



# Westlands Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 124119  
**LEA** Staffordshire  
**Inspection number** 281637  
**Inspection dates** 23 November 2005 to 24 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Tony Dobell RISP

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Ostend Place
<b>School category</b>	Community		Westlands
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Newcastle, Staffordshire ST5 2QY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 296130
<b>Number on roll</b>	184	<b>Fax number</b>	01782 296 131
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Martin Wright
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 December 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Stephen Stirland

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small primary school serves a mixed socio-economic area to the south west of Newcastle. Children join the Reception class with different levels of knowledge, understanding and skills but, when the intake is taken together, attainment on entry is broadly at the level expected at this age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and about eight per cent are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Five per cent of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual time is slightly above average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school giving satisfactory value for money. The school judges its effectiveness accurately overall but sometimes too positively. Pupils make sound progress overall during their time in the school and good progress in Years 1 and 2. The headteacher and staff are determined to raise achievement and to improve standards.

Pupils' personal development is good as is the quality of the curriculum. Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. A number of useful initiatives have been introduced which have not yet had time to have a significant impact on standards and achievement. Standards need to be raised in Years 3 to 6 where they are not improving at the same rate as in Years 1 and 2, particularly in science. Information from assessment is not used with sufficient rigour or systematically enough to help pupils to make better progress. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory although slow at times because of staffing changes. Given the school's track record and recent developments, the school has the necessary capacity to make further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Take steps to raise standards in Years 3 to 6, and to improve pupils' progress in science.
- Use information from assessments more systematically to help pupils to improve their work.
- Increase the pace of change so that improvements are put into place more quickly.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and good in Years 1 and 2. Building satisfactorily on their broadly average attainment on entry, children reach the expected standards by the end of the Reception year. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2, particularly in reading. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2005, standards in the school improved overall on those attained in 2004. The results of pupils in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were broadly in line with the national average in writing and mathematics and significantly above the national average in reading.

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Years 3 to 6, although progress in science was unsatisfactory in 2005. Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2005 were lower than those attained in 2004. In 2004, the results in the national tests were average in mathematics and science and significantly above average in English. However, about one quarter of the pupils in Year 6 in 2005 had learning difficulties and continuity of teaching for the class had been disrupted as they moved up from Year 3 to Year 6. Further, movement of pupils in and out of the school adversely

affected the results. There was some improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in mathematics in 2005, but standards in science in particular worsened.

Throughout the school, standards in information and communication technology exceed expectations, as do pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve at the same rate as other pupils, as do those with English as an additional language.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good overall. Moral and social development are strengths. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong and support each other naturally and sensitively. They contribute well to the local and wider community, for example, by supporting charities and running stalls in school fetes. Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. Some opportunities for reflection are missed, other than those provided in assemblies. Pupils have a good understanding of other faiths, but their appreciation of other aspects of life in a multicultural society is less developed.

Behaviour is outstanding throughout the school and relationships at all levels are very good. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and they would change very little. They have a very clear understanding of the need to exercise regularly and to eat healthy food. They enjoy responsibility and are enthusiastic about the opportunities provided, for example, for older pupils to be monitors in the infant playground. Pupils make good progress in developing the skills necessary for their future economic well-being. Attendance is satisfactory although adversely affected by holidays taken during term time, which the school tries hard to discourage.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress. Frequent changes of staff in Years 3 to 6, now resolved, mean that the good teaching in Years 1 and 2 has not consistently been built on in later year groups.

The good teaching contains interesting learning activities which enthuse pupils, so that they work with sustained concentration. Where teaching is good, careful planning ensures that all pupils participate in learning and achieve well. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, graded work for pupils at different stages of learning ensured that all could make progress from their existing levels of understanding. One pupil remarked that the lesson had been 'fun, even though it was maths'. Similarly, in a good science lesson in Year 1, pupils joined discussions eagerly and settled quickly to independent work because their interest was thoroughly engaged by the activity.

Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils are less engaged and work is less skilfully targeted to enable all pupils to learn effectively.

Throughout the school, excellent relationships in lessons support pupils' learning. In the Reception class, a satisfactory range of activities and accurate assessment result in sound achievement. Assessment of pupils' progress has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection, but information from assessments is still not used systematically or rigorously enough to promote good rather than satisfactory progress, particularly in science. Teaching assistants competently support pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities so that they learn as well as others in their classes.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's curriculum is of good quality and meets all requirements. A number of features broaden pupils' learning. Languages are well established and pupils have opportunities to study French, German and Spanish. Information and communication technology is also well established and access to good facilities means that pupils' competence is above expectations. Pupils also have good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. However, a lack of emphasis on investigative work in science has adversely affected progress in recent years in Years 3 to 6.

Personal, health and social education and citizenship are planned well and make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the residential week for Year 6, which also contributes effectively to personal development. A range of visits and visitors help to make learning relevant. A good range of activities is well attended and contributes well to learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Pupils feel safe and secure in the school and appreciate the lack of bullying. Parents are pleased that rare instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. Behaviour management is outstanding. There are sound procedures for child protection and parents' questionnaires make it clear that they are happy with the school's provision for care and welfare.

Pupils with particular difficulties are looked after well and there are good links with specialist agencies if their support is needed. Pupils' progress is now tracked and, when progress is not as expected, action is taken to help pupils. However, not all pupils understand how well they are progressing and advice to pupils on how to improve their work is inconsistent and is not effective in raising the standards which pupils reach at the end of Year 6.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving and have some good features. The headteacher has led the school successfully through a turbulent period when the pace of change was slow because of many staff changes. However, the situation is now more settled and the headteacher, well supported by the deputy and all adults in the school, is now focused on raising standards and improving achievement based on accurate evaluation of the school's effectiveness.

Some good initiatives have been introduced, for example, in the curriculum, but they have not yet been in place for long enough to improve achievement significantly, for example by raising standards in science. An interesting initiative is the newly introduced programme of planning for school improvement. This is helping to give a sharper focus on the action necessary to raise standards. Other initiatives include the development of a private nursery and before and after school clubs, which have been much appreciated by parents.

There is now a good unity of purpose among all adults in the school who understand that greater rigour and consistency are needed to improve the achievement of all pupils. The school has a clear commitment to equality of opportunity and all pupils have full access to all that the school offers and it satisfactorily consults pupils and their parents.

The governing body has improved well since the last inspection and fulfils its responsibilities well. It has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and potential for development and is effective when asking the school to explain and justify priorities.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's finances, manage its resources effectively, and have a good appreciation of the principles of best value.

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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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	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

<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	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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>	3	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>	3	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>	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

<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**

Westlands Primary School Ostend Place Westlands Newcastle-under-Lyme Staffordshire ST5 2QY

25 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us into your school and for being so friendly and polite to us. Thank you too for talking to us about your work and your life in the school.

These are the things that your school does well

- Your personal development is good because you enjoy responsibility and care for each other well.
- You make sound progress but could reach higher standards, especially in science.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you thoroughly enjoy your learning.
- Many of your lessons are interesting so that you work hard and are keen to join in.
- You know the importance of exercise and eating healthy food.
- You feel safe and secure in the school.
- Your headteacher and all adults in the school are keen to improve the school further.

We think that three things would improve the school further

- Improving standards, especially in science.
- Helping you to make better progress by measuring your progress more carefully.
- Introducing improvements more quickly.

We very much enjoyed our two days in your school and wish you well for the future.

Best wishes

Mr A J Dobell Lead inspector