

# William Westley CofE VC Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110795
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310420
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joy Richardson

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	185
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr John Stowell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Bryant
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	Mill Lane Whittlesford Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB2 4NE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223832176
<b>Fax number</b>	01223832176

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

## Description of the school

The school mainly serves the village of Whittlesford, but a third of pupils come from further afield. The school roll has grown in recent years. A new class was created in September 2007, following the building of a new classroom, and the school now has one class for each year group. Three quarters of the pupils are from White British backgrounds, while a quarter come from a variety of minority ethnic groups. A few pupils are learning English as an additional language. Children's skills vary on entry to school, though their language skills are generally well advanced. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education and this reflects its own evaluation of its effectiveness. The school is much loved because of the way that it nurtures pupils in an atmosphere of humanity and respect. This ethos, often spoken of as 'the William Westley way' provides an extremely strong sense of community. At the same time, the school recognises that it lacks systems to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they could.

Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school as a whole, though this varies between years. Children make a slow start in Reception. Achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 but the pace of progress is uneven. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is generally in line with the national average, but below this in writing. Pupils make broadly the progress expected over Years 3 to 6 in relation to their individual starting points, reaching standards in line with, or sometimes above, the national average. The school has begun to check more closely on pupils' progress each year, and to identify where they could and should be doing better. As a result, the pace of progress is picking up and this is leading to higher standards in the older years.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Although much of the teaching has significant strengths, and some is outstanding, the quality is far from consistent. The school lacks clear expectations, for example about the teaching of reading, to support the work of individual teachers. The curriculum is broad and much enriched by extra activities. The school offers a variety of popular clubs and encourages constructive play, as with the teaching of traditional skipping games. Music is a strength, and provision for information and communication technology has been much improved since the last inspection.

The fostering of pupils' personal development is good and, in some aspects, outstanding. This is seen in uplifting daily assemblies, where story, song, reflection and celebration bind the community together. Pupils absorb the school's values, knowing that they themselves are valued and that their contribution matters. This is richly demonstrated in the care of older pupils for younger pupils as 'friendship buddies', and the pride taken in doing this well. The school's warm and welcoming atmosphere is much appreciated by parents as well as by pupils.

Pupils are known and understood as individuals, and cared for well. The school makes suitable arrangements to ensure pupils' health, safety and welfare. The school is taking steps to guide pupils' progress more effectively by the purposeful use of assessment.

The headteacher creates an ethos that makes the school a good place to be for staff, pupils and parents. The school is now in the process of developing a leadership team to ensure that plans for improvement are translated into action throughout the school. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 4

Although children settle in well and enjoy school, the Foundation Stage has weaknesses that restrict the pace of progress over the Reception year. Improvements have been made since the last inspection to ensure a balanced curriculum. Children develop well as people, becoming absorbed in activities and relating well to others. They are eager to learn. However, teaching does not systematically extend thinking and reinforce learning. Activities are not clearly designed to build on what children can already do and to lead learning forward. Children broadly reach

the early learning goals for their age by the end of the year, but this varies between the areas of learning. Although children's personal development is strong, they do less well in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development. Not enough attention is given to the teaching of early reading and writing skills and knowledge of sounds, letters and words. As a result, the foundations laid in literacy do not provide a solid basis for later learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that the Foundation Stage gives children a good start in their learning.
- Build a management team to strengthen consistency and continuity in teaching, learning and progress through the school.
- Further develop the use of assessment to raise expectations of the progress pupils are capable of making.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement through the school is satisfactory. Pupils reach standards that are broadly average, and show signs of improvement in the older years. Although most pupils reach the level expected nationally at the end of Year 2, some fall short, particularly in writing. The extent of higher attainment is not as great as might be expected in writing or in mathematics. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 and pupils make broadly the progress expected over these four years. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average, and above average in some years. The school is putting in place systems for tracking the progress pupils are making. These systems are still new but are leading towards the setting of realistic but challenging targets in all years, rooted in evidence from assessment. This is serving to show up weaknesses at an earlier stage, to raise sights for able pupils and to flag up where extra work is needed.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils respond well to the strong lead of the headteacher in this area. The school's rich community life, as exemplified in daily assemblies, leads to excellence in pupils' all-round spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils understand and appreciate the school's rules and its underlying Christian values. They show tolerance and respect for individual differences and beliefs. Pupils cooperate readily, and organise themselves well, for example playing together in large groups at playtime. They behave well, showing courtesy and consideration. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to lead healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. The relatively new school council is already carrying through ideas for improving the school, such as displaying the school rules, cleaning the water fountains, and setting up a 'buddy bus stop'. The school is working to extend opportunities for pupils to make their views heard, and to take responsibility for their own work. Pupils make a strong contribution to the community, for example in looking after younger children, raising money for charities, and performing at local events. They develop skills which prepare them well for later life. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is good.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although the quality varies widely from unsatisfactory to outstanding. The securing of greater consistency and the spreading of good practice are recognised as key priorities. Where teaching is weak, time is not used to the full, and activities do not maximise progress by pupils of all abilities. By contrast, the outstanding teaching fires pupils' interest and ownership of their work, so that they grow in confidence and belief in their capacity to succeed. Teachers are beginning to work together to moderate the standard of pupils' work, in order to ensure accuracy and to raise expectations. However, methods to be used throughout the school, for example in teaching reading and in planning lessons, are not clearly set out. This means that changes in staffing are not cushioned by clear guidance on approaches to teaching and learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together, and relationships between adults and with children are generally very positive.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum overall. All statutory requirements are met, although the school does not yet provide the recommended amount of time for physical education. The school offers an excellent range of popular clubs, which include a range of sports, and pupils enjoy representing the school in teams. Creative subjects, including music and singing, art and drama feature strongly. Learning is linked across subjects, for example in imaginative writing arising from work in history. The curriculum is also enriched through a wide range of visits and visitors, including a book launch by a visiting author. The school has invested heavily in information and communication technology. Pupils are benefiting from the effective use of interactive whiteboards, and are very excited by arrival of a second set of laptop computers. Although the curriculum is well planned in some classes, aspects such as the teaching of phonics require a more coherent approach throughout the school.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

This area of the school's work is satisfactory overall, with significant strengths in the quality of care. Staff provide good role models for the pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe, and that bullying is rare and dealt with effectively if it does occur. The partnership with parents is extremely strong, and pupils gain much from this. The headteacher and staff are readily available and parents are warmly welcomed, for example to weekly assemblies. The school takes the necessary measures for the safeguarding of pupils and for ensuring their health and safety. The guidance of pupils' learning is satisfactory. A new system for checking the pace of each child's progress is helping to set sights higher, for staff and pupils. Older pupils are encouraged to focus on targets for their learning, though this approach has yet to work its way through the school. Teaching assistants ensure that pupils with additional learning needs, including English as an additional language, have access to the curriculum and generally make the same progress as other pupils. Detailed individual education plans are maintained for those who need them, though these vary in quality between classes and do not always record the results of reviews.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's leadership is very successful in creating an ethos which fosters pupils' personal development, and a rich community life. Effective management has been constrained by the lack of a leadership team to support the headteacher in pursuing the priorities for improvement that are widely recognised. This team is now under construction, and a new deputy headteacher has been appointed. The school's self-evaluation is open, honest and accurate, although the means of translating ideas into action have yet to be fully worked through. The staff are enthusiastic and committed to working together more closely as a team, for example in developing approaches to literacy and using assessment to guide teaching and learning. Governors are very supportive of the school and provide significant expertise, ensuring effective financial management in securing the extension to the building. They provide support and challenge, valuing the school's distinctive ethos while recognising the need for more systematic procedures to ensure that all pupils achieve their best.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

12 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of William Westley Primary School, Whittlesford, CB2 4NE

Thank you for welcoming us and talking to us about your school.

Everyone at William Westley loves the school and we can understand why. You, and your parents, seem to especially enjoy the assemblies, and we enjoyed them too. You sing and play music beautifully and join in very well, and the stories help you to think about how to live your lives.

We think that William Westley helps you to grow up well and we were pleased to see how well you behave. We were impressed by the way that the Year 6 pupils look after the younger children. You are lucky to have so many clubs, and it was good to see all the playground games. How many can you get jumping in one skipping rope I wonder?

We noticed that you get down to work and you are keen to learn. Mr Bryant and all the staff want you to learn as well as possible and we have been talking with them about ways of helping you to do even better. We think that the youngest children could get on more quickly with learning to read and write. The teachers will be looking closely at how much progress each of you is making, and how much further you could go. Mr Bryant will be getting together a team of people to help make sure that good ideas about teaching are shared across all the classes.

We hope you go on enjoying life at William Westley and will aim to do your very best.

Joy Richardson

Lead inspector