

Westfield School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117055
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	312476
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Farrell

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	27
6th form	7
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Mackay
Headteacher	Susan Harris
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2004
School address	Westfield Walk Leominster HR6 8HD
Telephone number	01568 613147
Fax number	01568 616848

Age group	4-19
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2008
Inspection number	312476

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Westfield School provides for pupils experiencing severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities, autistic spectrum disorder and a small number who have profound and multiple learning difficulties and/or disabilities or other additional needs. All pupils have statements of special educational need. Pupils' attainment on entry is significantly below national expectations because of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Although its age range includes children in the Foundation Stage of education, at the time of the inspection there were no pupils of this age range and had not been for some time prior to the inspection, so this stage is not reported. Pupils come from North Herefordshire and part of South Shropshire. There are 20 boys and 14 girls on roll. No pupils speak English as an additional language and a small number are in the care of the local authority. The school has an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher who have held these posts since 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Westfield School is a satisfactory school. There are particular strengths in the sixth form, whose effectiveness is good, and in pupils' personal development. Parents value the school, saying 'We cannot emphasise enough how happy our child is at Westfield School' and 'A great school with super staff who not only support the student but also the parents.' Good links with other agencies and schools strengthens the range of support that Westfield School effectively offers.

Pupils feel safe because they trust staff and feel there is always someone they can talk to. They eat healthily and enjoy physical exercise because the school promotes these very well. They are similarly enthusiastic about all aspects of school life. They have a strong sense of the school as a community, encouraged by opportunities for joining the school council and the feeling that they and what they achieve is genuinely valued by those around them. For pupils aged up to 16 years, economic and workplace skills are sound because, although they have suitable workplace opportunities, their progress in basic skills is only satisfactory. Pupils' personal development is good overall because the school offers strong pastoral support, including its arrangements for safeguarding pupils, and because the curriculum promotes most aspects of personal development well.

Standards are significantly below average because of pupils' learning difficulties. However, pupils at all key stages up to the age of 16 make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily, including those with different types of learning needs. This is because teaching and learning are sound and because pupils have good attitudes to their learning. Common strengths of teaching and learning include the good relationships among pupils and between pupils and staff, and the teamwork of teachers and teaching assistants who offer strong support. However, work is pitched at a level that encourages only satisfactory progress and lessons are not always as challenging as they could be because full account is not always taken of pupils' previous learning. The sound curriculum promotes many aspects of personal and social development effectively, for example, through the good range of enrichment opportunities, such as lunchtime clubs and residential activities. It promotes basic skills only satisfactorily. This is because there are not enough opportunities to develop skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology across the curriculum. The school provides satisfactory academic guidance for pupils overall but targets are not always as challenging as they could be. Pupils make good progress in personal, social, health and citizenship education because provision for this is particularly strong, permeating all aspects of school life. Although standards in the sixth form are significantly below average, students make good progress and achieve well because teaching and learning are good with activities being very relevant to students' needs.

Overall, leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and this leads to the satisfactory provision overall. The headteacher and senior managers work hard and staff pull together as a team. There are clear links between performance management of staff, the school improvement plan, and staff training. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses broadly but, because data relating to pupils' progress are not analysed sufficiently, opportunities to refine and further improve provision are missed. Governors offer satisfactory support and challenge but this, too, is constrained by the limitations in the analysis of the pupils' progress. The school has taken effective steps to improve since the previous inspection and has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The sixth form offers good provision. Attainment on entry is significantly below average because of the students' special educational needs. However, students make good progress and achieve well. They gain suitable accreditation in the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and in a 'Preparation for Working Life' qualification. Opportunities are missed to offer a wider range of accreditation and the school is keen to extend these. The personal development and well-being of students is good because this area is very well supported. Asked what lessons he enjoyed, one student expressed the very positive attitudes of others when he said, "Every single one". Teaching and learning are good because of students' good attitudes to learning and because teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together to ensure the content of lessons is relevant, challenging and stimulating for this particular age group. The good curriculum, including the life choices scheme, personal, social, health and citizenship education, work-related learning and regular work experience provides a strong structure that help students progress well. Behaviour is very well supported in lessons. In the well led and managed provision, academic and pastoral support are both good, with a strong emphasis on challenging and raising students' own expectations. The sixth form has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 9

At the time of the inspection, no children were taught as part of the Foundation Stage

What the school should do to improve further

- With particular reference to provision for pupils up to age 16, the school should:
- analyse assessment data on pupils' progress better to more precisely identify areas for improvement
- raise the level of challenge in pupils' learning targets and work by ensuring that information on pupils' previous learning fully informs planning
- provide more opportunities across the curriculum to develop literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Standards are significantly below average. However, pupils make steady progress and achieve satisfactorily. Progress is sound for pupils in all key stages, although slightly stronger for younger pupils. Progress in number, while still only satisfactory, is the strongest element of mathematics because lessons emphasise it more than other aspects. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in personal, social, health and citizenship education. For pupils aged 5 to 11 years, progress in speaking and listening, although still satisfactory, is stronger than that in mathematics and science because other activities outside lesson times, including those

involving the school council, encourage it more. Boys and girls achieve equally well and pupils cared for by the local authority progress as well as others. Pupils with different needs, including those with profound learning difficulties and/or disabilities, severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with autistic spectrum disorder, all make satisfactory progress. Individual education plan targets are clear and appropriately matched to needs. Pupils reach targets that are covering important areas but they are not always challenging enough and encourage only satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

There are particular strengths in pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The joyful nature of assemblies promotes spirituality very well. Pupils celebrate different cultures through a variety of experiences, for example, in art and pottery, through Fair Trade activities and through links Westfield School has developed with schools in other countries. Behaviour is good throughout the school. In lessons and around school, pupils get on with each other very well and treat each other considerately. They develop confidence and self-esteem because their achievements are valued, for example, in attractively displayed samples of their work. They are proud of their achievements and display enthusiasm and enjoyment in their approach to work. Pupils understand how to keep healthy. They know the importance of a healthy diet including fresh fruit and participate with enjoyment in physical activities. Pupils understand the importance of keeping safe. For example, they explain clearly the potential risks of using the Internet. Pupils make good progress in developing their understanding of citizenship because of the good provision made. Those on the school council work well together for the benefit of the school community. In the sixth form, students develop good economic and work-related skills because of the wide range of opportunities offered. In the rest of the school, these skills are only satisfactorily developed because of limited opportunities across the curriculum.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Teaching for pupils with different types of learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for pupils at different key stages is satisfactory. It is good in the sixth form. Among the common strengths of teaching and learning in the main school are good relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff; pupils' good behaviour in lessons; and the strong support of teaching assistants who work very patiently with pupils. Behaviour is very well managed. However, planning does not take enough account of assessment information showing previous learning and work is often pitched at a level that encourages only satisfactory progress. As a result, lessons are not always as challenging as they could be, whereas in the sixth form the level of challenge is good. Opportunities to use computers to enhance learning across the curriculum are sometimes missed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

In the satisfactory curriculum in the main school, there are no inadequate aspects and some elements are good. Policies and schemes of work are in place that take into account the school's wide age range and different types of learning needs. The whole curriculum strongly promotes most aspects of personal and social development well. Assemblies and lessons contribute greatly to pupils enjoying their education. Education for health and safety is good. The good range of opportunities for enrichment, including lunchtime clubs, residential trips and the use of the local community, is particularly effective in enhancing pupils' personal development. Satisfactory provision for literacy, numeracy and communications technology encourages the satisfactory progress pupils make in these areas. But opportunities to further develop these skills are missed because they are not planned across the curriculum and embedded in the planning for other subjects. The good sixth form curriculum is well matched to students' needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Overall care, guidance and support is satisfactory. It is good in the sixth form. Child protection and health and safety procedures including risk assessments are clear, up- to-date and understood by staff, and this promotes pupils' understanding of health and safety well. Pupils have trusting relationships with adults and feel safe, and parents are happy with the way their children are looked after. The network of partnerships across the local community enables the school to regularly use the services of external agencies to meet the specific needs of pupils. While pastoral support is therefore strong, the school's support for academic progress in the main school is not as effective, although it is still satisfactory. This is because the targets used in the system of tracking are not always challenging enough so that they encourage only satisfactory progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The headteacher and senior staff work hard and care deeply about the school. Many aspects of pupils' personal development are promoted well across different areas of school life. In the school as a whole, staff work as a team and there is a sound sense of direction aided by satisfactory school self-evaluation. As a result, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further. The school has worked hard to gather data on pupils' progress and is taking steps to improve the accuracy of this information by participating in moderating sessions with other local special schools. But the data are not yet drawn together and analysed sufficiently to identify precisely what the school needs to do to improve further. Therefore, although managers broadly know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, opportunities are missed to strategically tackle very specific areas. Whilst the school development plan identifies important priorities and indicates how they are to be reached, intended outcomes are not always as clear as they should be. The system of performance management is linked to the priorities of the

school development plan and to staff aspirations, informing the training the school subsequently provides. This satisfactorily enables targets to be set to aid improvements and for resources to be deployed soundly. The school satisfactorily promotes equality of opportunity. As a result of good leadership and management in the sixth form, its self-evaluation is good, with clear strategies and outcomes for improvement identified. Its capacity to improve is therefore good.

Governors provide satisfactory support and challenge. but their ability to challenge further is constrained because they do not always have precise enough information. There are good links with outside agencies.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19
---	----------------	-------

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	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	NA	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
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	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
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	3	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	3	2
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	2
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	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

Thank you for your help when my colleague and I inspected your school recently.

Westfield is a satisfactory school. We found some particularly good things: the school helps you develop very well and you are polite and friendly; it has a good sixth form; and there are strong links with other people to make sure you get the support you need. Quite a lot of things are satisfactory in the main school, including the teaching, the curriculum, guidance to help you improve and the way the school is managed.

To try to make some of these things better, I have asked the staff to:

- use information about your progress better so it is clearer what the school needs to do to improve
- make sure that the targets that you have and the work you are given really stretch you
- make sure that English, mathematics and information and communication technology is planned into other lessons much more.

When the work school expects you to do is even harder than it is now, you will need to try even harder. I am sure you will do your very best.

Thank you again for being so kind to me when I was with you.

With every good wishes for your future.



14 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westfield School, Leominster, HR6 8HD

Thank you for your help when my colleague and I inspected your school recently.

Westfield is a satisfactory school. We found some particularly good things: the school helps you develop very well and you are polite and friendly; it has a good sixth form; and there are strong links with other people to make sure you get the support you need. Quite a lot of things are satisfactory in the main school, including the teaching, the curriculum, guidance to help you improve and the way the school is managed.

To try to make some of these things better, I have asked the staff to:

- use information about your progress better so it is clearer what the school needs to do to improve
- make sure that the targets that you have and the work you are given really stretch you
- make sure that English, mathematics and information and communication technology is planned into other lessons much more.

When the work school expects you to do is even harder than it is now, you will need to try even harder. I am sure you will do your very best.

Thank you again for being so kind to me when I was with you.

With every good wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Farrell
Lead inspector