



Westgate Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120691
LEA LINCOLNSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280873
Inspection dates 15 November 2005 to 16 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs. Pat Cox LI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Westgate
School category	Foundation		LN1 3BQ
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01522528308
Number on roll	443	Fax number	01522533241
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Norman MacDonald
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr. Roger Ingram

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large junior school has 443 pupils on roll. The proportions entitled to free school meals; from minority ethnic groups; or who have learning difficulties and disabilities are below the national average. An average proportion have Statements of Special Educational Needs. A lower percentage than nationally leave or join the school other than at the beginning of Year 3. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is usually well above the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The school rightly judges that it provides its pupils with an adequate education, giving satisfactory value for money. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, and therefore the pupils achieve adequately. Some teaching is precise and builds well on what the pupils already know and understand. However, the teachers do not use information about individual pupils' standards sufficiently to plan their lessons. The pupils make adequate progress overall in English, mathematics and science. However, there is little information about standards or progress in other subjects. The pupils are not sufficiently involved in investigative work, or in knowing how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The pupils behave well and have good attitudes to school, which they enjoy. Their attendance is above the national average. They know what a healthy lifestyle is and the school takes good care of their safety and well-being. They and their parents have a reasonably positive view of what is provided. However, the school has not taken suitable steps to improve its performance since the last inspection. There is little understanding of why the quality of teaching has declined. While the school runs smoothly, there is not a long-term strategic direction and planning for the future is weak. There is some monitoring of provision but this is not rigorous enough to identify the areas where improvement is needed. Too little has been done to develop the roles of the subject and year-group leaders, and action to remedy weaknesses has been slow. Governance is unsatisfactory, and has not ensured sufficient improvement since the previous inspection. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, most staff show sufficient enthusiasm and commitment to give satisfactory capacity to improve. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI 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 leadership and management.

What the school should do to improve further

- Involve all leaders in monitoring and evaluating the school's effectiveness, clarifying specific priorities for improvement, planning thoroughly to address them and rigorously pursuing agreed courses of action. - Develop the procedures to assess the progress the pupils make and ensure that staff take full account of all information to provide a consistently high level of challenge for all. - Develop the opportunities in all subjects for the pupils to plan their own work, carry out investigations, evaluate the progress they have made and set targets for further learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. The results of the Year 6 national tests have been somewhat erratic over the years but have been consistently above, and

often well above, the national average in English, mathematics and science. The results in 2003 indicated that the pupils had made satisfactory progress since the tests in Year 2. The results in 2004 showed adequate progress overall. However, there had been better progress in English than in mathematics, and particularly in science, where standards had also been too low in 2003. The most recent tests in 2005 demonstrated an improved picture in mathematics and science, although the progress in English, particularly writing, had declined somewhat. A comparison with the Year 2 tests suggests that these pupils made satisfactory progress overall but the school did not meet its challenging targets in English or mathematics, particularly at the higher level. The pupils presently in Year 6 are again attaining above the expected standards in English and mathematics. Standards in scientific knowledge are above the national average, but the pupils do not do well enough in scientific enquiry. An over-use of worksheets in some subjects restricts the pupils' ability to use and develop their writing across the curriculum. The school has little information about standards in other subjects. However, it is evident that, while standards in religious education have improved recently, those in design and technology remain too low. The pupils who have learning difficulties and those whose first language is not English make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is above the national average. Almost all behave well. The school deals effectively with the rare incidents of bullying. Pupils' social and moral development is good, and relationships between pupils and with adults are positive. Learners' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to reflect on important issues and questions. Pupils learn about their own culture through lessons such as history and religious education but their awareness of other cultures is not as rich as it could be. Learners make a satisfactory contribution to the running of the school. The school council is an effective means for pupils to influence what happens at the school, as when designing the decor for the toilets. Pupils develop sound skills for their future well-being, though, as at the time of the last inspection, there are too few opportunities for them to take initiative in their own learning. They develop a satisfactory understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including the value of exercise and healthy foods. Pupils gain a good awareness of how to keep safe, for example from talks from a policeman about how to deal with strangers.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils are well-managed, staff have good relationships with them and value their efforts. When teaching is at

its best, work is matched well to the range of abilities and is challenging for all, including the more able. However, the tasks are frequently the same or very similar for all pupils, so the more able are not challenged sufficiently and do not achieve all they can. Teachers share with pupils what they are to learn in a lesson and identify what they have done well. Nevertheless, the marking of work is very variable and often too brief to identify exactly what pupils have to do to improve. Staff miss many opportunities to use a range of strategies to involve them directly in all parts of the lesson, and as a result many pupils sit and listen passively. The way in which staff check and monitor pupils' progress is inadequate. The school has been slow to develop effective procedures that identify the exact progress made by all pupils. The information available has not been analysed and used well enough to set more challenging targets for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. There is a satisfactory programme of personal, social and health education and good use is made of visits and visitors to bring learning to life. The provision for pupils who have learning difficulties is sound and enables them to take a full part in activities. There has not been a rigorous audit of teaching time to ascertain whether it is used effectively. There are relatively few planned activities that allow pupils to solve problems and carry out investigations and experiments. Too much lesson time is allocated to the pupils carrying out administration tasks and too little to some subjects like art, and design and technology, narrowing the curriculum. The school is bringing in a range of expertise to cover the teachers' planning and assessment time, but the quality is variable and sometimes inadequate. While staff are keen to develop awareness of healthy lifestyles they miss many opportunities to influence the choice of snacks.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for its pupils. This is a caring school that successfully looks after the physical and mental well-being of its pupils. It gives due regard to the safety of all. Child protection, and health and safety procedures are clear and staff provide the pastoral support that individual pupils need. Pupils feel that school provides a safe environment for them. Most, but not all, agree that there is an adult they can confide in. There are suitable arrangements to ensure the security of the site. The school's arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are not rigorous enough to enable teachers to give them sufficiently clear guidance about how they might improve further. Teachers give pupils general advice, such as whether or not they have learned what was expected but pupils do not have a sufficiently clear view about what to do next to extend their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management are inadequate. The school runs soundly on a day-to-day basis but there is not a clear long-term strategic view. Self-evaluation systems are fragmented and inefficient, so there is an over-optimistic view of the school's effectiveness. There is a duplication of effort and a lack of clarity about leadership and management roles. It is not clear where responsibility lies for monitoring and bringing about improvements. Year-group and subject leaders are eager to develop their areas and contribute to school improvement, but have had insufficient guidance to develop their roles; an issue at the time of the previous inspection. Consequently, many are frustrated. Planning for school improvement is weak. Strategies for identifying priorities for development are ineffective. The school does not examine itself with sufficient rigour to identify and tackle urgently areas where improvement is needed, for example, the long-standing decline in science. While test results in English, mathematics and science give an adequate view of standards, information about achievement and teaching in other subjects is scarce. Although some teaching is monitored, strategies for following up areas for improvement are not consistent and there is little understanding of why the quality of teaching has declined since the previous inspection. The school is aware that the improvement plan itself is poor but there is little evidence of moves to improve it. Many initiatives have been introduced, but are rarely carried through effectively and therefore have little impact. Governance is unsatisfactory; governors have an adequate view of standards but have not ensured that there has been sufficient progress since the previous inspection.

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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	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	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	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	2	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	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?	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	3	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

We enjoyed our visit to your school very much and would like to thank you for the way you made us feel so welcome while we were with you. I would like to tell you something about what we thought of your school. We think that you behave well, are good at taking responsibility and mostly enjoy your work. You read and write well and are good at mathematics, although we feel that you need to be more involved in planning your own science work. Your teachers look after you well, but we agree with some of you that there are times when lessons could be more interesting. It would help if you were given more chance to discuss the topic, or to write what you had learned rather than filling in worksheets. We also thought that you need to spend more time doing subjects like art, and design and technology. Your teachers tell you what you're going to learn in lessons and mark your work to tell you whether you've managed it. But they could involve you more in knowing how to make your work better. This would make it easier for them to make sure that the work was exactly right for each of you. Thank you once again for the polite and friendly way you looked after us; it was a pleasure to meet you. I would like to wish you all the best for the future.