



Warren Dell Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117169
LEA HERTFORDSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280003
Inspection dates 30 November 2005 to 1 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. George Derby LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Gosforth Lane
School category	Community		WD19 7UZ
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02084284571
Number on roll	212	Fax number	02084214160
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Peter Jenkins
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Ms. Linda Sheppard

Age group 3 to 11	Inspection dates 30 November 2005 - 1 December 2005	Inspection number 280003
-----------------------------	--	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Warren Dell is an average sized primary school with a small Nursery, situated on an estate to the south west of Watford. Families in this area are more disadvantaged than most. The children begin school with lower levels of skill, knowledge and understanding than many others of a similar age. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals and of those who have learning difficulties is much higher than in most other schools. There is only one pupil with a statement of special educational need. The school has few pupils whose home language is not English or who are from minority ethnic groups than nationally. A higher number of pupils than average join and leave the school during the school year. There is a high turnover of teaching staff and some stay only a very short while. The school's circumstances are challenging in these respects. An acting headteacher and deputy headteacher started in September 2005. The school has applied to become an 'extended school'.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

Warren Dell has found it difficult to deal with its considerable number of challenges and as a result, the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress have not been consistent and are inadequate. Work is not planned well enough to meet the range of pupils' needs and not enough use is made of all the available information to set targets. This has led to generally low standards and pupils not achieving as much as they could. The provision for children in Nursery and Reception is sound and they make reasonable progress. However, in the rest of the school the picture is much more variable. Overall, therefore, the school does not provide a sound education for its pupils nor does it provide adequate value for money. The school's written self-evaluation does not paint an accurate picture, although the acting headteacher knows what needs improving. The school has assessed its own performance from time to time and has often identified correctly key weaknesses. However, its response to these has often been limited. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Leadership and management are now satisfactory. The new acting headteacher has already put a considerable number of things in place to secure improvement. She motivates and inspires the rest of the new senior leadership team, who understand their role in bringing about improvement. Their ability to do this is sound. There is strong teamwork and a positive commitment to the pupils. The rigorous approach to identifying why things are as they are is helping to prioritise the actions needed to be taken. The school has had a troubled past with regard to pupils' behaviour and exclusions have been too high. The acting headteacher's systems are having a positive effect. The pupils' behaviour and attitudes are now sound. However, more needs to be done to improve the poor attendance and punctuality. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure there is a significant proportion of good or better teaching and especially improve the planning of what pupils are to learn and the match of work to different groups. - Raise attainment and ensure that all groups of pupils make consistent progress across the school. - Make better use of the information available to set challenging targets for groups of pupils and the school as a whole. - Improve attendance and punctuality.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are low and pupils do not make enough progress during their time in school. There is too much variation across the school. Improvements are being made but where

teaching is not satisfactory the progress the pupils make is too slow. Most children enter the Nursery with standards that are below those expected. Through the Nursery and Reception classes they make satisfactory progress as a result of the adequate teaching they receive. Most are still below average in all aspects by the time they enter Year 1. The attainment of Year 2 pupils improved in 2004 but dropped again to well below average standards in Year 2 assessments in 2005. The pupils' progress in this key stage has been limited. The school's inability to secure stable and good quality staffing significantly affected the pupils' achievements. After the last inspection, standards at Key Stage 2 plummeted to an all time low in 2003. Since then progress and pupils' attainments have begun to rise. In 2005 the Year 6 group of pupils reached near average standards in the national tests because they had benefited from consistently good teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6. Assessment data indicates that these pupils made good progress through Key Stage 2. However, it was from a base of significant underachievement in Year 2 caused by weaknesses in teaching at that time. The school is currently unable to ensure that its pupils reach Year 6 having made the progress of which they are capable. The quality of teaching is too uneven and the pupils' attendance is poor. Although the overall pattern of attainment shows that boys achieve similarly to girls, the standards that different groups reach vary markedly. The school's targets are unrealistically challenging and are not reached because of this.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

These are satisfactory and are evidence of the impact of recent improvement. The pupils enjoy school, and their relationships and behaviour are satisfactory. The pupils describe how well bullying has been reduced, although some still remains. Staff are generally consistent in their expectations of behaviour and in implementing sanctions when this is problematic. Pupils' understanding of right and wrong has improved and their attitudes to learning are now sound. Overall, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Current initiatives aimed at encouraging pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle are beginning to show some signs of success. Considerable emphasis is placed on teaching children how to be safe in and outside the school. Overall, the pupils' contributions to the school and wider community are satisfactory. The school council's requests to improve playground equipment are to be implemented soon. Good plans are in place to develop older pupils' level of responsibility; for instance, in looking after others at playtimes. However, the pupils are not academically well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. The school's own analysis of teaching over the past two years has shown that teaching has been variable and frequently unsatisfactory. The school's own target of 80% good or better teaching

has not yet been reached. Weaknesses have often been related to numerous changes in staffing and the teaching by temporary staff. When pupils have had consistently strong teaching, even over a small number of years, they make good progress. The teaching seen on this inspection was inadequate; the best was satisfactory only. Not enough account was taken of the needs of learners, the pace of learning was too slow, and what the pupils were intended to learn was not specific enough in plans. Occasionally, pupils were not managed adequately and were too slow to settle to their work. The teaching by temporary or inexperienced teachers was weak. Elsewhere, however, lessons had a clearly defined structure and introductions usually got the lesson off to a reasonable start. Teachers made sound use of the interactive whiteboards to aid understanding. Objectives were shared, although these were sometimes more about the activities in the lesson than the pupils' learning. The main part was usually planned for three different ability groups. The match of work to these groups was often not sharp enough. Reviews of the pupils' learning were occasionally too superficial. Teaching assistants often make a valuable contribution to lessons as was seen in a mathematics and computer lesson in the Reception class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a broad curriculum which is relevant to pupils' needs and is occasionally enhanced by interesting links between subjects. There is a very strong emphasis on teaching basic skills, which has begun to improve standards. Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is satisfactory and ensures that they make sound progress. Pupils who have learning difficulties are adequately provided for, as are those who do not speak English at home. There are examples of good curriculum planning which matches the abilities of all children. Inconsistencies in teachers' use of assessment information mean that, too often, planning lacks challenge. This slows the pupils' progress. The provision for personal and social education is satisfactory and strategies to encourage the well-being of children are being increasingly woven into the curriculum. The school has a satisfactory range of well-supported, extra-curricular activities during lunch time and after school. Day visits enrich the curriculum and make a positive contribution to children's learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

These are satisfactory. A significant proportion of pupils start school with challenging behaviour and learning difficulties. Teachers and support staff provide effective support for them and children's behaviour is satisfactory as a result. Recent initiatives have been successful in improving levels of care and support for children. However, while children now have targets that help them understand how they can improve their work in literacy, many do not have a complete understanding of what the targets mean. Child protection procedures are in place and good attention is paid to ensuring pupils' health and safety. The pupils report that they feel safe and secure in school. Those who have learning difficulties are identified rapidly and appropriate support is provided.

Information is shared well with parents about their progress. However, reports about other children often lack detail with regard to where they need to improve. The school works well with other agencies to support pupils and their families.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management are sound and the newly appointed acting headteacher has a clear vision for the school. She has high aspirations and good plans to rectify the weaknesses. She is clearly demonstrating an ability to take the school forward. However, much of what has been started has yet to have a full impact. She brings a much needed 'breath of fresh air' to the leadership of the school and knows what it needs to provide a 21st century education for the pupils. The temporary senior management team is motivated, enthused and ready, willing and able to aid improvement. The headteacher has already linked the priorities for training to the 'school plan' and to performance management. She has also been instrumental in introducing with the local authority an intensive programme to improve literacy and numeracy across the school. The work of subject leaders is beginning to improve. Plans for improvement are in place for all subjects and leaders are beginning to take a greater role in monitoring standards and quality of provision. In English and mathematics there is strong self-evaluation, although this is limited in other subjects. The school does not have a robust way of checking on how well it does. The acting headteacher is quickly beginning to develop systems. Some aspects of its work, such as the actions in the 'school plan', have been reviewed and evaluated. However, where limited progress has been identified, little response has been made. The headteacher has brought together the school's data effectively so that greater sense can be made of it. This is aiding her and subject leaders to get a better understanding of what needs to be done immediately. She has quickly begun to tackle the weaknesses in teaching and to provide support where needed. Governance has improved over the past year and is now satisfactory. The chair is an experienced governor who has brought greater rigour in monitoring the school's work and holding the school to account for its performance. Governors have a more accurate picture of the school and each member has specific responsibilities assigned. However, only a small number fully undertake these tasks.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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 taking the time to talk to the inspectors. We found your comments very helpful. You and the staff made us very welcome. Unfortunately, the school faces lots of difficulties because some teachers do not stay very long. This makes it very difficult for you to make all the progress you could. However, we were pleased with the following: - You are generally happy to be at school. - You are getting on better with each other and with the teachers, and your behaviour is satisfactory. - You enjoy your lessons and school in general, especially the visitors, such as Watford Football Club who promote many aspects of health education. - Miss Sheppard is working hard to make the school a better place for you to learn. - The progress of last year's Year 6 was astonishing, although they did not do at all well when they were in Years 1 and 2. Unfortunately, the school has not been improving very quickly. There are still a lot of important things that you and the school need to do to make it better: - You need to improve your work in all subjects - you've got the capability to do much better. - You need to continue to work hard, come to school on time and attend regularly. - Miss Sheppard can't do all the work on her own; she has now got a strong senior team but needs more good teachers to teach you well. - The information the staff have about your work could be used better to help you and the school improve. Miss Sheppard is getting help from another person who was a headteacher and lots of other people are also giving advice. Inspectors will check in a year's time to see how well the school is doing.