

Westfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125117
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315154
Inspection date	19 June 2008
Reporting inspector	George Rayner

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sylvia Mitchell
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Ashby
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2004
School address	Bonsey Lane Westfield Woking GU22 9PR
Telephone number	01483 764187
Fax number	01483 721725

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following areas of its work: achievement and standards; pupils' personal development and well-being, teaching and learning; and leadership and management, including the capacity to improve. Evidence was gathered from: lesson observations, discussion with staff, pupils and governors, scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and documents, parents' and carers' questionnaires. Other aspects were not inspected in detail, 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

This school is smaller than average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. The main area of difficulty for these pupils is in learning to use language to communicate, especially in writing. The majority of pupils have White British heritage, although about a quarter do not. No single group outnumbers the others and very few pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English. An above average proportion of pupils arrive and leave other than at the usual times.

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. Most parents agree. They say that their children are happy here and make good progress. Systems for caring for pupils are well organised and diligently carried out. The school has effective links with outside agencies to provide any additional help that individual pupils might need. As a result, pupils feel safe and are confident that the adults will help them if they have a problem.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They enjoy school. This is shown by their enthusiastic involvement in all that the school has to offer, for example, in their high attendance at extra-curricular clubs. Most pupils come to school regularly. However, although the school works hard to encourage regular attendance, the overall rate is affected by the frequent absences of a few. Almost all pupils behave well, but a small minority do not always do so. Pupils have caring attitudes to one another. They welcome those who arrive during the school year, so that they settle in quickly. Pupils show considerable concern for children elsewhere who are less fortunate than themselves. One said, 'We were pleased when we got new playground equipment, but worried that children in our partner school in Africa didn't have such good things, so we decided to help them.' Pupils often suggest good causes that they would like to support and willingly take part in fund-raising activities. Pupils live active lives. They particularly enjoy the sports clubs and play energetically at playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils understand the importance of a balanced diet and make sensible choices when choosing foods. They contribute well to school life, through roles such as school councillors. The older pupils often help the younger ones, by for example, listening to them read. Pupils are proud that, because the adults listen to them, their ideas have often led to improvements, such as a quiet garden for reflection. Pupils' good progress helps them to prepare well for their future lives.

Pupils' skills and knowledge when they enter the school are generally below the expected levels for their age. Pupils are taught well which, together with a good curriculum, contributes to them achieving well and reaching average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. In years 1 and 2, progress is good overall, but satisfactory in writing. Year 2 pupils have a sound vocabulary, but many find it difficult to produce writing of any length. Due to an effective focus on the teaching of writing in Years 3 to 6, introduced since the last inspection, progress accelerates in these years, which helps pupils to catch up in English. Because the needs of pupils who have difficulty in learning to use language to communicate are carefully identified and effectively provided for, they make similar progress to their classmates.

Teachers plan lessons carefully to provide challenges that are appropriate for all pupils' abilities. They use a variety of techniques to make learning interesting. Pupils appreciate this and enjoy their lessons. They say that, because teachers work hard to make lessons fun, their progress is good in subjects like mathematics. In most lessons, teachers set clear expectations and deal effectively with any misbehaviour. However, this is not fully consistent. Consequently, in a few lessons, although only a small number of pupils misbehave, this temporarily slows the pace of learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively to ensure that any pupils finding their tasks difficult receive the help that they need to keep up with the pace of learning.

A recent curricular enhancement is providing French lessons in Years 3 and 4, supported by specialist guidance from a local secondary school. Plans are in hand to extend this to Years 5 and 6. Staff are aware that pupils have limited opportunities for sustained independent learning

in integrated, themed activities. In partnership with other local schools, they are beginning to improve this. The school makes good use of the adjoining arts centre. For example, the link has given many pupils specialist tuition in playing musical instruments. A good range of extra curricular clubs gives pupils the opportunity to experience a variety of sporting and cultural activities.

Care, guidance and support are good. Effective systems track pupils' progress and ensure that those falling behind their targets are given extra help to catch up. Staff are improving these further by using teamwork to share assessment information more widely. The assessment policy is not consistently used across the school, however. For example, the use of marking to guide pupils on how to improve is better in some classes than others.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides a clear direction and there is considerable unity in pursuit of this, shared by staff working at all levels. A reorganisation of leadership, so that staff now work in teams, has improved the sharing of decision making and monitoring. This is still developing so that for example, those responsible for subject leadership are not yet sufficiently obtaining first hand evidence from lesson observations. Governors have improved their involvement in decision making, which was weak at the time of the last inspection, so that they are now providing good support. The school's leaders value the guidance of local authority advisers in their self-evaluation, which has helped them to have an accurate view of strengths and areas needing improvement. Steps taken have been effective, in particular in raising Year 6 standards in English and mathematics since the last inspection. The track record demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. The adults provide a secure and welcoming environment, so that children settle quickly and begin to enjoy learning together. The accommodation is bright and spacious, providing a stimulating learning environment. There is a good balance between adult led activities and those that give children opportunities to learn by playing and exploring. By the time children leave the Foundation Stage they are working securely in most of their areas of learning and are particularly strong in their personal development. This is due to teaching and care that are good overall. Many children still have significant weakness in using language to communicate and teaching and learning of this are satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Speed up progress in using language to communicate in the Foundation Stage and in writing in Years 1 and 2.
- Improve the attendance of the minority of pupils who are often absent.

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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 ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2
The attendance of learners	3
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

02 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westfield Primary School, Woking, GU22 9PR

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you. I am grateful for the help you gave, by talking to me and showing me your work. I was able to see that yours is a good school.

Due to good teaching you make good progress in English, mathematics and science. By the time you are in Year 6, your standards match those in most schools. Several of the younger pupils find writing difficult. While your progress in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 is good in most things, it is slower in this. Your progress in writing speeds up in Years 3 to 6, so that you catch up well. I have asked the staff to try to make it faster in Years 1 and 2, so that you will be even better in English by the time you leave the school.

Some of you told me that you really enjoy school and that the teachers work hard to make lessons fun. Also, that you really enjoy all of the clubs that they put on. I could see that all of these things are true. Most of you behave well and work hard. You are cheerful, are willing to join in and often help out around the school. This makes it all worthwhile for your teachers and is one of the reasons why you do well. Most of you come to school regularly, but just a few are absent too often. This means that you miss out on all of the good things that the school does. I have asked the adults to try to improve attendance and you can help by only missing school when you really have to.

Well done to you all and very best wishes for your future lives.

Yours sincerely

George Rayner

Lead Inspector