

# Weston Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117413
<b>Local Authority</b>	HERTFORDSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	312605
<b>Inspection date</b>	7 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Williams HMI

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>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	133
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Cherry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Zoe Phillips
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	Maiden Street Weston Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7AG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01462 790317
<b>Fax number</b>	01462 790890

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' academic progress and personal development, the organisation, planning, teaching and assessment of mixed age classes, and the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation. Evidence was gathered from a range of documentation, especially planning and monitoring documents, observation of lessons, discussions with staff and pupils, and from parents' written comments. There was no detailed investigation of other aspects of the school's work, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Weston Primary School is a small and oversubscribed village Church of England Controlled school. There are 20 part-time pupils in the Nursery. Almost all enter the main school from the Nursery and pupil turnover is low. The vast majority are of White British background and the number with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. The school has won several awards including a Healthy Schools Award and one for ecological awareness.

## 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. Children's attainment on entry is above average in all but social and emotional development and by the time they leave school standards overall have risen to above average and sometimes well above average. In recent years the mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding of Year 6 pupils have been particularly good. For most this represents good progress, though the school knows that it could do better with some more able pupils who have the potential to reach the higher levels. Strategies have been put in place to achieve this that are showing signs of success.

There is a rigorous approach to monitoring teaching and learning so the school rightly judges the overall quality of its teaching to be good. The Nursery and Foundation Stage get pupils off to a fine start by teachers initially focusing on pupils' social and emotional development and encouraging them to be independent learners. Across the rest of the school teaching and learning are good because teachers have a well developed knowledge of the subjects they are teaching. This means they can question pupils, challenge them to understand, and move them on in their learning at a good pace. Teachers are aware of the need to plan carefully for mixed age and ability classes and pay careful attention to what has, or has not, worked from the previous lesson. Those few pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve well through targeted support; the gifted and talented are provided with a range of opportunities both within school and outside to demonstrate and develop their talents. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to learning, for example in the teaching of French and Spanish which pupils really enjoy learning. The curriculum is outstanding; it is delivered in a way that makes it fun to learn and is enhanced by a number of extra-curricular activities, languages and a wide range of visits and visitors.

Across the school pupils' response to adults and other pupils is very good and their behaviour is good. Their personal development is good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development since a community spirit underpins it. Pupils really enjoy school and attend well. The school council is effective and pupils feel they have many opportunities to contribute to life in the school. Partnership with parents and other organisations is very effective in promoting pupil's development. Pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are above average and provide good foundations for their future economic well-being.

The school maintains outstanding levels of care. Pupils understand what makes a good diet and appreciate the need for regular exercise. They receive good guidance on how to stay safe and look after themselves. Older pupils take care of younger ones at breaks and playtimes; they read to them and take part in a range of other mixed age group activities. They are beginning to understand the levels at which they are working and their targets for the next stage, but this is only at an early stage of development. Teachers monitor pupils' academic progress carefully. Parents are very supportive of the school though a few are worried about the large number of pupils in some classes. This is a popular school with numbers on roll at or a little above the agreed admission number. However, management has been careful to minimise any possible negative effects of this by splitting classes and arranging the timetable well. One parent comment was typical, 'My child is happy here and really enjoys lessons'.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The governing body provides good support and monitors the school's performance soundly. The new headteacher, recently appointed, provides good leadership. Parents speak highly of the way the headteacher has

brought about a culture that listens to them, that acts on their comments and that communicates with them very well. The team of teachers and support staff, many of which are new to the school, are committed to raising standards. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and identifies the key priorities for development. The school improvement plan is good and is helpfully related to detailed subject improvement plans. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection and the school currently provides good value for money. It has good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage is managed well. Nearly all pupils in the main school have attended the Nursery. In Reception they therefore settle well and quickly into routines. Transition between the Nursery and Reception, and between Key Stages 1 and 2, is smooth and effective. Teaching and learning are good. There is an appropriate emphasis on teaching phonics and in developing skills across a range of competencies. There is a good curriculum provided with some stimulating activities. The outside area is outstanding in providing children with opportunities to develop physical skills.

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

- Increase the number of pupils achieving Level 3 by the end of Year 2 and Level 5 by the end of Year 6.
- Make children more aware of the levels of their work and develop their understanding of the targets to improve their levels.

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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?	2
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?	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	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	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?	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

8 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Weston Primary School, Weston SG4 7AG

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed meeting and talking with you, including your school council who represented you very well. You have a very nice, clean and attractive school to work in. The outside area, especially for the younger children, is really excellent.

Weston Primary School is a good school in many ways. I like the way you listen to the teachers, work and play together. It is good to see the older pupils helping and looking after the younger ones so well. When you are in lessons you work well with each other, the teachers and teaching assistants. You seem to really enjoy coming to school and behave well. You obviously enjoy much of what you are doing. I could see you find learning fun, especially the Spanish lesson!

Mrs Phillips and all the teachers and teaching assistants take excellent care of you. The food the school provides you at lunchtime is good and you know what to do to be fit and healthy and, most importantly, stay safe. Well done!

Much of the teaching in the school is good because teachers understand their subjects well. I hope you will continue to work hard to do well in all subjects and I have asked the school to look at ways of helping you understand your targets better so that you know what you have to do to achieve the next level. I have also asked the school to look at ways of helping more Year 2s and Year 6s achieve the higher levels in their tests.

I hope you will continue to work hard and do well at Weston Primary School.

Yours faithfully

John Williams

Her Majesty's Inspector