

# Westfield School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131933
<b>Local Authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	315892
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Melvyn Blackband

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	35
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jenny Phillips
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Geoff Allen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Highfield Road Bourne End SL8 5BE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01628 533125
<b>Fax number</b>	01628 523345

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<b>Age group</b>	5-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school provides for pupils with severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. A minority of pupils have additional complex learning needs. There is presently one girl at the school. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds. Most pupils are White-British in origin but there are a small number of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds. A high percentage of pupils are entitled to free school meals.

## 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 is performing significantly better than at the time of the previous inspection and standards are satisfactory. There is evidence of improvement in all key areas although a great deal of work remains to be done. In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Because of their social and behavioural problems, often resulting in exclusion from their previous schools, the standards attained by pupils at the time of their entry to the school are below average. All pupils, however, are making satisfactory progress and a few achieve well, resulting in most cases in their successful return to mainstream schools. The pupils love coming to school and the great majority of parents are happy for their children to attend, knowing that they enjoy their lessons and that the school has increasingly high expectations of their progress. One parent commented, 'This school is an excellent place for my child to be, to help him get back on track.'

All the pupils make good progress in their personal development. This underpins the pupils' continuing motivation to learn and their achievements. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and has improved because of the regular monitoring by the senior staff. Teachers generally ensure that their lessons are interesting, well paced and challenging. As a result, the pupils enjoy their work and respond by trying their best. Although the school's tracking of each individual pupil's achievement is satisfactory and improving, the format does not make it easy to assess the overall progress of groups of pupils. In addition, assessment is not used as sharply as it could be to set pupils targets for learning that will challenge them to build further on their success. As a result, pupils are generally unsure how to improve their work. The curriculum is satisfactory and subject leaders are increasingly confident in managing each area. Programmes are enriched by the use of off-site visits to extend the pupils' social and cultural understanding.

The pupils thrive within the caring and supportive ethos of the school. Children with continuing behaviour problems or personal difficulties are very quickly identified and supported. A strong emphasis is placed on personal, health and social education (PHSE) and on specific techniques, which help the pupils to understand their own behaviour. This promotes the pupils' emotional and behavioural development and they learn to remain healthy, to keep safe and to behave well. The pupils are involved wherever possible in decisions about themselves. The provision for pupils with additional difficulties in reading is good. These pupils are well supported and follow specifically adapted programmes where this is appropriate. The pupils value their school. This is evident through the good relationships they have with staff, their good attendance and the way they proudly wear their uniform. This provision, along with the progress pupils make in learning and using basic skills, prepares them satisfactorily for their future learning.

There has been substantial improvement in the leadership and management of the school. The headteacher knows the school well and he has appropriately prioritised the main areas for improvement. The appointment of an experienced teacher as deputy head has strengthened the management team. The school now evaluates its work satisfactorily, although this is only just beginning to have an impact on pupils' achievement. Managers seek out and act on the views of all connected with the school, including the pupils. The governing body is supportive and monitors aspects of the school's work with increasing confidence. The school has made consistent improvement since the previous inspection and has a sound capacity to improve further.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment more consistently to set learning targets for pupils which give them clearer guidance on what they need to do to improve their work and thus make progress even more quickly.
- Improve the presentation of assessment data to enable senior staff to maintain an effective overview of pupils' progress.

A small proportion of the 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

The pupils' attainments on entry to the school are generally below average and there are sometimes large gaps in their knowledge and understanding. All the pupils make satisfactory progress however and some achieve well. The standards of the higher ability pupils in Year 6 are comparable to those achieved nationally by pupils in mainstream schools. Those pupils with additional learning difficulties achieve equally well and there is no evidence of underachievement by any pupils. The tracking of pupils' progress in basic skills is satisfactory and improving and this has a growing impact on their achievement. All the pupils make steady progress in literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT). The pupils make good progress in meeting challenging behavioural targets. They learn to take a pride in their improved behaviour after a history of school failure and rejection. This has a significant impact on their academic success.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

The pupils' good progress in personal development reflects the school's strong management of behaviour and emphasis on moral and social values. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is also good. This was demonstrated, for instance, in the many instances of consideration for other pupils that were observed during the inspection. Their social development is outstanding and the major strength of the school. The pupils are delightful in their openness and friendliness to staff and other pupils. They respond very well to the rewards and praise they are given. As a result, they work harder, behave better, and therefore make faster progress.

The school is calm because pupils feel safe and confident and know what is expected from them. When pupils' behaviour becomes unacceptable it is dealt with calmly and with understanding and support for the pupil involved. As one boy put it, 'Things happen but teachers sort it out quickly.' There were a minority of parents, however, who still expressed some concern about standards of behaviour. Pupils develop their understanding of their behaviour and responsibilities to others through good provision in PHSE. This is supported by the efforts pupils make to help others, for example in charity fund raising. They gradually gain knowledge of healthy lifestyles and healthy eating and they have opportunities to take part in physical activity during the day. They develop their social skills because of the excellent example they are set by staff. The pupils' attendance is good. This is because they enjoy school and are proud of their progress. Those pupils who were spoken to were emphatic that bullying was rare and quickly dealt with and that they found this school better than any other they had attended. Parents generally have a high regard for the school. A typical comment is, 'His attitudes and

behaviour have come on in leaps and bounds.' This increase in social skills along with their grounding in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy ensures pupils are well prepared for transfer to secondary school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teachers know their pupils well and this enables them to plan interesting, well-paced lessons. The pupils like their teachers. Pupils gain confidence to learn new things because they receive a high level of individual tuition from well-trained teaching assistants. The management of behaviour is good. Pupils understand and respond to clear routines. They enjoy their lessons and try their best. Classroom staff play a full part in assessing and recording the steps in pupils' progress. However, some of the teachers' day-to-day planning is insufficiently focused on the small learning steps, which the pupils make. This is because the use of assessment to sharpen pupils' learning targets and further extend their achievements is not yet consistent.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils enjoy a curriculum which is well matched to their interests and which is regularly monitored for its effectiveness. Because the assessment of pupils' work is inconsistent, teachers do not yet always effectively adapt curriculum programmes appropriately to meet the learning needs of each pupil. Programmes in PHSE underpin much of the school's work and these have a significant impact on the pupils' achievement in personal skills. There is a range of activities that help pupils to learn in everyday situations, for example, teaching them to behave appropriately in the community. Literacy and numeracy programmes are increasingly effective because teachers use the national strategies for teaching these subjects. This adds rigour to their lessons and has a positive impact on the pupils' progress.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a high standard of pastoral care for pupils. Child protection procedures are effective. There are appropriate procedures for risk assessments and the necessary checks on staff are in place. Pupils are involved wherever possible in reviewing their own behaviour and in negotiating the type and amount of support, which they think they will need. This has a strong impact on their growing ability to exercise self-control.

Relationships are supportive The pupils have a good understanding of their behaviour targets because staff tell them how well they are doing and reward them with merits. The targets are clear and regularly repeated to pupils. However, whilst teachers give appropriate feedback to pupils about their academic efforts, pupils are not clear on their learning targets, because the targets are not focused enough. Therefore, in most cases the pupils do not know how to improve their work and take that extra step to raise their achievement.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school have significantly improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be inadequate. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established clear targets for the school's improvement and although there is still much to do, there are clear signs of progress in the quality of teaching, in the tracking of pupils' achievements and in the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's development. Managers now have a secure grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and focus appropriately on the pupils' achievement.

Communication within the school is good. The staff feel consulted, involved and valued. There are sound procedures to support new teachers and professional training is relevant to all staff, for example in the whole school training on behaviour management. Governors provide satisfactory support to the school. They have a developing understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Relationships with parents are good and the communication between home and school is well organised and positive.

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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 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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
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
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

05 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westfield School, Bourne End, SL8 5BE

Not long ago I came to your school to see how you were getting on and whether I could suggest anything to make the school better. You made me very welcome and I enjoyed meeting some of you in the classrooms and in the dining room and library. Thank you and well done.

I was only with you for one day. That was long enough for me to realise that you go to a school which gives you a satisfactory education and which is improving all the time. I could see that you all enjoy school and that your behaviour has improved rapidly. These are the main strengths of the school.

- You work hard and you are making progress in your work and good progress in your behaviour and personal development.
- You have a good range of activities, including those that help you become independent, make choices, and prepare you for when you go on to secondary school.
- All the adults at the school look after you well.
- Lessons are interesting. This means you enjoy learning and do your best.

I think the school could improve further if the staff were to write down more carefully how well you have made progress. This would help them to give you appropriate targets to aim for which you understood better. I think also, that if all the information about how well you are doing was made easier for your teachers to understand and use, then they could help you to improve faster.

You can help yourselves too, by working as hard on improving your behaviour and your work as you have been doing.

Please thank your parents for the helpful comments they made on the questionnaires.

Best wishes to you all.

Mel Blackband

Lead Inspector