



Westfield Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117270
Local Authority HERTFORDSHIRE
Inspection number 290778
Inspection dates 13–14 November 2006
Reporting inspector Paul Missin

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Westfield Road
School category	Community		Hoddesdon
Age range of pupils	4–11		Hertfordshire EN11 8RA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01992 465739
Number on roll (school)	151	Fax number	01992 447548
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Paul Stephens
		Headteacher	Mrs Diane Ashmore
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is smaller than most primary schools. Most children benefit from pre-school provision and there is a separately funded playgroup on site. Almost all pupils have White British heritage and a small number who have very recently arrived from Eastern Europe are at an early stage of learning English. There is a small proportion from Traveller communities. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those eligible for free school meals is average. The school has recently been the subject of reorganisation proposals. There has been high staff turnover in the last two years. The headteacher was appointed in January 2005. The school has the Investors in People award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Westfield is an effective and improving school which provides good value for money. Since her appointment, the headteacher has introduced several improvements which have secured the support of most parents. One wrote, 'Since the headteacher was appointed, I have witnessed the school progress and move forward in so many positive ways.' This has been achieved against a background of potential difficulties including possible closure as a result of reorganisation and significant changes in staffing and leadership. The improvements have resulted from the headteacher's vision and energy. Her good leadership gives the school a clear vision for its future development which is securely centred on raising standards. A very effective partnership has been established with the acting deputy headteacher which enhances the school's management. Several of the subject coordinators are new to their roles but they are enthusiastic and are developing their roles well.

An important strength of the school is the care which is consistently shown for all pupils. This impacts positively on their personal development. One parent wrote, 'Staff are kind and friendly and they look to help all children in all aspects of their work. My child feels both valued and listened to.' Pupils behave very well and show very good attitudes to their work. They respond well to the challenge provided by the good curriculum and enjoy the visits which enliven their lessons.

Good progress has been made in improving standards since the last inspection, especially in the Reception class and in Years 3 to 6. In Reception, standards are above average and achievement is good as a result of good teaching. Learning is carefully planned and interesting. Standards in Year 6 have been rising recently and in 2006 were above average overall. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6 as a result of good teaching, particularly in Year 6, and effective additional support for individual pupils. Standards in Year 2 are broadly average, which represents an improvement since last year. In Years 1 and 2, there is too much variation in the quality of teaching, especially in Year 1, and as a result pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Across the school, standards in writing are lower than those in other subjects. The school has rightly identified this as a priority and is devising an improvement plan.

A good amount of data about pupils' achievements is collected and used to set them useful learning targets. However, data are not yet used sufficiently to monitor the progress made by different groups of pupils, or to give a clear enough view of the transition between the different phases of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the quality of teaching, particularly in Years 1 and 2, to match the best.
- Use assessment data more effectively to monitor the progress of groups of pupils and the progress of pupils as they move between the different phases of the school.
- Raise standards in writing by devising and implementing a detailed action plan.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good overall. From an average level when they first enter the school, most reach above average standards by the time they leave. Children in the Reception class make good progress in all areas of learning to reach above average standards by the time they begin Year 1. Standards in Year 2 have until recently been below average, but are beginning to rise and in the current Year 2 are broadly average. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are also rising. The upward trend evident in 2005 has been continued into 2006, when standards were well above average in science, above average in mathematics but average in English. Targets for Year 6 are suitably challenging. Achievement is good in the Reception class and in Years 3 to 6. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 because of too much variation in the quality of teaching. Pupils from Traveller communities are well integrated and make similar progress to their peers. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress towards their individual learning targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Most pupils enjoy coming to school, and attendance is broadly average. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The provision for their moral and social development is very good, while for their spiritual and cultural development it is satisfactory. Pupils learn to cooperate and work as a team through activities, clubs and community events. As a result, they leave the school as mature and sensible pupils, well adjusted for their next stage of learning.

Pupils demonstrate responsibility through an effective school council which is well regarded by other pupils and represents their views. Pupils of all ages understand how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and can explain the benefits of exercise and good diet. They are well informed about road safety and the dangers of talking to strangers. Fund raising at school fairs and charity events contribute to the personal qualities pupils will use in their future working roles.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching is good in Reception, Year 2 and in Years 3 to 6. Here teachers manage pupils very well and consistently encourage very good attitudes and behaviour. Lesson planning is detailed and focuses well on what pupils are being expected to learn. Teachers use questioning very effectively to extend and assess what pupils know. Children in Reception enjoy a good range of interesting

practical tasks which allow them to make choices. Where teaching is less successful, particularly in Year 1, the pace is sometimes slow and expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Overall, teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties is good. Pupils' learning benefits from being set useful targets in reading, writing and mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It gives appropriate emphasis to the development of literacy and numeracy, although provision in writing is not yet fully effective. Pupils use computers regularly and develop good skills in information and communication technology. There is a well planned programme for pupils who need additional support with basic skills. This is helping to raise standards, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides good opportunities for children to develop all areas of learning, including independence and initiative. The range of extra-curricular activities is good and clever use is made of visits and visitors to enliven the curriculum. Several pupils said how pleased they were with this aspect of the school's work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, support and guidance are good. Child protection and safety requirements are met. Any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with quickly and effectively. The support for pupils with learning difficulties is good. The support for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory and is being strengthened, especially for the newly arrived pupils from Eastern Europe. Staff know the circumstances of the pupils well. Pupils' educational, social and emotional needs are identified well and good quality support is provided.

Pupils are supported well by teachers' regular assessment of their work and the setting of improvement targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The school has been through a period of uncertainty which has limited its capacity to improve. However, since the appointment of the current headteacher, planning for improvement has been rigorous. Initiatives have led to higher standards in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6, but have been slower to impact on Years 1 and 2. Overall progress since the last inspection is good. The headteacher, acting deputy headteacher and staff team provide a secure platform for further improvement. There is shared commitment to meeting pupils' needs and ensuring equality of opportunity.

The school has an accurate view of its performance. The school's work is regularly monitored and evaluated and test results are used well to identify where action is

needed to eliminate underachievement. The systems for checking the work of teaching staff focus well on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. However, data from regular assessments are not used sufficiently to give a clear view of the progress that pupils are making across all phases of the school, especially from Reception to Year 1, or the progress being made by different groups of pupils.

Governors are well informed, monitor the school's work closely and offer a good balance of support and challenge. They are actively involved in establishing the school's strategic direction. The views of all members of the school community are sought and taken into account. Finances are targeted carefully to meet the school's objectives.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

15 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Westfield Community Primary School, Westfield Road, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, EN11 8RA

Thank you for making us so welcome when my colleague and I visited your school recently to see how well you were doing.

You told us how much you enjoy coming to school and about some of the exciting places you visit. Some of you are very pleased about the opportunities which you have to take responsibility around the school, such as being school councillors, monitors on the playground or waiters in the dining hall. We were impressed by the real sense of being part of a school community which is shared by children and adults as well. You behaved very well and were very polite to us when we went around the school.

Pupils in Year 6 achieve well, particularly in their science work, but across the school, standards in writing could be better. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 should continue to work hard with their teachers so that they all do as well as they can. The school collects a lot of information about what you can do but needs to have a clearer view of what different groups are doing and to track the progress that you make as you move between different classes in the school.

Your parents thought that the school was led and managed well. We agree. Your headteacher has a clear view of how the school should develop and all staff work together well as a team. We think that your school will continue to get even better.

We wish you well in the future.

Paul Missin

Lead inspector