

Westfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111240
Local Authority	Halton
Inspection number	337649
Inspection dates	23–24 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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 of pupils on the school roll	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Joan Lowe
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Dawes
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and saw eight teachers. Meetings were held with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's own assessment and national assessment data, policies and minutes including those related to safeguarding, and samples of pupils' work. A total of 41 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and 14 pupils' questionnaires were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- standards in mathematics, and progress, particularly of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the quality of teaching and teachers' use of assessment
- whether there has been sufficient improvement since the last inspection.

Information about the school

Almost all pupils in this smaller-than-average school are from White British backgrounds. The number eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above that of most schools. There is a specially funded unit for pupils whose hearing is impaired. The school has received the Healthy Schools award and has achieved Activemark and Artsmark Gold since the last inspection. The headteacher has been in post for one year.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. There have been recent improvements in some areas of leadership, provision and in pupils' personal development. The headteacher's strong and energetic leadership has been significant in affecting change.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage progress well owing to the good provision for their learning and development. Thereafter, most pupils make steady progress throughout the school, but the pace of learning and progress in Years 3 to 6 is variable due to inconsistencies in teaching quality and the effectiveness of teachers' assessment. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who attend the specially funded unit are well cared for and supported. They learn well and make good progress. Standards in English, mathematics and science, at the end of Year 6, are average overall. They are above average in English because a strong focus on boosting attainment in that subject paid dividends in 2009 with much improved results. The school is correct in its current ambition to raise standards in mathematics.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils attend school regularly and behave well. They contribute well to everyday school life, feel safe, and enjoy their learning. The curriculum enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily. It provides a good range of opportunities for sports and those for the arts are increasing because of strengthening links with local high schools and popular after-school clubs.

All staff members are clear about the part they play in driving the school forward. The headteacher's inclusive style ensures that senior leaders participate fully in action planning and monitoring the school's effectiveness. Teaching has improved somewhat as a result of frequent monitoring. However, this has not always focused sufficiently on pupils' learning. Leaders have worked hard to install new systems for checking pupils' progress and involving pupils in assessing their own work. Governors are very committed to the school and fully share the vision for improvement but are not yet fully involved in leading initiatives and evaluating outcomes. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and given the progress made in tackling issues around assessment and teaching quality, and the general trend of overall improvement, the school currently has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics by:
 - providing opportunities for pupils to practise and develop mathematics skills

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across the curriculum.

- Improve the consistency of good teaching by:
 - ensuring that successful assessment practices seen in some classes are fully used throughout the school
 - focusing more sharply on the pace of pupil's learning when monitoring teaching quality.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enjoy their learning and most work enthusiastically when challenged. They are usually attentive and work steadily with partners and in small groups. Most pupils share the view that lessons are fun. Older pupils are becoming more skilled at measuring their own progress and setting targets for themselves and this helps the pace of their learning.

Most pupils make satisfactory progress by the end of Year 6 but the pace from class to class for some is uneven because not all are guided well enough about how to improve their work. There has been good improvement in writing which had an impact on English standards in 2009, but mathematics standards have not reached the same level. Pupils' current work and school assessments indicate average standards and that the majority of pupils are on track to make expected progress. Progress for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is more consistent because of the additional help they receive. Those who attend the hearing impaired unit are provided for and supported well when they join other classes, where they take a full part in lessons alongside their peers.

Pupils are very polite and considerate of one another. They respect others' opinions as well as their cultural differences and show justifiable pride in what they do for their school. The school council gives all an active voice in school developments and pupils' eagerness to act as Eco team members, play leaders and playground buddies, for example, indicates the importance they attach to caring for others. Pupils are aware of what contributes to a sensible diet and are very much involved in sports activities. Their involvement with the Fire Service in maintaining an allotment helps them to learn about the sustainability of healthy food supplies. Their average attendance and progress in literacy and numeracy are a satisfactory contribution to the skills they need for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The inconsistency of teaching quality makes it satisfactory rather than good and accounts for pupils' satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Although there is more good teaching than there was at the time of the last inspection, there remains some inadequate teaching to be eliminated and some, which is satisfactory, to be improved. In the most effective lessons all work is carefully tailored to pupils' varying needs so that all are challenged well and make progress. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and pupils fully understand what is expected of them. Other lessons, however, lack a sense of urgency so the pace of learning is slow. In a mathematics lesson, for example, pupils spent too long on meaningless colouring tasks. Different abilities were not taken into account and pupils were not clear about what they were learning. Teachers' lesson planning is satisfactory but the best practice is not shared. Most teachers introduce information and communication technology (ICT) effectively into lessons and pupils use computers routinely to support learning. All teachers manage pupils well. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. There is some good practice seen in marking and involving pupils in assessing their own progress but this is not a strong feature in all classes and leaves some pupils unclear about what they need to do next.

The curriculum enables pupils to achieve satisfactorily in numeracy but does not offer enough opportunities for pupils to apply those skills to other subjects in order to help them learn in a more creative way. ICT, however is a strength and is used successfully. There is a good range of activities to enrich pupils' learning and provide enjoyment in art, drama and sports. A good initiative is the formation of a brass band, which is

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furthering interest and standards in music.

Parents agree overwhelmingly that their children are well cared for and pupils themselves say that there is always an adult to turn to for help when needed. Support for vulnerable pupils is well organised and as a result, some make remarkable progress, for example, in their personal social development. Parents are happy with the information they receive from school about their children's progress. Arrangements for those starting school and transferring at the end of Year 6 are good. The good care and guidance pupils receive about their personal safety and relationships have a strong impact on their positive attitudes towards others.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

By restructuring leadership responsibilities and opening up opportunities for professional development the headteacher has established a collective determination among governors and staff to bring about improvement. The confidence of parents and carers in the school has grown as they have become increasingly involved in their children's learning. Good initiatives such as Forest School, focusing on pupils' learning through the environment, and partnerships with schools and businesses in the locality are beginning to provide new opportunities for learning. Despite some advances in the key areas of teaching and the setting up of effective systems for tracking academic progress, leaders recognise, correctly, that there is still some way to go on those fronts. A measure of the schools ambition for its pupils is the challenging targets it has set for the coming years.

The school strongly challenges all forms of discrimination and ensures that individual pupils have the opportunities they need to achieve their best, whatever their particular talents or abilities. There has been a thorough analysis of the school's needs and how it can respond to the issue of community cohesion. Productive links have been made with schools in Nairobi that contribute to pupils' good cultural awareness. However, action to communicate with contrasting schools in the United Kingdom has been slow and is still at a very early stage resulting in the satisfactory promotion of community cohesion overall.

Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and that all staff are given the training they need. Good practice is adopted with regard to risk assessment and there is clear guidance about the implications of safeguarding within the curriculum. The school makes good use of outside agencies to inform pupils and parents, for example,

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about the safe use of ICT.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's abilities are below typically expected levels when they enter Reception. Good leadership and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage result in good progress. By the end of Reception most children work securely with the early learning goals and a few are more advanced. Children develop good personal skills and attitudes. They consistently behave well, take on responsibilities such as tidying up after themselves, and show good levels of independence and perseverance. One child, for example, would not stop for lunch because he was determined to number all of the paper rabbits (up to 48) which his group had found on their 'bunny hunt' in the school grounds. A good balance is planned between adult-led activities such as lessons on letters and sounds and those, which children choose for themselves. There are also good links between these activities so that children can follow up independently what they learn in the classroom. Teachers make best use of the outside area, including the wooded section of the grounds (the Forest School) where children learn and develop well through exploration and play but current outside resources do not allow for the full range of independent physical development. Provision for children's welfare is good. Strong relationships with parents and carers mean that children settle confidently into their new surroundings. Staff are very watchful over children's safety and well-being. Their close observation and evaluation of children's progress is recorded well in their 'learning journeys', which are shared regularly with parents and carers.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The views expressed by parents and carers about aspects of the schools provision are overwhelmingly positive. A small number of parents and pupils thought that behaviour could be better, but on inspection evidence, pupils' behaviour was judged to be good and managed well by staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Westfield Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 160 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	63	14	34	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	61	15	37	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	56	18	44	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	46	21	51	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	51	20	49	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	56	17	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	59	16	39	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	39	19	46	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	54	19	46	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	41	16	39	7	17	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	39	22	54	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	44	22	54	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	49	20	49	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



25 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westfield Primary School, Runcorn, WA7 4TR

Thank you very much for the kind and friendly welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. It was a real delight to talk to you about your school because you are all so polite and well mannered. We found out quite a lot from our discussions with you. For example, you told us how much you enjoy taking responsibility for different things, how much you enjoy sports and your Forest School activities. We also noticed that your attendance is improving. No doubt that's because of your smashing school dinners! Nevertheless, it's very important so do keep it up.

You are making satisfactory progress in your work. Children in Reception get off to a good start. The standards you reach in writing are improving but your mathematics could be better. Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and fun, and all of the adults in school take good care of you. Most importantly you take good care of each other and behave well.

Your parents, school governors, teachers and especially your headteacher, are just as proud of your school as you are, and everyone wants it to be better. To help that to happen I have asked if they could help you to reach higher standards in mathematics by giving you the more chances for investigation so that you use your skills in different ways. I have also asked teachers to make sure all of your lessons are as good as the very best ones and that you always know exactly what you need to do next to improve you work so that your learning is better and make your best progress in all subjects.

Best wishes and good luck to all of you.

Yours sincerely

Mr Kevin Johnson

Lead inspector

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