



Westgate Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118252
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280276
Inspection dates 9 May 2006 to 10 May 2006
Reporting inspector Sheila Browning AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Summerhill Road
School category	Community		Dartford
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Kent DA1 2LP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01322 223382
Number on roll	226	Fax number	01322 274225
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Dorothy Snape
Date of previous inspection	30 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Beverly Christy

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	9 May 2006 - 10 May 2006	280276

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Westgate serves a community with many challenging circumstances. Most pupils are from White British families, with nearly a third from minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils speaking English as an additional language is high. Over a third of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. Many pupils join or leave the school part way through their primary education. Children start school with below expected skills and experience for their age, particularly in language. The present headteacher has been in post since April 2005. There are other pre-school and community facilities on the same site, with whom the school works in partnership. As of October 2006, Westgate and all of the site users, including a local technology college, are due to become part of the Dartford Learning Campus. The school is part of a local authority intensifying support programme.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors judge the school's overall effectiveness as satisfactory and improving. The school also judges its effectiveness to be satisfactory. It is now evaluating its performance closely and this has given it an accurate view of its work and achievements. It is carefully evaluating the impact of its many new developments. The issues raised in the last inspection report have been successfully tackled. The school demonstrates a clear determination and secure capacity to improve further. The school provides satisfactory value for money. The school has made significant strides forward in the last year as a result of the headteacher's leadership, with strong support from the governing body, staff and parents. Though standards remain low, there are clear signs that pupils are now doing better and are achieving satisfactorily. Improvements in teaching and the better use of assessment are already proving successful, though monitoring by subject leaders is not consistent. The strong support for pupils with English as an additional language is ensuring that these pupils are making good progress. Teachers now have higher expectations of pupils' achievement, but recent improvements are not yet sufficiently well established to ensure that work is always matched well to pupils' abilities. Children enter the Foundation Stage with low-level skills, particularly in language, and have limited experiences. Because of the strong focus on language development, they make satisfactory progress. Though attendance is below average, the school is working successfully to improve it. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good. The care, guidance and support of pupils is satisfactory and links with agencies and the community are good. Leadership and management have clearly identified weaknesses and are tackling these rigorously. As yet, there has been insufficient time for this to have an impact on standards. The sharper assessment is not yet used to plan work that is always well matched to pupils' stages of learning. Governance has improved considerably. Governors are involved in planning the school's future, evaluating its work and hold the school to account well.

What the school should do to improve further

- use assessment information so that work is consistently well matched to pupils' abilities in order to increase achievement and raise standards in English, mathematics and science
- monitor more closely the quality of teaching and learning within lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are well below those nationally. Recent improvements and higher expectations have ensured that pupils' achievement is now satisfactory. However, the improvements are too recent to have an impact on attainment, so that standards remain low. Nevertheless, inspection evidence shows that the standards are higher in the present Years 2 and 6 than seen in the well below average national test results in recent years. Children join the Reception Year with significantly lower skills than those expected for their age, and many have limited experience of speaking English. By the

end of the Reception Year, about half are on course to meet the expected goals for learning. The school sets realistic and challenging targets for pupils' performance at the end of Year 6. Low attainment on entry, many pupils not having English as their first language or joining the school at a late stage present significant challenges for pupils' learning. The school is tackling these well through focused adult support and in English and mathematics pupils benefit from being taught in groups arranged by prior attainment. Tracking of pupils' progress and assessments provides secure evidence that individual pupils have achieved satisfactorily from where they started in Year 1 and Year 3. Standards have fluctuated since the last inspection but show recent improvement. Whilst pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve satisfactorily, by contrast, those at the early stages of learning English, because of the good support they receive, achieve better than other pupils. The programmes for those with learning difficulties are not always well matched to their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils say "We don't like school. We love it!" Behaviour is good and attitudes to learning are positive. Pupils say bullying is rare and that adults deal with inappropriate behaviour quickly and fairly. Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables most pupils to value and be aware of each other's needs and opinions. They enjoy the range of responsibilities provided and understand their obligations towards one another. This prepares them well for their next stage of education. Although attendance for a small minority is below average, the school is working successfully to improve the situation. As a result of closer partnerships with parents and stronger links with the education welfare officer and by celebrating good attendance, attendance is improving. Pupils make an effective contribution to the school and local community. The school council plays a useful part in the day-to-day life of the school. Members of the school council attend governing body meetings to share their views about the school. Pupils have agreed that their focus for this year is to be improving the environment. They have managed a budget and purchased playtime equipment, monitored its use and are now exploring sponsorship with a variety of companies to purchase some more. Pupils know their opinions are listened to and express trust in the adults in school. Pupils gain a good awareness of social issues in the world through fund-raising activities. A clear understanding of environmental issues is growing as a result of their participation in activities leading to the Eco schools award. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for safety, exercise and healthy eating. Year 6 pupils take part in the 'Safety in Action' week and pupils have a secure awareness for their own safety. They enjoy the 'fresh fruit and cool milk schemes', and the take-up of sporting activities beyond the school day is good. The school is now working towards Healthy School status. Improvements in pupils' achievement in mathematics are helping them to develop relevant skills for their future life and work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving because teachers now have higher expectations of what pupils can do. The better use of assessment is already proving successful. In English and mathematics, assessment information is used well to monitor and track pupils' progress, change the curriculum and set targets for learning. The school is taking steps to ensure assessment is used more effectively to support teaching and learning in other subjects. Whilst it is improving, teaching is not yet consistently good because, for example, whilst pupils benefit from being taught English and mathematics in groups arranged by prior attainment, lesson plans do not always take into account the range of ability within the group. Occasionally, all pupils are given the same work to complete. Good relationships, together with teachers' effective use of resources, such as interactive whiteboards, make lessons interesting. At the start of most lessons, teachers make sure pupils understand what lessons are about and what they will be learning. This approach helps pupils to focus on what they should be achieving. Satisfactory lesson planning is underpinned by teachers' secure command of subjects. Reception-aged children benefit from having a good balance between activities that are directed by the teacher and those they choose for themselves. A strong emphasis is placed on developing their speaking and listening skills. These factors help to ensure the children's satisfactory progress. The identification, teaching and support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are satisfactory, as is that for more capable pupils. Provision for those at an early stage of learning English is good. Across the school, teaching assistants work in close cooperation with teachers and make a valuable contribution to all pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and is improving. The curriculum for children in the Reception class provides a carefully planned range of activities that focuses on their individual needs appropriately and, as a result, they are making satisfactory progress. Teachers are now developing satisfactory skills in identifying and addressing the needs of all pupils. The school is linking subjects together, and teachers cover topics in greater depth to better suit pupils' learning. Closer tracking of their progress and use of additional support and intervention programmes is helping most pupils to make better progress. The school has good partnerships with local authority consultants and together they are improving the quality of English and mathematics lessons. Since the last inspection, improvements in physical and religious education ensure that pupils now have sufficient time and coverage to develop their skills. Additionally, French has been introduced for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Resources for information and communication technology (ICT) are much improved, enabling pupils to better develop their skills. In English and mathematics, groups are arranged by prior attainment, to better meet pupils' learning needs. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and are

offered suitable activities. Programmes for those with learning difficulties are not always well matched to their needs. The school makes good provision for out-of-class activities and education for health and safety is good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils receive satisfactory care, guidance and support. Systems for first aid, security and arrangements for child protection are effective. Every year, pupils in Year 6 participate in the local 'Safety in Action' programme. The school places a great priority on raising levels of self-esteem and independence to better help pupils learn. Pupils know their targets for improvement and marking helps them achieve this. The guidance to pupils about how to make progress has improved and usually teachers mark work with helpful comments about how to improve. The school has formed effective partnerships with a wide range of educational and other supportive agencies, including school councillors and behaviour specialists, to provide additional pastoral support for both the family and the child. This has directly benefited those pupils who have needed support. Pupils say they are happy to speak about their concerns and feel safe. Pupils are keen to be 'playground buddies' and 'peer mentors' during playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils have a 'voice' and the school council plays a major role in the changes to their learning environment. Parents are supportive of the school and value the good level of care given to pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The recently appointed headteacher is leading the school well, and has a clear vision for the school's ongoing future. There are clear signs that the action she has initiated is already leading to improvements in teaching and assessment practices, so that progress is increasing. The role of subject coordinators has developed since the last inspection. Subject leaders take greater responsibility for evaluating standards and achievement, but do not yet monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning sufficiently. Provision for pupils at early stages of learning English is managed well and results in them making good progress. Identification and support for pupils who are more capable is satisfactorily managed. The headteacher, senior staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. These are accurately reflected in its selfevaluation and improvement plan. The improvement plan is a useful tool to move the school forward because it is based on accurate analysis by the headteacher and focuses on raising standards and is prioritised well. The school maintains good communications with parents. Their views are regularly sought and acted upon. Links with outside agencies are effective and specialist advice is used comprehensively to the benefit of pupils. The governing body is supportive and they have played a major role in improving the school recently. They have specific responsibilities, and are now well informed about the school. Governors have improved their role in evaluating the school's effectiveness. They now play an effective part in strategic and financial

planning. Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, and the shared commitment of staff, governors, pupils and parents, and the considerable improvements made recently, the school's capacity to improve is good.

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
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	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	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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

Dear Pupils Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work and seeing your lessons. These are the things we found that Westgate School does especially well:

- We were impressed with your behaviour and how well you look after one another, which ensures that your school is a safe and happy place.
- There are lots of interesting clubs and activities, which you really enjoy.
- You are able to help make decisions about how to improve the school.
- Everyone is working hard to make Westgate even better than it is now. We know everyone wants to do better and we have suggested some things to help:
- Your teachers need to give you work that is just right for you and not too easy or too hard to help you improve even more.
- We have asked your teachers to make sure that teaching is always good in lessons.

With best wishes Sheila Browning On behalf of the Ofsted inspection team