

Westdale Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122535
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	314319
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Anna Coyle

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Rob Willis
Headteacher	Mr Anthony Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2004
School address	Digby Avenue Westdale Lane Mapperley Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG3 6ET
Telephone number	0115 953 1606
Fax number	0115 956 8309

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Westdale Infant School is smaller than most other primary schools and serves the local community on the eastern side of Nottingham. Attainment on entry is similar to that expected for age overall, but lower in some key areas of communication, language and literacy. The majority of children are White British. A lower proportion than nationally are from minority ethnic groups and very few learn English as an additional language. The proportion of children who find learning hard is also lower than that of other schools. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools award.

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 in which children do well. Parents speak highly of the education and care it provides and appreciate the way that it works with them. They feel that the school is a 'genuine, caring environment which is fun and stimulating for the children' and the inspectors agree.

Achievement is good. Children begin school with skills that are mostly typical for their age and make good progress in the Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes. This leads to standards that are above average by the time they leave at the end of Year 2. The school has focused strongly on the achievement of boys recently and standards are now rising well amongst this group. The school has also improved standards in reading through a range of successful strategies.

Children develop good personal skills because the school supports and guides them very well and has a highly inclusive ethos. This leads to good attitudes and behaviour. Children develop a sense of responsibility by taking on jobs around the school that contribute to community life; for example, they enjoy having their say in activities known as 'Our Voice'. The school provides excellent pastoral care for the children and this encourages them to participate fully in lessons. Academic guidance is good overall, although children do not have specific targets in mathematics.

The school's good quality teaching helps children to learn well. Teaching is sometimes excellent when lessons are lively and imaginative and teachers set a rapid pace to learning, as seen in literacy and Spanish lessons. Teachers manage classes effectively and staff generally have high expectations of children's behaviour. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to children's learning and closely support those with additional needs. The curriculum is planned well and the broad range of after-school clubs and visits enrich learning. Outstanding displays of children's work and plenty of playground facilities contribute to the stimulating and vibrant learning environment.

The school has improved well since it was last inspected; summer-born children do much better than they did in 2004 and the provision for information and communication technology has improved significantly. This is due to the effective leadership, management and governance of the school. The headteacher's dedication and energy is pivotal to the school's success. Senior managers and staff share good commitment to the children and check on how well they are doing, although the subject leaders do not monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their areas. The school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the two Reception classes get off to a good start and do well. Despite entering with limited skills in literacy, they make good progress and achieve the expected goals in the six areas of learning by the end of the Reception year. This is as a direct result of the good quality teaching that focuses clearly on developing children's skills and knowledge, especially in phonics. Teaching is sometimes excellent in literacy and this leads to rapid progress because children quickly become confident and make choices for themselves. They behave well and benefit considerably from a rich curriculum. Staff plan and organise activities well and keep a close eye on how well children are doing. This is overseen by a good Foundation Stage leader, who manages the provision efficiently and regularly keeps a check on children's progress. The newly

refurbished outdoor area, with its wealth of exciting activities, play areas and toys, is used extensively by the Reception children and those in the nearby pre-school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Set clear targets for children's learning in mathematics.
- Extend the roles of the subject leaders by enabling them to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their areas.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress and achieve well throughout their time in the school. The results of the national tests show that standards have regularly been above average by the end of Year 2, although standards dipped a little in 2006. They rose again in 2007 and are currently just above average in reading, mathematics and science. The most able children do well, as do the few who learn English as an additional language and those who have additional learning needs. The school's good focus on improving standards in reading and increasing the achievement of boys has paid off and progress has accelerated significantly in both of these areas.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children are welcoming and polite. They really enjoy school and attendance is good. They respond quickly in lessons when asked to listen to their teachers and they happily work together in groups. Children have good attitudes to learning and relate well to adults and to each other. This helps them to increase their basic skills, and prepares them well for the future. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children reflect sensitively on issues concerning themselves, their classmates and those whom they support through fund raising. They behave well and have a good understanding about keeping safe. Children are keen to have their say in school community affairs through the 'Our Voice' initiative; for example, they are involved in taster sessions for school dinners to help improve the take-up of healthy school meals. At playtime, they enjoy each other's company, being active in the playground or sitting quietly together. The spacious grounds are well equipped and this encourages children to be imaginative and energetic in their play.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers' high expectations of behaviour and effective teamwork with the teaching assistants mean that learning proceeds at a good pace. They effectively promote excellent relationships, which maintain a friendly rapport during lessons. Lesson plans state clearly what children with different abilities will learn and teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to capture their attention. Very occasionally, teaching is only satisfactory when the pace slackens and the tasks are not matched closely enough to the needs of individuals. Marking is inconsistent: in the best examples, it is helpful and supports learning but, at times, it only affirms effort. There is some excellent teaching in literacy and Spanish that keeps the children enthralled and leads to some exceptional progress in these subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum provides rich and well-balanced experiences for the children. Personal, social and health education is planned well and contributes directly to the positive outcomes in personal development. Creative aspects, such as art, are strong and children have good opportunities to learn a modern foreign language (Spanish) from Reception to Year 2. Outstanding displays of children's work contribute to the stimulating and vibrant learning environment. A wide range of extra-curricular activities and a number of educational visits enrich learning considerably. Children enjoy participating in the themed weeks, such as the recent 'Disability Awareness Week' and these strongly support their personal development. Leaders have rightly identified the need to forge further community links to enhance children's understanding of living in a multicultural society.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The effective care and support the school provides are rooted in the strong relationships between the staff and children. Pastoral care is excellent. Parents speak highly of the school's caring atmosphere and are very supportive of the school. Children who need additional help are guided well and effective teaching assistants ensure that they make good progress. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and the safeguarding of children are implemented rigorously. Good systems for tracking children's progress lead to effective support for those who are not meeting the expected levels. Children are clear about their personal learning targets in writing but they do not have any targets in mathematics to help them learn more effectively. There are good links to help transition to junior school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's very good leadership and management are key to the welcoming, friendly nature of the school and the good achievement of the children. He has an excellent commitment to the school and a clear vision for the way it will develop. He is well supported by the deputy and keeps a careful check on standards and the quality of teaching. The school evaluates its performance accurately and uses the information to feed into a comprehensive school development plan. However, although they check on how well children are doing, the subject leaders do not monitor teaching and learning in their areas yet. The governors provide good support to the school and use their wide range of expertise conscientiously to the benefit of the children.

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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 ¹ 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	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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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?	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

20 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Westdale Infant School, Mapperely, Nottingham, NG3 6ET

You may remember that we visited your school recently and saw you in lessons and taking part in the Summer Fair. Some of you talked to us about your school and told us about all the things you enjoy. We learnt a lot about the things you do and enjoyed seeing you working and playing together. We think you go to a good school and your parents agree. Here are a few things we found out:

- You behave well and work hard in lessons.
- The teachers are good at teaching you and helping you if learning is hard.
- You have lots of exciting things to do and you make good progress.
- All the grown-ups care about you and look after you really well.
- The school provides plenty of after-school activities for you to enjoy.
- Many of you help by doing jobs and some of you make your views known through 'Our Voice' activities.

Mr J and the staff and governors all work together very well to make sure that the school is a good place to be, and they keep looking for ways to make it even better. We think they should go on helping you to improve in mathematics by giving each of you some targets. We have also asked the teachers to check on the teaching and learning in their subjects. You can help by coming to school every day and continuing to work hard.

Best wishes for the future

Dr Anna Coyle

Lead inspector