

Weston Rhyn Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123403
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	292648
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Rajinder Harrison

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Hughes
Headteacher	Richard Hines
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2002
School address	Weston Rhyn Oswestry SY10 7SR
Telephone number	01691 773429
Fax number	01691 774692

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average but less than the average number have a statement of special educational need. The school was given designated extended school status in March 2006 and offers private pre-school provision and out of school care for up to 24 children aged from 3 to 14 years. In addition, it hosts adult learning courses and family learning and support programmes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. Pupils' personal development is good, as are the school's care, guidance and support arrangements. Pupils enjoy school, form very good relationships and trust the adults that work with them. Parents are very positive about the school and confident that if problems arise these are dealt with promptly. The school is a happy place to be in and pupils feel safe and valued.

Children start in the Nursery class with knowledge and skills that are generally below the levels expected at this age. Good teaching, incorporating well constructed activities and experiences, results in children achieving well and most reach the expected levels at the end of their Reception Year. This good teaching and learning prevails throughout the school. Coupled with good procedures to check pupils' progress, it results in all pupils achieving well. However, there are occasions when teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough, especially in enabling pupils to take greater responsibility for their own learning so that they improve their performance. In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average. In Year 6, pupils are working at standards that are broadly average in mathematics and science and a little above average in English. Good support for individuals ensures that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve as well as their classmates. A good curriculum and a very wide range of additional activities and experiences enhance learning well, but pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn about and appreciate the richness and diversity of British society.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's inspirational leadership promotes good teamwork amongst all staff. There is a strong focus on helping pupils achieve the best that they can so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The right actions have been taken to ensure that weaknesses previously identified in mathematics have been addressed, as well as checking, through very careful tracking, that, by the end of Year 6, boys' attainment is similar to that of the girls. Governors are very supportive, kept well informed about school matters and astute in managing finances. However,, their procedures to check and evaluate the school's performance are not rigorous enough in checking how improvements are progressing or what impact they are having on raising standards. The school knows itself well and is accurate in its self-assessment. The staff and governors have the best interests of the pupils at heart. The quality of care and education is good and standards have improved since 2006. The capacity to make further improvements is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise expectations of what pupils can do, particularly in taking greater responsibility for their own learning.
- Ensure that governors check the work of the school and its performance more rigorously.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to gain a greater understanding of the multicultural nature of British society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start in the Nursery with levels of skills and knowledge that are generally lower than expected at this age. Their literacy and numeracy skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world are particularly weak. Knowing this, staff assess individual needs carefully and

modify activities accordingly so that all children can take part and achieve well. Through good teaching, most generally reach all the early learning goals by the end of their Reception Year.

In the national assessments in 2006, pupils in Year 2 attained above average results in reading and writing and below average results in mathematics. In these same national tests in 2006, pupils in Year 6 attained well above the national average in English, well below in mathematics and above average in science. However, with improved provision in mathematics, more rigorous systems for checking pupils' progress and improvements in teaching, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, now achieve well throughout Years 1 to 6. They are working at standards that are now average overall and a little better in English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school, arriving early and eager to learn. With rigorous checks in place, pupils' attendance is now satisfactory. Behaviour is good. Pupils work and play together sensibly, with 'playground friends' making sure younger ones are safe and have friends to play with. Pupils willingly accept responsibility and are keen to do more. They proudly welcome visitors 'into our school family'.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's strong, caring ethos engenders in pupils respect and consideration of others. Pupils influence decision making through the school council, for example, in redesigning quiet play areas and choosing dramatic colour schemes. Recycling projects indicate pupils' good awareness of environmental issues. Geography lessons, religious celebrations and links with pupils in Kenya help them appreciate cultures and traditions beyond Britain, but they have insufficient awareness of the cultural diversity in Britain. Choosing healthy options for lunch, decrying the dangers of drugs and alcohol and high attendance at the numerous fitness and exercise clubs indicate pupils' good awareness of living healthy lifestyles. Through their involvement in village events and from many visits and visitors, they gain a good understanding of life beyond the school. The good progress pupils make in their basic skills and their good personal development prepare pupils well for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan work that is generally matched well to pupils' needs and lessons are lively. Teachers pose challenging questions and encourage pupils to discuss things with each other. The increased emphasis on practical activities, for example, in mathematics, where pupils explore problems and discover for themselves, is helping pupils understand more clearly what they are learning. This has resulted in improved standards this year. This 'hands on approach' extends to the effective use of interactive whiteboards where pupils can see, for example, how problems should be set out for them to be solved one step at a time. Very good use is made of support staff who make sure all pupils participate fully so they achieve well. Because relationships are good, pupils are confident in asking for help if they need it, but occasionally they rely too much on staff rather than trying for themselves. Rigorous assessment and tracking procedures help teachers identify pupils who need additional support through, for example, homework and 'maths' clubs, so that they do not fall behind. The system of setting pupils individual targets is proving effective in encouraging pupils to achieve these so they make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Recognising that many pupils, particularly the boys, learn most effectively through practical activities, the school has improved the curriculum, not only in mathematics but other subjects; hence, pupils' current good achievement. Topics that combine work in design and technology and science, for example, help pupils see how learning in one subject impacts on work elsewhere. Opportunities for pupils to use computers have improved and pupils' literacy skills are promoted more through other subjects. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is good, allowing them to participate fully. Children in the Foundation Stage have many exciting activities encouraging them to try new things. Particularly good are the opportunities for them to develop their literacy and numeracy skills and to explore the world in which they work and play.

A well structured programme for personal, social and health education supports pupils' good personal development. A very good range of additional activities, including music, crafts and sport, enhances pupils' learning and provides them with an insight into the world of work and leisure.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The arrangements for pupils' safety and child protection are secure, as are the required safeguarding procedures. Pupils feel they are listened to, and trusting relationships give pupils the confidence to approach any member of staff if they have a problem or feel unhappy. Parents speak very highly of the teachers and know they are welcome in school if they have any concerns regarding their child's learning at school or at home.

The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good. Teachers set appropriately challenging targets to help pupils progress and identify early those who might be falling behind or need specific help. Good use is made of external agencies where necessary. Pupils have individual targets and a good number know them. However, pupils are not involved enough in setting their own targets or evaluating their achievements so that they know exactly what they have to do to improve their work. Marking is also inconsistent, although there is good practice in some classes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has a clear vision of how the school should be. High emphasis is placed on promoting pupils' good personal development and this has already had a marked impact on raising achievement. Through thorough review of provision and performance, he knows what needs to be done to make improvements. Effective teamwork involving all staff has allowed the school to produce a clear and comprehensive improvement plan to address the weaknesses, for example, in pupils' numeracy skills, so that standards have improved since the 2006 national tests. Strategies that encourage boys to achieve more have been effective. Regular evaluation of teaching and good staff training has led to improvements in learning. Rigorous monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress has helped to identify pupils who need additional support so that they achieve well.

Governance is good and the issues identified in the previous inspection have been fully addressed. Governors are very supportive of the school and make regular visits. They are starting to ask searching questions regarding the school's performance but they are not rigorous enough in checking how improvements are progressing or the impact they are having on raising achievement.

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Annex A

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	3
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	2
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.

Annex A**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

14 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Weston Rhyn Primary School, Weston Rhyn, SY10 7SR

I am writing to tell you what we found out when we came to your school recently to look at the work you do and to talk to your teachers. It was lovely meeting you. Thank you for making us feel part of your 'school family' and for being so friendly and polite. I am sorry we could not spend longer in your lessons but what we saw was good. I enjoyed chatting to you over lunch and it was good to see so many of you eating healthy things like fruit and salad. I particularly loved the Nursery class's assembly. It was just magic watching the older classes join in with the action songs.

- Yours is a good school. These are the things we particularly liked:
- You enjoy school, try hard and make good progress. You are doing so much better in numeracy than last year.
- Your work has improved because the teaching is good.
- The work planned in all the subjects is good and the additional clubs, the interesting visitors and visits you have are very good.
- The school takes good care of you. The adults who work with you listen to you and help you if you have problems.
- Your behaviour is good and you know so much about staying fit and healthy.
- The headteacher has worked hard to make sure everyone does their best to help you learn and grow up as really sensible young people.

These are things we have asked the school to do to become even better:

- Teachers should expect more from you, especially in setting your own targets and checking your own work, so you know what to do to improve.
- The governors should check if the improvements they are making are helping you to do even better in your work.
- You should have even more opportunities to learn about all the different people from other parts of the world who live in this country

There are things you could do to help, too. For example, you could make sure you know your targets and work hard to achieve them.

It is lovely that you enjoy school so much and I hope that you continue to do well.

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison Lead inspector