



Westfield Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119928
LEA Leicestershire
Inspection number 280688
Inspection dates 16 May 2006 to 17 May 2006
Reporting inspector Rajinder Harrison AI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Westfield Road
School category	Community		Hinckley
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Leicestershire LE10 0LT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01455 637437
Number on roll	288	Fax number	01455 618656
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev Michael Taylor
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Paula McSorley

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Westfield Junior is an average size school. The pupils' attainment on entry is below average. Eligibility for free school meals is slightly lower than average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The school has a unit that caters for the needs of 20 pupils who have moderate learning difficulties. Very few pupils are of minority ethnic origin and none is at an early stage of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with the 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 less well than in all the circumstances it could be reasonably expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve and significant improvement is required in relation to leadership and management, and the pupils' achievement and standards.

The school has made inadequate progress since the last inspection. Achievement has declined and standards by the end of Year 6 are significantly below average. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress overall and a significant number underachieve. The achievement of the pupils with moderate learning difficulties is satisfactory. They make sound progress because support for them in the school's special unit is good. While overall care, support and guidance of pupils are satisfactory there are some weaknesses. Some classrooms and exits fail to display the necessary fire safety notices and the school has not assessed carefully enough some of the risks to the children's safety. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The rate of attendance is above average. The pupils want to be at school and want to learn. Relationships are good and pupils behave well. Leadership and management are inadequate. The school's strategic planning lacks a clear focus on driving up standards. The analysis of assessment information has not been rigorous enough to help improve achievement and senior staff have a limited overview of the progress that pupils make. Collection and analysis of relevant data to evaluate the school's performance more accurately have only recently been introduced. Members of the senior management team monitor work in the areas for which they are responsible, but not all of them have had the opportunity to do this rigorously enough. As a result, the school has an over-generous view of the effectiveness of its provision. The leadership team has not demonstrated that it has the capacity to improve. However, through reasonable teaching and a satisfactory curriculum, the school does provide an acceptable standard of education. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, but pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons and marking does not always help them to understand how they might improve their work. Overall, the school fails to provide satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that leadership and management focus on driving up standards through effective strategic planning.
- Ensure that assessment data is used effectively to monitor the school's performance at every level.
- Improve teaching so that all pupils are fully challenged.
- Ensure that all classrooms and exits display the required fire safety notices and a rigorous risk assessment is made of the public right of way that runs through the school's grounds.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are well below average and the pupils' achievement overall is unsatisfactory. Standards have declined since the last inspection in each of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school failed to reach its statutory targets in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2005, most notably in English. It accepts that its strategies to improve the quality of pupils' writing have not had enough impact. The emphasis placed on solving mathematical problems last year helped pupils to make up some lost ground but did not improve standards significantly for this year group. In science, the school has identified that there are some weaknesses in pupils' abilities to apply their knowledge and understanding when interpreting information. Pupils in the special unit make satisfactory progress because they receive good individual support. However, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities in the mainstream classes do not always make the progress that they should. In the current Year 6, standards are well below national expectations. The school's data suggest that about a quarter of this year group are underachieving. There are indications that writing is beginning to improve as a result of developing skills through other subjects, but this approach is too late for the pupils in Year 6. Teachers' expectations are not high enough when setting pupils' targets. Procedures that measure progress accurately have only recently been introduced and not all teachers use this information to support lesson planning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school and display positive attitudes to learning. This is reflected in their above average attendance. They behave well and the atmosphere in lessons is relaxed and friendly with good co-operation between pupils. Pupils freely help and support one another, some acting as 'buddies' to those who may be worried. They are confident in approaching staff when they have a difficulty, problem or require help. They feel safe and take heed of the advice as to how to take care of themselves and each other. They understand the benefits of taking regular exercise and adopting healthy eating habits. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory but there are insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to reflect as they consider their place in the world. They demonstrate appropriate sensitivity and awareness of the lifestyles and religions of other cultures. Pupils consider the needs of those less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for charities. Their cultural development is well supported through a range of creative activities including themed days that help to bring learning alive. Pupils are regularly consulted through the school council on matters such as the playground games they would like. Some help around the school by acting as monitors. However, weak basic skills and too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning by pursuing individual targets mean that they are not prepared well enough for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There have been recent improvements, for example the increased consistency in the way literacy is being taught across the school, that have improved provision. However, these improvements have not yet had a significant impact on raising pupils' achievement. Teachers plan lessons that generally hold pupils' interest satisfactorily, but their expectations are not high enough and pupils are not always fully challenged by the work they are set. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding are not always well enough consolidated and extended. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Behaviour is managed well and pupils respond positively to explicit guidance and instruction. They are less confident when having to work independently. Teaching assistants are deployed efficiently to support pupils who need extra help. This support is particularly effective in the school's special unit. Teachers' marking is generally satisfactory but inconsistent. Work is marked regularly with comments that are often positive. In literacy, pupils receive clear guidance on how to improve their work further. This level of advice is not apparent in all subjects. Assessment procedures are also inconsistent and lack rigour. As a result, teachers' understanding of pupils' achievement and progress is patchy.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Teachers plan a reasonable range of activities to promote learning, but opportunities to challenge pupils and encourage greater independence are sometimes missed in lessons. With the recent introduction of strategies to tackle weaknesses in writing and numeracy, basic skills are now being covered satisfactorily. A good range of out-of-school activities extends pupils' skills and interests, and contributes to their personal development. This is further supported by an effective programme to raise pupils' awareness of the dangers of drugs and how to look after themselves safely. Over half the pupils attend a range of clubs and events that include sporting activities which promote their understanding of living healthy lifestyles. There is a good emphasis on pupils' creative development through art and drama and every pupil has the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. Visits to places of interest support learning in many subjects and the residential visits open to all year groups help pupils to develop their independence and self-confidence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The overall care, guidance and support provided by the school are satisfactory. There are strengths in the quality of pastoral support for pupils. Pupils are successfully encouraged to attend school regularly. All those who work in the school are made aware of child protection procedures. Pupils know that if they have problems or

concerns, staff will deal with them promptly. Pupils in the special unit are supported sensitively, with outside agencies being used effectively to offer expertise when required. There are some weaknesses regarding aspects of care and safety. Some classrooms and exits do not display the necessary emergency fire safety notices and the school has not assessed carefully enough the potential risk to the children's safety posed by the access to the public right of way. Ineffective use is made of assessment information to identify individual targets for pupils so that they take greater responsibility for improving their performance and attaining higher standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management are inadequate and have failed to move the school forward since the last inspection. The headteacher has recently delegated additional responsibilities to senior managers, for example to monitor teaching, but not all staff have had the opportunity to pursue this rigorously enough. More accurate assessment data are now being gathered but no check is made that all teachers use this information appropriately. Pupils' progress is not monitored rigorously enough to check they are working to the expected levels in every class. A significant number of pupils make inadequate progress. The support provided by the school for the pupils is generally managed well but the arrangements for guiding them in their learning and making sure they are safe need improving. The school operates in a calm, orderly atmosphere. There are weaknesses in the way the school checks on its performance and effectiveness. Strategic planning is weak and fails to identify how standards are to be raised and the quality of teaching improved further. There is no systematic review of the strategies that are implemented to check that they are working. Weaknesses are not tackled with a sense of urgency in order to drive improvement. Governors are not fully aware of the school's shortcomings because information has not always been shared with them. They have not held the school to account adequately. The new chair and vice chair of governors acknowledge that these weaknesses need immediate action. There is insufficient evidence that the leaders have the capacity to improve the school. However, because the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory, and the curriculum, care, guidance and support provided are sound, the school provides an acceptable standard of education. Partnerships with other schools and the community are satisfactory, but a number of parents feel their views are not taken seriously and that the school is not led and managed well.

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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>	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?	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	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	4	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	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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?	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?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	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	3	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	4	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 I am writing to tell you all about the visit that I made to your school with my colleagues. If you remember, we came to look at all the work that you were doing and to talk to you and your teachers. We enjoyed meeting you and thought you were very friendly and polite and behaved really well. It was really good of you to take time to talk to us. We found out many interesting things about your school. For example:

You like school and many of you are very good at attending every day.

You like your teachers and other helpers and always try to do your best.

You are kind to each other. You help each other whenever necessary.

Your teachers organise interesting clubs and trips for you to take part in.

You are learning to become fit and healthy.

You think of others less fortunate than yourselves by raising funds for charities. While these are some of the good things, we think there are some things that the school could do even better. We have suggested:

The standards you reach by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science should be higher.

Information on your progress needs to be used to make sure that your learning moves on as quickly as it should.

Your teachers should give you harder work so that you learn even more.

Everything is done to make sure everyone is looked after all the time. Inspectors will be visiting again to see how the school is dealing with these things. We are sure you can do really well if you receive this help. Please remember to always try to do your best and carry on enjoying your school days. Yours faithfully Mrs Harrison Lead inspector