupils to make their own, well-defined choices were excellent. This resulted in some memorable pieces of writing that they all enjoyed. Pupils achieve well across a wide range of subjects. The quality of the artwork around the school is very impressive. The school's approach to music, which so many pupils enjoy, was evident in the enthusiastic singing of the Year 3/4 choir and the impact that this is having on their self-esteem.

Pupils are proud of their school and are enthusiastic about many aspects of its life. They thoroughly enjoy lessons and the extra-curricular activities, trips and visits, which contribute well to their learning. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Attendance is very high because pupils really want to come to school. Pupils' contribution to the local community is good, particularly in their support for a range of charities and

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local activities. The school council has been responsible for important initiatives, such as the promotion of better sporting activities. These efforts, and the healthy schools initiative, have ensured that pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Pupils report that the rare incidents of bullying or poor behaviour are dealt with very well and they feel very safe in school.

The standards reached by pupils in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, combined with their keen appetite for teamwork and their zest for learning, prepare them well for their transition to the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good. In many lessons, there are strong elements that help pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Teachers work as a keen and enthusiastic team to encourage pupils in their learning. Pupils know that their ideas are valued and the outstanding displays in the classrooms and around the school celebrate their achievements. Most teachers keep up a brisk pace and help pupils to meet their high expectations by asking questions that encourage them to think hard. In two extremely well-taught English lessons, one in a Year 1/2 class and one in a Year 5/6 class, the teachers both challenged the pupils to be adventurous and 'take risks'. This emphasis on not being afraid to try was a theme in many lessons, but not all, which really helped to move the pupils forward. These teachers gave high quality feedback to test pupils'

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understanding, introduced extra challenge and used praise effectively to raise pupils' expectations of what they were capable of achieving. As one of the teachers said, 'You are going to write like angels and edit like the wind' and as far as their assessments later showed, they did.

Staff's improved expectations of pupils' progress are reflected in the challenging targets set for individual and year groups. In most, but not all, lessons staff effectively helped pupils assess their own and each other's work, identifying what to do next. This was clear in a mathematics lessons in a Year 1/2 class. The pupils were enthusiastic and sensible as they used number squares. The teacher's good use of praise, and focus on the time available, was a reflection of the way the school concentrates on encouraging pupils' attentiveness and hard work.

Throughout the school, positive relationships between staff and pupils contribute to the supportive ethos for study. There are many examples of where the school has worked extremely well with pupils, their families and outside agencies to help remove barriers to learning. The impact of the school's extremely effective support, guidance and care is evident in the pupils' good standard of behaviour and highly developed social skills.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked hard to develop a corporate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. All adults involved in the school value the senior leaders' open-door approach through which they consistently give an exemplary lead and relate effectively with pupils, parents and the local community. Teamwork is of a good quality and all staff play a valuable part in moving the school forward. As one staff member said, 'It has been exciting to be a part of the school in the last four years.' There is an effective plan for further development and senior leaders show an urgency to make sure their vision is appreciated and shared so all staff are willing to make further improvements. All staff know their roles and are willing to take on the responsibility of promoting improvement through sharing their expertise by implementing their plan to 'Learn from Good Practice'. The governing body is fully involved in all developments and supports the school effectively. Its recent full and detailed analysis of the school's strengths and areas for development showed they bring a wide range of experience and skills to bear to act as critical friends and to hold the school to account when necessary.

Staff and governors ensure that discrimination in any form is not tolerated and the school is very effective in promoting equal opportunities. It values the opinions of parents and

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carers and pupils and acts upon these. Procedures to safeguard pupils' well-being, safety and health are thorough and all members of staff are well trained. Checks on staff appointments follow recommended guidelines and are recorded carefully. The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is satisfactory. A plan and clear actions are in place for promoting pupils' understanding from a local perspective. Links with other local schools and agencies are harnessed well. The need to expand its links to provide better national and global perspectives is well understood by the school, as these links are not yet sufficiently well developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The huge level of commitment and care shown by reception staff pays dividends in the way that all children settle into the school so well and immediately begin to learn. Home visits and induction meetings enable the staff, children and their families to get to know each other and help make sure that starting school is a happy event. These visits lead to the full involvement of the local community, which continues right through the school. As one parent said, 'My son has recently joined Reception and has always been reluctant to write, however since joining Westover he has been so excited to learn that he is now a keen writer. We feel that Westover has given him the best possible start and are pleased to be a part of the school.'

Staff know the children very well and they ensure that the least able and most vulnerable progress well. Opportunities to decide on what they want to do, get out the required equipment and get on with their task, give children a real sense of determining their own way forward, and guarantee their full involvement in all activities. Such is their independence and confidence that they can already explain why they had made their choices.

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Children make rapid progress and achieve exceptionally well, especially in communication, language and literacy, and in their personal, social and emotional development. Adults have high expectations, provide very clear routines and enable children to build strong, positive relationships. At all times, staff engage and stimulate the children's interests. As a result, there were high levels of enjoyment and concentration as children remembered the differences between the Three Bears, helped each other out with the weighing of porridge oats, and used the role-play area to explore their topic about nursery rhymes. The classrooms are stimulating and the amazing outside area provides the same exciting level of challenge and stimulation, especially for the more-able children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The return of questionnaires from parents and carers was below the national average. The majority of these parents, and those who spoke to the inspection team, were very happy with the school. They consider that the school is well led and managed and has a dedicated team of staff. They agree that the school has a very warm, supportive and friendly atmosphere and most feel their children progress well. Inspection evidence shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Parents and carers were particularly impressed with the pastoral support their children receive. Evidence from this inspection supports parents' positive views. The small number of constructive parental concerns, for example about how the school dealt with any disruptive behaviour, were followed up during the inspection as part of the general gathering of evidence. Inspectors found that incidences of unwanted behaviour are dealt with well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Westover Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 311 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	51	35	48	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	40	55	34	47	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	27	44	60	6	8	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	36	40	55	5	7	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	29	40	41	56	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	35	42	58	3	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	40	39	53	5	7	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	21	29	39	53	4	5	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	32	38	52	4	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	38	32	44	8	11	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	27	39	53	7	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	32	37	51	5	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	41	36	49	4	5	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westover Primary School Portsmouth PO3 6NS

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we came to the school recently. We did enjoy our visit. Yours is a good school with many strengths, and we agree with what you told us it is a really fun place to learn. Here is a list of some of the things that we think are really good.

- The school looks after you extremely well and you all make good progress in your learning.
- You all make an excellent start in the Reception classes.
- You behave well, get along with each other and feel very safe in school.
- You all have very good ideas on how to make things better.
- You have a good understanding of how to live healthily.
- You find lessons interesting and really enjoy school.
- There are plenty of exciting things for you to do both in school and on visits and in clubs.
- The headteacher and staff manage the school very well.

Even in good schools, there are some things that could be better. We have asked the staff to make sure that they always use their knowledge of how well you are doing to set you work that closely matches your needs and that you are told clearly about how to improve your work. We want them to learn from each other about how to make all of your lessons even better. We also want your headteacher and staff to make sure you are given the chance to find out more about people in other parts of the country and the world that are different from where you live. In turn, you can all help by carrying on listening carefully and taking note of what your teachers say. Then you will all continue to make good or even better progress in your learning.

Yours sincerely

David Marshall
Lead inspector

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