

# Westoning Lower School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109490
<b>Local Authority</b>	BEDFORDSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310004
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Manuel

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>	First
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	132
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Bryson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jean Peacock
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 May 2002
<b>School address</b>	High Street Westoning Bedford Bedfordshire MK45 5JH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01525712994
<b>Fax number</b>	01525715664

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<b>Age group</b>	4–9
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are wide ranging but broadly average overall. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds and there are very few minority ethnic pupils. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The inspection confirms the view of staff and governors that this is a good school. It has some outstanding features. The headteacher has established a strongly committed staff team who work together well to provide the highest levels of care and support for pupils. Staff have established an inspiring curriculum with a wide range of interesting activities. These activities not only create meaningful links between subjects but also teach pupils important life skills, such as independence, confidence and respect for each other. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons immensely and achieve well in their learning, due to the good teaching. Parents appreciate the efforts made by the school to provide their children with a good education.

Attainment on entry to the school covers the full range and, overall, is broadly as expected of four-year-olds. Children make good progress in the Reception class and by the time they enter Year 1 most have attained all the levels expected at this age and about a third have exceeded them. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. They achieve well. By the end of Year 2, they consistently reach standards in reading and writing that are well above average. In mathematics, standards are not quite as high but are above average. In Years 3 and 4 good achievement is maintained and, by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, the standards they reach remain well above average in English and above average in mathematics. The school has well considered plans to raise standards in mathematics to the same level as in English.

Teachers plan lessons well to meet the full range of needs and pupils agree that lessons are often exciting. Good use is made of computers to support learning in all subjects. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent as they work together in lessons sharing ideas. Targets for pupils are not yet sufficiently challenging to act as a lever for raising achievement in mathematics. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Through their 'Values Education' programme, pupils are prepared very well for their future well-being. Pupils are able to reflect on important issues and make very good contributions to the school community, the local community and the world beyond. Pupils feel safe and know how to lead healthy lives.

The leadership and management of the school are good. Governors provide good support to staff and are fully involved in the school's development. Finances are managed well. The school provides good value for money and has good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The careful induction of children to Reception ensures that most of them settle quickly. Good liaison takes place with pre-school groups and families to share information for the benefit of the children. Good use is made of the resources in both the indoor and outdoor areas. The teacher and helpers provide a wide range of stimulating activities, which ensure that children enjoy the early stages of learning. They learn how to work and play together and develop good levels of self-confidence. Early assessment takes place to identify each child's particular needs so that the necessary support is provided as quickly as possible. Children are given a good start and by the time they enter Year 1 are keen to learn.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils of all capabilities make consistently good progress in mathematics.

- Ensure that teachers set sufficiently challenging targets to enable them to reach the highest possible levels.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good because of the stimulating learning environment throughout the school. Pupils make equally good progress regardless of ability or background. Children enter the Reception class with a wide range of ability and make good progress. On entry to Year 1, almost all achieve the levels expected of this age and reach good standards in personal and social development and language skills. This good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. Results of national assessments at the end of Year 2 confirm that pupils are well above the national average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Inspection evidence and school assessment data show that standards remain above average by the time pupils leave the school in Year 4.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Within the school's stimulating and caring environment, pupils really flourish. Good progress begins in the Reception class when children learn to work and play together and develop good levels of self-esteem. The smooth transition throughout the school further develops their very positive attitudes to learning and to each other. Behaviour in classes and around the school is good. The very small number of incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with skilfully. Pupils learn and fully understand how to lead healthy lifestyles through exercise and diet. Pupils feel safe and secure in school because they are very well looked after by caring staff who deal with any issues quickly and effectively.

Pupils on the school council express the views and opinions of themselves and others. They contribute to the school and the wider community by helping around the school, helping at local functions and supporting many charities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding in all respects and is strongly promoted through the school's 'Values Education' programme and a good range of visits and visitors. All of these factors provide pupils with a good start in life and prepare them exceptionally well for the next stages of education. Attendance levels have been improving to be just above average. The school is working hard to remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and so reduce the number of holidays taken in term-time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Strengths of teaching are in the range of planning which is adjusted to meet the different needs of pupils and the links between different subject areas to make learning more meaningful. Pupils' learning is good as a result. Excellent relationships are evident in lessons and teaching assistants work closely with teachers to provide very good support for pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to improve at their respective levels and to participate in discussions. Gifted and talented pupils often take on extended tasks. Pupils say that they often find their lessons exciting and enjoy learning. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to use inter-active whiteboards confidently in lessons. Good use is also

made of the computer suite to link the learning of new skills to other subjects. On a few occasions the pace of a lesson drops. Teachers use the new tracking procedures effectively to monitor pupils' progress. There is still room for improvement in the setting of even more challenging targets in mathematics and science to enable pupils of all capabilities to achieve the highest possible standards.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's curriculum is very broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. New strategies have been introduced to make learning more exciting. These strategies include strong links between literacy and other subjects. This can be seen, for example, in writing about history topics and in links between information and communication technology (ICT) and other subjects. The new computer suite has improved provision greatly since the previous inspection. In addition, pupils in Year 4 learn French and enjoy a visit to France to extend their learning of the language and experience a different culture. The school's highly innovative and imaginative programme of 'Values Education' underpins the learning ethos of the whole school and teaches valuable life skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn to swim. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and clubs, which pupils enjoy and greatly appreciate and which contributes extremely well to their personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are extremely well cared for and supported. All necessary safety checks are carried out regularly. Pupils believe that they are very well looked after and many say how much teachers help them. The school has established outstanding links with parents and involves them regularly in the support and guidance of their children. Links with outside agencies are productive, ensuring that additional expertise is secured whenever necessary. The setting of learning targets is now fully embedded in the school and progress towards these is regularly monitored through newly devised tracking sheets. Pupils know their targets and know what to do to achieve them. Pupils with learning difficulties are very well supported to enable them to make good progress in their weaker areas.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has developed a very distinctive and caring school since the previous inspection when she had only just been appointed. All staff have delegated responsibilities for different areas of the school's work and work together as a highly cohesive team. Regular monitoring and evaluation is carried out and the school development plan focuses resources on the most important areas for improvement. A relevant current priority is to set more challenging targets for all pupils to raise standards still further. Governors are very active and supportive and play an important role in monitoring and evaluating the development of the school. More recently, governors have been actively involved in improving the accommodation with the planned replacement of the two temporary classrooms by a permanent extension. The school works hard to provide the best possible education for its pupils and has good capacity to improve further.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### 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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

7 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westoning Lower School, Westoning, Bedford MK45 5JH

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I inspected your school. I enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work. I agree with you that your teachers are great and care for you a lot. They make lessons very interesting and even exciting at times. What about that really exciting assembly showing how Jesus turned water into wine? Wasn't that wonderful?

You are very good at English and good at mathematics and I know you enjoy your lessons and are trying hard to improve all the time. You have an excellent curriculum which makes learning very interesting and I liked the descriptions some of you wrote about highwaymen. I also liked the way that you learn extra skills, such as how to work quietly on your own sometimes and how to respect and help each other. You are very polite. You behave well and are very sensible. You have also been very good at raising money for charities - well done! Your school councillors think hard about your ideas for making the school better and they are buying new equipment to make playtimes even happier. You certainly know how to keep fit and healthy.

Your teachers and governors are trying hard to give you the best possible education. I have asked them to do two things to improve your school further. Firstly, I would like the teachers to give you harder work in mathematics so you reach standards that are as high as the ones reached in English. Secondly, I would like the teachers to make sure they set you even higher targets and explain them to you, to help you get to the higher standards.

I believe that there are even more exciting times ahead for you at your school and I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

David Manuel

Lead inspector