

# Westgate Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118252
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	326793
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Liz Duffy

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	198
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carole Bowes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Beverly Chris
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Summerhill Road Dartford DA1 2LP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01322 223382
<b>Fax number</b>	01322 274225

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Westgate Primary School is a small one-form entry primary school. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is for children in the Reception class. The school is ethnically diverse. Although the majority of pupils are from White British families, a third of the school population come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils speaking English as an additional language is high. The proportion of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above the national average, with most having speech, language and communication or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is average. The school has recently moved to the Dartford Learning Campus, which serves the community's needs from nursery to adulthood. The play area for the new building is still under development. The current headteacher has been in post since April 2005. Since this time, there has been a high turnover of staff (50%). This is mainly through previous teachers retiring.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Westgate Primary School is a satisfactory school. It is an improving school which demonstrates a range of strengths. The motto, 'To be the best we can', underpins the ethos of a school that is 'on the move'. The strategies being put in place are making a significant difference to the confidence, participation and achievement of pupils; for example, regular reviewing of targets has helped pupils to understand what they need to do to improve and having access to individual programmes of support boosts learners' self-esteem. Its commitment to doing the best for every pupil lies at the heart of the good care and support they receive. As one parent stated, 'All the teachers are very caring and dedicated to their job.' Successful efforts have been made to build the trust and involvement of parents in the life of the school and in their children's learning. Through the parent questionnaires, parents expressed their appreciation for the regular contact they have with the school.

Good partnerships and relationships with outside agencies and other schools help to provide support to vulnerable pupils as well as provide exciting enrichment opportunities for all pupils. For example, a number of pupils enjoy music tuition at The Mick Jagger Centre nearby. Because there are effective links between pupils and people from other cultures in Britain and overseas, the school promotes community cohesion well. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to their learning. Particularly striking is the support and encouragement they give each other as well as their appreciation of each other's backgrounds and learning needs. Through such an inclusive environment, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, together with those for whom English is an additional language, progress well when compared to similar pupils from other schools.

Children enter Reception with skills below national expectations, particularly in language. By the end of Reception, the majority of children are performing above the expected level for communication, creative, social and emotional development, demonstrating that children in Reception make good progress. By the time they leave Year 2, standards are similar to those expected at that age. This is due to the good teaching and provision evident in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Thorough planning of creative activities which engage and challenge the children ensures every individual thrives. Changes in staffing and a lack of reinforcement of key skills in literacy and numeracy mean that this good progress is not sustained with all pupils in Years 3 to 6. Standards attained in reading have steadily increased and are now broadly average by the end of Year 6; however, this is not replicated in writing, where standards are below national expectations. Progress in writing in Year 3 is slow and this affects learning in the later years. Satisfactory progress is made in mathematics from the time pupils enter the school until the time they leave; however, Year 4 pupil performance demonstrates that progress slows at this time. In both areas, pupils do not record regularly enough their learning in their exercise books, thus limiting the reinforcement of knowledge and skills. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6.

The headteacher provides very clear strategic direction for the school and this is complemented by an able governing body, together with an enthusiastic staff who take on board new ideas and are working to improve the learning experiences of pupils. A broad and balanced curriculum is offered but provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education is limited. There is inadequate access to outdoor space for all pupils and this limits effective delivery of certain games and sports and required outdoor learning for children in Reception. School leaders have firm plans to answer these shortcomings and the school has

good capacity for further improvement. It has successfully raised standards and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, in Years 1 and 2 and for particular groups of learners, such as the more able. The school has effectively addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection, which were to improve the use of assessment information and to monitor more closely the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Taking into account their low starting points, children in Reception make good progress and reach or exceed the standards expected by the time they start Year 1. This is due to the good teaching they receive. Children make a good start to their schooling through effective links with the pre-school provider and the school's good induction arrangements. A particular strength is the development of children's social skills and attitudes towards others. Children play in harmony and the majority talk freely with adults. Learning is purposeful and this is underpinned by effective planning which incorporates a variety of challenges for children to complete in a range of situations. The good relationships enjoyed with parents help the school to target planning so children's individual needs are catered for. Children are helped to be independent. For example, they take responsibility for clearing up and taking photographs of each other to record their learning. Daily recording of evidence helps inform the 'next steps' for improvement, although insufficient use is made of the teacher assistant to help with this aspect to ensure all 'next steps' for all children are captured consistently. Having recently moving site, a key priority is the development of the outdoor learning area (at present there is no large and fixed climbing apparatus for physical development). As a result, links between outdoor learning and indoor learning are not strong enough. The Early Years Foundation Stage team successfully lead developments. They actively seek other examples of good practice to enhance their provision and evaluate provision regularly to ensure that children are cared for well.

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

- Raise standards of writing in Year 3 and standards of numeracy in Year 4 so that pupils sustain good progress from Years 1 and 2.
- Improve the use of the outdoor learning area for children in the Foundation Stage to cover all six areas of learning and to deliver effectively outdoor sporting experiences in PE for Years 1 to 6.
- Improve provision for ICT.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as 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**

From starting points which are below those expected for their age on entry, most pupils make satisfactory progress by the time they leave school. The good support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those who have English as an additional language enable these pupils to make good progress during their time at school. This is also true for the more able pupils in mathematics and English, where pupils benefit from a range of enrichment activities as well as targeted extension. However, too many pupils in Year 3 do not make fast enough progress in writing, and this is also the case for pupils in Year 4 with numeracy. Pupils

have insufficient time to practice and apply key skills, which restricts their progress. This affects performance in Years 5 and 6. By the end of Year 6, pupils are performing below expectations in writing and mathematics.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are proud of their school and feel that they are listened to. They appreciate the fact that 'every child matters' and the opportunities they are given 'to help make things better'. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. They show caring attitudes towards others and report that they make friends quickly. One pupil spoke highly of the support he had received through the anger management and self-esteem programme. This had enabled him to work well with others. Although a small proportion of parents expressed concerns that bullying was not always dealt with effectively, pupils say there is little bullying and when it does occur, it is tackled successfully. They feel safe and 'looked after'. Behaviour is very good and well managed by staff. Pupils have a strong sense of community and enjoy participating in fundraising events, such as 'Red Nose Day'. Such events help to give pupils a satisfactory understanding of issues in the outside world. Preparation for future life is satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy life but they feel they would benefit from more space for outdoor play. Attendance is satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Good relationships between the teachers and the pupils are a common feature in every classroom. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support learning, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also those for whom English is an additional language. Resources are well managed. Pupils report that work is 'suitable for you' and this is evident in the planning, where there are a range of engaging tasks to meet the needs of various abilities. On occasions, the pace of learning slows and too few pupils contribute to feeding back their ideas. Teachers do not consistently reinforce key points of learning, especially in giving pupils time to use and apply key skills. Pupils take insufficient account of the recommendations for improvement given by their teachers' marking.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

A creative curriculum is delivered in Years 1 and 2 and this serves the needs of learners well. Of particular note is the provision throughout the school for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, together with the provision for the more able pupils. Both groups benefit from individual programmes which develop learning and provide further enrichment opportunities. For example, the more able attend challenge workshops at a neighbouring secondary school. The impact of such provision is seen in the results that these groups attain. All pupils benefit from an interesting range of extra-curricular activities. Standards observed in art are high and this is due in part to the enjoyable activities run in the art club and the regular support provided by a local artist. However, ICT provision is underdeveloped, even though the school has a high surplus in its budget. Although pupils have regular access to ICT, the ratio of computers to pupils is low and online access to support independent learning is in

its early stages. The lack of accessible outdoor space is an issue for the teaching of physical education.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Parents value the quality of pastoral care and the quality of the induction arrangements for their children, whether starting in Reception or transferring from another school. Support from the parent liaison officer is highly thought of by parents and teaching staff. There are strengths in academic guidance. The school has in place a tracking system which helps teachers identify underperformance and thus provide support as necessary. Marking gives pupils helpful advice on how to improve. However, some teachers do not monitor regularly whether their comments have been taken on board by pupils and acted upon. Pupils understand their targets and know what they need to do to improve. They enjoy the use of a 'target dartboard' which encourages them to achieve. The support for learners who speak English as an additional language, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who are gifted and talented are all great strengths of the school's provision. The school complies with all statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school's effectiveness in tackling underperformance is reflected in its success in improving standards in the Early Years Foundation Stage, in Years 1 and 2 and for particular groups of learners: learners who speak English as an additional language, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who are gifted and talented. The school's capacity to raise standards further is good because there are many strong leaders and managers in the school who effectively support and develop those leaders who are new to the role. This is during a time of significant change, the large turn-around of staffing and the movement to a new site. Morale is good because teachers recognise that pupils reach higher standards than in previous years. Leaders and managers have identified that the next step is to raise pupils' achievements so they meet national expectations when they leave in Year 6. Self-evaluation is accurate and is used effectively to draw up plans for future school improvement. Staff are involved in decision making and thus have ownership of the improvement needs of the school. Governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and share the school's drive to improve. Good use is also made of local partnerships to support learning. For example, the 'Spectrum Centre' provides useful guidance for those pupils with autism whose achievement is good. International activities (such as fundraising for service women in Afghanistan) and regular discussion of current affairs (for example, exploration of G20 issues in lessons) help pupils to appreciate and understand the world they live in.

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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?	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?	2
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?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## 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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	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**

17 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westgate Primary School, Dartford DA1 2LP

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to me and my colleague during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed meeting you and listening to your views about your work and the school. A particular thank you goes to those pupils who gave up part of their lunchtime to spend time with us. Your school is judged to be satisfactory and improving. There are many strengths and good features:

- Your participation in your lessons and your positive attitudes towards learning.
- Your teachers' commitment to supporting you to achieve your best.
- Your use of targets to help you to improve.
- Your behaviour, which is of a very high standard.
- Your support for one another, whether it is to help another person make friends or to help a friend with improving a piece of work.

There are a few things which we have asked your headteacher, teachers and governors to do in order to make your school even better than it already is. These are:

- To make sure that you are helped to make better progress in your writing and numeracy, especially for pupils in Years 3 and 4.
- To improve your access to outdoor space, making sure that those of you in Reception can learn outdoors as well as you do indoors, and for those of you in Years 1 to 6, to have access to outdoor sport and games.
- To make sure you have access to a range of computer programmes and equipment to help you in your learning.

You can help by making sure you read the comments teachers write in your exercise books and that you follow the advice that your teachers give you.

I wish you all the best with your future learning.

Yours faithfully,

Liz Duffy

Lead inspector