

# Morecambe and Heysham Westgate Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119347
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	301753
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Straw

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	485
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Joyce Roach
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Stephen Robinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	Langridge Way Westgate Morecambe Lancashire LA4 4XF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01524 832747
<b>Fax number</b>	01524 400498

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Westgate is more than double the size of most primary schools. The school is situated in an area of mixed housing with some social deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to claim a free school meal is well above average. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds and very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average but the number of pupils with statements of special educational need is above average. Children's skills when they enter Reception are below those usually expected for their ages in all areas of learning.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Westgate Primary school provides a good quality of education with some outstanding features. The school is a vibrant community, which lives up to its mission statement of 'caring, sharing and aiming high'. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school because of the different activities that teachers plan for them and the way in which the teachers all give extra help if they need it. Most pupils behave well and all are friendly and polite to each other and to adults. The pupils' understanding of how to keep safe and live a healthy lifestyle is outstanding. The skills and confidence that they develop ensure that they are well prepared for their next stage of education and for the future. Parents are overwhelmingly positive in their praise, summed up by one parent who wrote, 'Westgate School is wonderful'. Parents praise the equal focus on developing children's emotional well-being as well as their academic achievements.

The quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good. The Foundation Stage is well organised with good systems to support children's personal development. Children learn to play well with each other and form good relationships. It is well resourced and offers an imaginative curriculum to support independent learning.

Children make good progress through the Foundation Stage and achieve well.

Standards are above average in the national tests at the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve very well. Achievement is very good in mathematics and science and good in English. Standards are average in national tests at the end of Year 2 but pupils achieve well from their below average starting point. There has been a steady improvement in writing across the school because the school has made this a focus for improvement. Girls achieve better results than boys in Years 1 and 2. The school has identified this and is addressing it well through a number of strategies.

Teaching and learning are good and sometimes outstanding. Enthusiastic teachers deliver exciting and creative lessons, which capture the imagination of pupils so that they are interested and engaged. Marking, however, is inconsistent in ensuring that pupils know exactly what to do to improve.

The excellent curriculum shines out from the brilliant displays in every area of the school. Pupils enjoy a wonderful range of opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom as well as having a good focus on developing key skills. The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Emotional and spiritual development is a priority as well as academic development.

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The headteacher is an outstanding leader who fosters the potential of all teachers to develop leadership qualities and skills. There is a shared vision and a strong sense of teamwork. This is an innovative school, which never stands still. The governors provide strong support and keep a balance between offering support to the school as well as challenging it to do even better. All issues from the last inspection have been addressed effectively and the school has continued to develop and improve. Because of the shrewd management of finances and the very good outcomes achieved, the school gives good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure consistency in the way the school makes pupils aware of how they can improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. Standards have been consistently above average at the end of Year 6 for several years. When children start school in Reception, their skills are below those expected for their ages. They make good progress so that, by the end of the year, most reach the early learning goals set for them.

In national tests at the end of Year 2, standards are average and most pupils achieve well. In 2006, girls achieved better than girls nationally and better than boys. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels is broadly average; although, fewer more able boys reach the higher levels in writing. The school is well aware of this and has a good range of measures in place to address it.

In the 2006 tests at the end of Year 6, standards were above average overall and significantly above average in mathematics and science. All pupils achieve well and significantly better than might be expected in science and mathematics. Progress in English is good but slower than in the other core subjects. There is little difference in the attainment of boys and girls at this stage. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of the support they receive from dedicated and well-trained teaching assistants. Higher attaining pupils receive extra challenge to ensure that they reach the higher levels.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The vast majority of pupils are keen to learn and participate fully and confidently in lessons. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attitudes and good behaviour in lessons and at break-times. Pupils relate well to each other and to staff. This is because there is a strong bond of mutual respect that is reflected in pupils' courteous and cooperative relationships. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils eagerly grasp the opportunities for them to reflect on their learning and their own actions. They feel very secure in school, are exceptionally well aware of how to stay safe and know how to seek help if needed. The impact of a school council and pupil elections help pupils to gain an understanding of citizenship. Pupils are knowledgeable about healthy lifestyles, choose healthy eating options and participate enthusiastically in sporting activities. The good opportunities they have to work independently and collaboratively in lessons and in projects, such as charity fund-raising, cement relationships and prepare them well for transition to secondary school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and occasionally outstanding. Teachers plan very well using assessment of pupils' progress effectively. Creative lessons have pace and interest so that pupils become confident and committed, showing enthusiasm for their work. Pupils are given opportunities to work individually and in groups to good effect. Teaching is enhanced by the welcoming, well-resourced classrooms, which are supportive of learning. The teaching staff foster very good working relationships with and between pupils, which ensures pupils' good behaviour and good attitudes to work. The school's team of skilled support staff works very effectively as part of the teaching team in helping all pupils do their best. The school has a

strength in meeting the needs of pupils who may be experiencing learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Subjects are often well linked, for example, Year 1 pupils, whilst acting out the story of the Little Red Hen, also enjoyed writing the story as well as making the bread for Little Red Hen to eat. Classroom practice is uniformly good, but there is a lack of consistency in marking so that pupils do not always know precisely what to do to improve their own work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is outstanding. The rich and varied curriculum is a key factor in pupils' achievement and personal well-being. Exciting and creative displays showing this broad curriculum are an outstanding feature throughout the whole school. The school's focus on English, mathematics and science is good, but teachers also provide plenty of scope for all other subjects, including information and communication technology (ICT) and French. The school is recognised for its dance group who have performed in several venues around the North West. Pupils benefit from the exciting activities they experience through very good links with the wider community, who influence and support the enrichment of the curriculum. The Reception children work in well-planned classroom areas that provide coverage of all areas of learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Outstanding systems to support and care for pupils are key strengths of the school. The warmth and support provided by a conscientious pastoral team are excellent. A parental comment, 'The school always goes the extra mile', is a fine summary of the school's approach. For example, the school promotes the safety of pupils through several initiatives, such as the 'Walking Bus' and their emotional development through teaching specific programmes. The tracking of pupils' personal and academic progress is very good. It identifies pupils in need of additional support and, as a result, all groups of pupils achieve to their potential. Seeing pupils with physical disabilities enjoying and enthusiastically taking part in sporting lessons is proof of the school's commitment to 'school being a fun place to enjoy'. All aspects of child protection, safe recruitment of staff, risk assessment, health and safety meet requirements.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good throughout the school and the leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. In July 2006, nearly all the members of the senior leadership team left, mainly as a result of promotions, and the dynamic new team of senior leaders has seamlessly taken over and carried the school forward. Subject co-ordinators lead well in their different areas and continually seek to develop and improve provision for pupils. Management decisions are driven at all times by the needs of the pupils and a great deal of creative thinking goes into making the best uses of the school's resources. Leaders ensure that pupils are very well cared for, as well as setting high expectations for their academic achievement. Their thorough and accurate self-evaluation ensures that planning is directed to raising standards and providing a nurturing environment in which pupils can grow and thrive. Care is taken to ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to learn and enjoy school. Parents and children are fully consulted and involved through questionnaires and regular meetings. Governance is good. The

governors are very well informed about all aspects of school life and discharge their responsibilities very efficiently. Financial management is sound and benefits from specific expertise on the governing body. There is good capacity to improve, founded on good improvement since the last inspection.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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

9 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Morecambe and Heysham Westgate Primary School, Morecambe, Lancashire, LA4 4XF.

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited you in school last week. We really enjoyed meeting you, seeing you at work and hearing your opinions about the many things you enjoy in school.

These are the things we really liked about your school:

- the way in which it is obvious that you all enjoy school and work hard most of the time
- you are friendly and polite
- the teachers teach good lessons, which make learning enjoyable and fun
- school takes excellent care of you and makes sure you are all safe and happy: there is really good support for anyone who needs a bit of extra help
- all the ways in which you are developing good habits such as eating healthy food and keeping fit with lots of different sports
- the wonderful displays all round school and the exciting activities you enjoy outside lessons
- we think all the teachers are doing a good job in making sure the school encourages you to achieve as well as you can.

Yours is a very good school that is always trying to improve. We have asked the teachers to make sure that when they mark your work you know exactly what you need to do to make it better. You can play your part by always trying your best and concentrating really well in lessons.

The inspection team wishes you well and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Straw, Sue Sharkey and Gordon Alston

(Inspectors)