

Westfields Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115994
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326305
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Joan Lindsay

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	246
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	91
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sheila Turl
Headteacher	Mrs Denise Powell
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane Yateley GU46 6NN
Telephone number	01252 873603
Fax number	01252 890832

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large infant school providing Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) education for children in three Reception classes. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils are from other ethnic minorities or have English as an additional language. Fewer pupils than the national average claim free school meals. The number of pupils who have a learning difficulty and/or disability is also less than average. These pupils have a range of difficulties and disabilities such as moderate learning, behaviour needs and autism. The school has the Investors in People award and some national awards reflecting its commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles. The current headteacher has been in post for two years following a turbulent time of staff and leadership changes.

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. There are some outstanding features such as the way pupils behave, and the care, guidance and support given to pupils. The personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is also outstanding. The school works well in partnership with others such as parents who are generally positive about the school and supportive in different ways such as when a large number of dads gave up their time for 'Bring Your Dad to School Day'.

Children make good progress in all areas of their learning in Reception and this rate of progress continues throughout the school. Pupils reach standards that are above the national average overall, although writing has not been as strong as reading and mathematics. However, a strong focus on teaching phonics and an emphasis on guided reading have resulted in a good improvement in the numbers reaching the higher levels in writing and reading. Teachers have excellent tools to track and assess pupils and these, combined with consistently good teaching, have led to improving standards in reading and writing and sustained high standards in mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with expectations. This is because there has not been enough direct teaching of skills due to a lack of suitable computers and time allocated. This is an area the school is in the process of rectifying with plans for better equipment and an ICT suite.

The curriculum is good and has rightly and successfully focused on developing literacy skills. Other subjects are covered adequately. However, the school has identified that not enough has been done to inject more interest and creativity. Plans are now in place to link subjects more, cover them in greater depth and add elements such as more 'hands-on' investigations, whilst still ensuring that pupils can practise their basic skills in all subjects.

Pupils love coming to school and this is reflected in their good attendance. They approach all aspects of school life with enthusiasm and say they have lots of friends. Their behaviour is excellent in class and around the school. The pastoral care that pupils receive is outstanding. This is because staff know pupils and their families well and also because they call in outside expertise to help those with specific needs. Academic support and guidance is also outstanding. Regular checks on what pupils have learned and the use of targets mean that they are given excellent support to achieve well.

Leadership and management are good and the headteacher provides strong leadership. She has rightly focused on raising literacy standards and has been successful in this aim. She is aware of the areas that need to be developed further such as ICT skills, extending the curriculum and enhancing pupils' understanding of different cultures in Britain. The school's self-evaluation is therefore good, as is the capacity to improve as there is a great sense of teamwork and a desire to continue to get better. Although some of the subject coordinators are new to their role, they are developing confidence in monitoring and managing their subjects. Governors are supportive and challenging and fully involved in the push for even higher standards.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children start in the Reception classes with skills and knowledge that are in line with what would be expected for their age. They get off to a flying start and settle quickly because they are very well-prepared through 'taster' sessions and home visits. The classrooms provide a rich

environment for children to learn and develop. Good teaching ensures that children achieve well so that by the end of Reception, standards are above those expected of the age group. Teamwork and good assessment procedures help teachers to plan activities that take account of children's prior experiences and learning needs. Considerable attention is paid to children's personal development and well-being. This high level of commitment is illustrated in extremely happy, confident children. Although they have only recently started school, children are already working happily with others and responding positively during class discussions. A very good partnership with parents has been established through very helpful opportunities to visit and speak to staff. As one parent commented, 'I have been very impressed with the Reception team's introduction to the routine and rules of school life'. Children respond well to good opportunities to make choices and select their own activities, particularly during the lively 'Discovery Time'. Children thoroughly enjoy these daily activities and happily take part in the many exciting tasks covering all areas of learning. The outdoor space is used well, but the lack of a covered area means play is restricted if the weather is bad. Independent tasks are generally carefully balanced with direct teaching and adult support, but occasionally, opportunities for children to make their own decisions are missed. The strong focus on teaching phonics makes a significant contribution to children's progress in early reading skills. The EYFS is led and managed well. This ensures good teamwork and a smooth transition for children from Reception classes into Year 1 where many of the routines carry on until they get used to learning that is more formal.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in ICT by enhancing resources and the time allocated so that skills can be taught directly.
- Develop the curriculum so that all subjects have time to be covered in greater depth, pupils' creative experiences are widened, and there are more opportunities for practical, investigative work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school successfully enables all groups of pupils to achieve well. Pupils who have a learning difficulty and/or disability generally make good progress as their needs are identified and they are well supported by teaching assistants. In recent years, as a result of inconsistent teaching due to a high turnover of staff, including senior managers, standards were declining. However they recovered in 2007 to be above average. 2008 provisional results indicate a good improvement in reading and especially in writing, particularly at the higher levels. This has resulted from a strong focus on guided reading and phonics. Current standards in mathematics are above the national average. Pupils make adequate progress in ICT and standards are as expected for their age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They are keen to learn new things and enjoy all that the school offers. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, but their understanding of Britain as a diverse society is less well developed. Bullying is very rare. Pupils promote the 'Playground Friend' system by giving support to lonely or vulnerable pupils and caring for them. They feel safe and are confident to approach school

staff with any worries. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and lifestyles. They are encouraged to make informed choices about the food they eat and to take regular exercise such as 'Huff and Puff' games at playtime. Pupils are a credit to the school and proud of their own community. The school council plays an active part in the school. Members speak with pride about their role in 'making sure the toilets are nice and clean'. They participate in fund raising for a range of charities. The good grounding pupils receive in their social and basic skills prepares them well for the next stages of learning. As one pupil said, 'The more you learn, the better job you get'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There is consistently good teaching throughout the school. This is due to a whole school approach to matters such as planning, the excellent use of data to support pupils to achieve as well as they can, and through good behaviour management. Some of the outstanding elements of teaching are the relationships between teachers and pupils, so that pupils enjoy their work and behave extremely well, and the teachers' use of different ways to involve pupils such as 'talking partners'. Marking is also used extremely well to guide pupils in how to improve. On occasions, teachers do not leave enough time for pupils to answer questions before supplying the answers as they are keen to move the lesson on at a good pace. Teaching assistants, who are generally highly trained, play an important role in pupils' learning in class and in phonics and guided reading group work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum covers all subjects, but there has been a particular focus on literacy, with extra sessions of phonics and guided reading as this was an area identified as a priority. As standards in literacy are now improving strongly the school has plans to free up time to make lessons more interesting for example by planning more investigations in science, and using drama across different subjects, while at the same time keeping the literacy standards up. The good personal, social and health education programme contributes to pupils' positive attitudes and excellent behaviour. ICT has not had a strong enough focus in the curriculum due to a lack of suitable resources and facilities but there are plans to address this. Pupils benefit from a good range of extracurricular activities many of which are sport related which add to their understanding of how to live healthy lives.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pastoral care is outstanding, in what some parents described as a 'caring, nurturing environment'. The school puts in excellent levels of support using many outside agencies and pooling their expertise and knowledge to benefit pupils. Also there is very good support to help pupils who may be finding it hard to mix with others or who have specific emotional needs. Procedures to safeguard pupils are robust. There are outstanding levels of support and guidance for pupils through the use of regular assessment and pupils' targets. Pupils know their targets well and feel that they help them to improve. One boy stated 'targets definitely help me to get better'.

Marking in books is very helpful to pupils, guiding them in how to improve and linking their work to the lesson's learning objective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management at all levels are good and the head teacher provides very clear direction. A recent focus on raising standards through improved teaching and learning is showing strong impact particularly on writing skills. Effective monitoring and evaluation by senior managers enables good guidance being provided to teachers about how to improve. This has contributed well to the recent recovery in standards. Governors have developed their role well through close links with the school and training. They are fully involved in school development planning and are very aware of the school's strengths and areas for development, and prepared to question where it is appropriate. Good partnerships with parents, outside agencies and the local communities support the school's work and community cohesion well. Pupils' understanding of UK and global communities is not well developed but links with schools abroad and in more diverse areas in Britain are now in place.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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 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?	1

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

06 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westfields Infant School, Yateley, GU46 6NN

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers, having lunch with you and joining in your assembly. We think your school is a good one. It is excellent at looking after you and helping you to settle and develop when you start in Reception. We also think your behaviour is outstanding.

Here are some of the things we like best about your school.

- You get off to a good start in Reception, and continue like this so that you reach high standards.
- You really enjoy school and behave extremely well. You feel safe because adults look after you so very well, know what you are good at and where you need extra help.
- Your headteacher is good at leading and managing the school and everyone works together really well.

This is what we have asked the school to do next.

- Help you to know more about how to use computers by making sure there is enough time and equipment, so that you can have lessons just learning about how to use them.
- Plan to give more time to some of your subjects so you can learn in a fun and exciting way and get the chance to do more things like investigations.

You can help your school by continuing to work hard and behave so well. Thank you again for a very enjoyable visit to your school and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joan Lindsay

Lead Inspector