



# Westhouses Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112508  
**LEA** DERBYSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 278947  
**Inspection dates** 10 October 2005 to 11 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Joyce Cox LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Bolden Terrace
<b>School category</b>	Community		DE55 5AF
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01773832518
<b>Number on roll</b>	53	<b>Fax number</b>	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Alan Cooke
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. John Grogan

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 10 October 2005 - 11 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 278947
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Westhouses is a small primary school with just 53 pupils, situated in a former mining and railway village north of Alfreton. The school sits at the heart of the village community. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Fewer pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities than in most schools. The majority of the pupils are white British with English being their first language. The small number who enter the school each year have skills which are slightly below those expected for children of their age. Three of the four teachers are new to the school since September 2004; this includes the headteacher.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

The inspection findings support the school's positive assessment of its overall effectiveness. Westhouses Primary is a good school and provides good value for money. The new headteacher has quickly and successfully developed and improved many aspects of the school's work. After analysing the 2005 test results, he correctly identified the need to improve writing standards throughout the school and with other staff wasted no time in putting interesting and successful initiatives into place. The school runs smoothly and pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Parents are very satisfied with the school. One parent sums this up by writing: 'the most striking thing about this school is how enthusiastic the headteacher and all the staff are.' Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average and better than those found in schools with similar features. All pupils make good and, in some cases, very good progress from when they start school. This is because staff know each pupil well and good teaching helps all children to achieve. The very small number of children in the Foundation Stage gets off to a good start. Pupils get considerable enjoyment from their learning as they are given practical and interesting things to do. They relate well to adults, like being in a small community and appreciate the good help and care they are given to become effective learners. Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good. The headteacher's good leadership and the support given by a dedicated staff ensure that any child who is not making the expected progress is quickly identified and supported. The school accepts that the next step is to involve pupils more in understanding what they need to do to reach even higher standards. Governors are supportive but realise they could be even more effective if they acquired extra skills to help them in checking on school improvement. The school has made good progress since its last inspection and is clearly able to improve further in the future.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Continue to raise standards in writing throughout the school. - Make sure that pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve their work to reach even higher standards. - Improve the ways the governors check and challenge the school's work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is correct in saying that all pupils make good progress. Children's attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but is slightly below that of other four year olds. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2; reaching at least average standards by the time they leave Year 2. By the age of 11 standards in national tests in 2004 and 2005 are above average in English, mathematics and science, and assessment data shows that pupils have made good and, in the case of the less able pupils, very good progress between Year 3 and Year 6. This impressive achievement is due to clear, focused leadership, high calibre teaching, accurate

assessment and skilled planning which successfully provides for pupils of different ages and abilities in the two classes.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in classes and around the school are good. They are keen to succeed and work hard. Attendance is good. Pupils' relationships with each other and with the staff are very good, reflecting the strong emphasis which the school places on their personal development. For instance, at lunchtimes pupils sit in mixed-aged tables and older pupils maturely and sensibly serve food to younger pupils, encouraging them to eat a healthy, balanced lunch. Pupils play happily together and say that instances of bullying or aggressive behaviour are very rare. Older pupils show initiative by helping to organise fund-raising events in support of charities and take on a range of responsibilities. The school is currently looking to reinstate the school council which will give pupils a fuller voice in making decisions. Their views are sought and acted upon through questionnaires and they have raised money to buy playground equipment. Pupils also have a good understanding of how to stay safe and enjoy keeping healthy and fit through regular exercise. The pupils' social development has been maintained at the very good level found at the time of the last inspection and the school has reviewed the provision for religious education and personal, social and health education to ensure there are increased opportunities for pupils to explore other religions and cultures. Provision for pupils' moral and spiritual development is good and pupils are proud and pleased to receive awards either for good work or behaviour. One pupil said 'I was star of the week because I was mature and sensible and helped the younger children to settle into their new class.' Learners make good progress in acquiring the necessary numeracy and literacy skills that will help in later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The inspection findings agree with the school that the quality of teaching and learning is good. It is one of the key reasons for pupils achieving so well. Pupils talk enthusiastically about how teachers make learning fun and interesting and 'always help me when I get stuck.' The very good relationships, classroom management skills and very detailed planning, together with the fact that staff know pupils so well, help all pupils to succeed. Staff are prepared to go the extra mile to bring learning to life for the pupils. For instance, despite the fact that the classroom is quite compact, a junior teacher provided exciting, stimulating and enticing activities for the Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils to investigate friction. The pupils were enthralled and moved sensibly around the classroom working together with excitement and curiosity, persevering and learning a great deal. Teaching assistants are capable, competent and highly valued members of the team. They enrich pupils' learning; for example, they happily collect

autumn leaves with the youngest children and dig for worms when asked! They provide good support to all pupils and in particular to those with learning difficulties. The headteacher has effectively built on existing practice to ensure that good and robust procedures are in place for assessing and following pupils' progress. The information is now used effectively to identify pupils who are not doing as well as expected and staff can now quickly deal with this. The school realises that the next step is to make sure that pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve their work so that they are fully involved in their own learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has a lively and interesting curriculum. The headteacher and staff have implemented a sensible and manageable timetable of looking at each subject and deciding what is going well and what needs to be done to improve it. Planning has improved considerably as new staff have worked swiftly to ensure that lessons cater even more effectively for the wide range of ages and abilities in the two classes. Staff and pupils are inspired and enthused about a new writing project intended to raise standards in writing. It is called 'Excite to Write' and pupils enjoy thrilling days out to provide a stimulus for their writing. Years 3,4,5 and 6 pupils clearly showed how much they had benefited from exciting indoor and outdoor activities when they wrote an interesting account using 'exciting adverbs' and 'adventurous adjectives.' A good range of clubs and other activities makes the pupils' learning fun and sustains their interest and enthusiasm. Year 6 pupils talk enthusiastically about the science and design technology projects they enjoy weekly at a nearby secondary school. Very good links with other local schools provide additional resources and a sharing of good practice which is extremely beneficial to both staff and pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school cares well for all its pupils and is always ready to recognise and celebrate their individuality. Staff know all the pupils and their needs really well. Pupils are keen to point out that there is always someone to turn to if they have any worries or concerns. Good procedures are in place for child protection. The school has established strong links with support agencies, such as the speech and language service which helps pupils with learning difficulties to take an active and enjoyable role in all that the school offers. The high priority the school gives to pupils' well-being is shown in the way it encourages pupils to follow a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise and to always look out for one another. For instance, at break time an older boy immediately volunteered to play with a younger pupil who was feeling lonely.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The school judges its overall leadership and management to be satisfactory but the inspector feels it is good and the school is being too modest. This is because the headteacher has achieved so much and had such an impact on raising pupils' achievement. He skilfully combines this with teaching two days a week in the Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 class. He has worked very hard since his appointment to improve provision in some significant aspects. For instance his decision to divide the junior class for some numeracy and literacy is having a considerable impact on raising standards, as pupils can be taught in smaller two-year groups. Pupils' writing is improving dramatically as a result of this management decision. The parents' views are extremely positive and all of them think that the school is well led and managed. The headteacher has created an ethos where the comparatively new staff has quickly gelled to look critically at all that the school does and find ways to improve. The school is good at evaluating what it does well and what needs to be improved. The school improvement planning is correctly focused on addressing weaknesses and maintaining strengths. The subject leaders' role has been improved and the staff cope very well with having to co-ordinate many subjects in a small school. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The information and communication technology resources have been extended and staff expertise has improved. Governors give good support to the school particularly in terms of keeping a close eye on its spending and assisting with refurbishment. They recognise that they need additional training to help them to sharpen their checking of school improvement. All pupils are treated equally and those who find learning difficult are supported well and helped to take a full part in school life.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming me to your school when I visited. It was a real pleasure to talk to some of you and to watch you working and playing. This letter is to tell you about some of the important things I saw. You are lucky at your school because the headteacher, teachers and all the other adults look after you so well. They encourage you to be happy at school, to be healthy and to stay safe and they make sure you have good opportunities to learn exciting new things. Many of you told me how much you liked your headteacher and all the other staff and how well you thought they helped you to learn. You also really like being in a small school and playing with all the other children at playtimes. You behave well and this makes it easier for the teachers to teach and for you to learn. You don't like it when people do not behave well, but you know what to do if they don't. You enjoy looking after each other, such as when you are serving lunches and helping new children to settle in. You are also very interested in doing different things and love taking part in clubs, trips, plays, 'Excite to Write' days and other exciting things the school provides for you. Your teachers are keen to make the school even better for you. I think that to do that they need you to get better at writing. It will also be good if your teachers tell you what you do well and how you can do even better in your work. It will also help you if the school governors help your teachers to check that they are doing the right things to make your school even better. It was so good to find out that all of you are happy at school and that your parents say you enjoy coming to school. Keep working hard and being good at Westhouses.