

Westmorland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132121
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	341290
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Andree Keddle

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	438
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr K Thompson
Headteacher	Mr Martin Henderson
Date of previous school inspection	23 April 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 29 lessons, observed 19 teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including safeguarding records, school policies, the school action plan, the mathematics raising attainment plan, reports from the School Improvement Partner, assessment data, pupils' work, teachers' planning and 118 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- the achievement of all pupils, particularly in mathematics and science to determine whether teaching and the curriculum are meeting their learning needs
- the progress made by different groups, such as higher attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language
- the achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the rigour and effectiveness of leadership systems in driving improvement, leading teaching and learning and in raising standards.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few pupils do not speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Since the last inspection the school has more than doubled in size and experienced many changes. In 2008, the school amalgamated with another primary school that was closed by the local authority. The newly amalgamated school operated on two sites with a new staff team recruited for one of the sites. In September 2009, and following an extensive building project, both sites moved into the present building. At the same time, the school amalgamated with a nursery school and several more staff members were recruited due to this further expansion.

A Children's Centre and after-school club managed by an outside private provider and located on the school site were not subject to this inspection.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Pupils, staff and governors are understandably proud of this good and improving school. Inspirational and highly effective leadership is ensuring rapid improvement. School leaders set ambitious targets and closely monitor pupils' progress towards these. Through a time of great change, the senior leaders and governors have successfully raised pupils' attainment. From three separate establishments, one school has been formed which provides an extremely safe and supportive environment in which pupils thrive. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures are in place and leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance. Staff development and training is excellent at all levels and the school's capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that pupils are cared for very well and make good gains in their learning and developing their personal skills. This is complemented by the excellent partnerships formed with other professionals and agencies. Also outstanding is the school's engagement with parents and carers with whom excellent relationships have been formed. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding; this work is given a high priority by the school and staff are proactive in ensuring that pupils are kept safe, especially the most vulnerable. As a result, the extent to which pupils feel safe is outstanding.

Overall, children enter the school with a level of skills and knowledge which is well below that expected for their age, especially with regard to their speaking, listening and communication skills. They make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage as the result of good and improving provision and outstanding leadership. This good progress continues through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and by the time pupils leave in Year 6, their attainment is broadly average. The quality of teaching is good and improving overall, as is the curriculum which is imaginative and enriched well by a wide range of visitors to school and educational visits. There is a clear focus on developing basic skills through themes and cross-curricular links in some year groups, but less so in others. The learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language are met very well. The progress made by higher attaining pupils is not as strong as for other groups, as these pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons or given time to apply their knowledge and skills to activities that fully meet their needs. The school prioritises the development of younger pupils' speaking and listening skills and has recently modified the Early Years Foundation Stage provision and Year 1 curriculum. However, the attainment and progress of some older pupils is hindered by their underdeveloped speech and language skills.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards further in English, mathematics and science by:
 - giving pupils regular opportunities to talk in lessons
 - maximising cross-curricular links to ensure that basic communication and literacy skills are developed in all aspects of the curriculum.
- Raise standards and increase progress for the higher attaining pupils in all key stages by:
 - ensuring that work is more closely matched to individual pupils' learning needs
 - increasing the level of challenge for these pupils
 - giving pupils more opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From starting points that are well below those typical for children of their age, pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching and achieve broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. An example of how the school is beginning to develop pupils' communication skills was observed in Year 1 where pupils were enthusiastic when composing questions to put to museum staff ready for their visit the following week. However, older pupils do not have as many opportunities to develop their communication skills and this sometimes hinders their learning. Pupils respond well to opportunities to evaluate each others' work as demonstrated by pupils who were keen to talk about how they had helped their partners by identifying two good points of their story (known as two stars) and one point to improve (known as a wish). Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress as the result of effective support from teachers and teaching assistants both in class and through specific one-to-one and small group learning programmes. Higher attaining pupils do not make as much progress because their activities are not always challenging enough and not consistently well matched to their learning needs.

Pupils' behaviour is good both in lessons and around school and they respond well to praise and encouragement from staff. Pupils have a good understanding of what is needed to live a healthy life and enjoy the healthy snacks at break time. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is good. They take part in decision making giving their ideas and suggestions to the members of the school council who, in turn, make decisions on their behalf, such as which items of play equipment to purchase for the playground. Pupils' current basic skills are broadly average and improving along with their attendance, providing a satisfactory basis for their future economic well-being.

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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Many lessons are characterised by teachers' good subject knowledge and activities well matched to pupils' learning needs resulting in a brisk pace of learning. Pupils have opportunities to build on and apply previous learning; for example in a good literacy lesson in Key Stage 2, pupils applied their understanding of features of performance poetry to performing poems in pairs for the rest of the class. However, in some lessons there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their speaking and listening skills. Teaching assistants are well deployed throughout all parts of lessons, giving extra support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those for whom English is an additional language. Information and communication technology (ICT) is well used to enhance learning.

Detailed and effective assessment systems are in place and school leaders use these to check on the progress that different groups of pupils make. The school has correctly identified the need to further challenge the higher attaining pupils, and as a result, their progress is beginning to accelerate. Pupils' work is well marked and there is effective use of praise coupled with good guidance as to what are the next steps to improve. Where teaching is less effective, particularly for higher attaining pupils, there is some over-direction by teachers, so pupils do not get enough opportunity to learn for themselves through applying their skills and knowledge to challenging activities.

The curriculum is well structured, broad, balanced and interesting giving pupils a good range of memorable learning experiences. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 talk with great excitement about the experiments carried out by scientists who visited their school and demonstrated how fire needs oxygen to burn. However, opportunities for pupils to

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apply their basic literacy skills across all subjects of the curriculum are not always maximised.

The school's outstanding care, guidance and support enable pupils to make good gains in their all-round development. All staff are committed to improving the pupils' well-being and this aspect of the school's work is given an extremely high priority. There is a very well organised and dedicated pastoral care team; vulnerable pupils are cared for particularly well and there are numerous examples of how the school has helped pupils overcome significant barriers to their learning, for example through excellent relationships with other professionals and agencies.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership of this school is characterised by very high expectations at all levels and a shared and determined drive for improvement. All safeguarding requirements are met and the school's excellent and highly proactive approach to safeguarding is coupled with outstanding partnerships which support pupils' learning and well-being. The school brings together a number of professionals who are based on the school site and work closely with families and their children. Relationships with parents and carers are outstanding and these contribute to the good and sometimes outstanding progress that individual pupils make.

The leadership and management of teaching and learning are good, with many new staff and procedures in place. School leaders are rigorous in their monitoring of the school's work and are ambitious and keen to improve the teaching to an outstanding level. Governors ask challenging questions and are fully involved in the life of the school. The attainment and progress of different groups of pupils are carefully monitored and the school promotes equality and tackles discrimination well. The school recognises that higher attaining pupils do not attain as well as their peers nationally and has recently put into place carefully planned strategies to address this. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good and the school is a highly cohesive community. Pupils talk about the new friends that they have made since the amalgamations and how well they get on with each other. The school facilities such as the football pitch and the ICT suite are well used and appreciated by the local community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children mostly enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a level of skills and knowledge that is well below that which is typical for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. Children make good progress as the result of activities that are well matched to their learning and development needs. Resources are plentiful both indoors and outside and are exceptionally well used. For example, in the Nursery, children delight in the role-play area and enjoy looking at the cocoons in the butterfly pavilion. A high priority is placed on developing the children's communication skills and staff work closely with the speech and language therapist who supports small groups of children with their speech and language development. In the Reception class, highly skilled staff work with children in small groups on daily letters and sounds activities.

Relationships between staff and children and their parents and carers are highly effective and the children are happy and enthusiastic learners. Staff make their expectations about behaviour and routines clear to children and reinforce these regularly with praise and, as a result, children behave well. Highly effective and rigorous safeguarding procedures ensure that children are safe. Assessment procedures are good and staff are able to closely track and measure the progress that children make. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding. Well qualified staff are very effectively deployed to ensure that children make good and improving progress. Planning is of a high quality and there is a consistent approach across both Nursery and Reception which has been quickly and smoothly achieved since the amalgamation with the nursery school at the start of this academic year.

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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	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school and the progress their children are making. Their responses show that they are pleased that their children are happy, safe and enjoy coming to this school. Parents say that the teaching is good and the school is led and managed effectively. Inspectors agree with these views. A few parents feel that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with well and that their views are not taken enough into account. The inspection found no evidence to support these opinions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Westmorland 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 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 438 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	88	69	37	29	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	88	69	39	30	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	77	60	45	35	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	77	60	46	36	2	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	83	65	38	30	2	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	73	57	50	39	2	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	52	53	41	3	2	1	1
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)	70	55	47	37	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	76	59	43	34	4	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	69	54	49	38	5	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	47	55	43	4	3	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	72	56	52	41	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	81	63	43	34	1	1	1	1

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



14 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westmorland Primary School, Stockport, SK5 8HH

Thank you very much for the very warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we inspected your school. Thank you for talking to us freely and giving your opinions in the questionnaires; you are clearly proud of your school. You are right to be proud of your headteacher and staff because they care for you in an outstanding way.

We were impressed with your good behaviour and how happy you feel in school. You have a good understanding of how to live a healthy life and an excellent understanding of how to keep yourselves safe, such as when using the internet. You make good progress in your learning as the result of good teaching and a good and interesting curriculum. Overall, we judged that yours is a good school.

To help your school become even better, we have said that senior leaders should:

- help you to achieve even higher standards in English, mathematics and science by giving you more opportunities to discuss your work and by developing your speaking and literacy skills in all subject areas
- help the most able among you to achieve even higher standards in English, mathematics and science by having opportunities to apply your skills and knowledge to more challenging activities.

Yours sincerely

Ms Andrée Keddle

Lead inspector

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