

Westgate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125559
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315260
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Gerald Griffin

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 on roll	
School (total)	121
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Smith
Headteacher	Lynne Andrew
Date of previous school inspection	30 June – 2 July 2003
School address	Bowling Green Street Warwick CV34 4DD
Telephone number	019 264 92015
Fax number	019 264 97783

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Westgate is a smaller than average size primary school. Nearly all pupils come from White British families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. A small number of pupils are at the early stage of learning English. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision comprises a Reception class. The privately managed 'Westgate Pre-School' is situated on the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Westgate is a good school. Pupils' achievement is good and they reach average standards by the end of Year 6 from starting points below those typically expected. Children get off to a good start in Reception, where they make good progress. Pupils are very polite to each other and to adults and behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils are very safe in the school's stimulating atmosphere and they are keen to tell visitors how much they enjoy their lessons, meeting their friends and participating in school clubs. As a result of their good personal development and well-being, pupils develop into mature and confident young people.

Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen markedly over the last year. For example, the quality of pupils' writing has improved because the school's planning has successfully addressed their low standards in spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, pupils' ability to express their ideas clearly in longer pieces of written work, such as stories or reports, remains a relative weakness. This is because the planning to remedy this shortcoming is not consistently effective.

This rise in standards is the result of improved teaching, which is now good. Teachers plan work that pupils find interesting and relevant and as a result they are keen to learn and work hard. Pupils are stretched well by their work in most lessons and make good progress. Occasionally the level of challenge drops and progress slows when the teacher talks for too long or does not ensure all pupils know exactly what they have to do. Pupils' regular homework extends their class work well.

The good curriculum has an appropriate focus on improving pupils' English and mathematics skills. It supports pupils' personal development well. Many clubs and educational visits enrich pupils' learning experiences and add to their enjoyment of school. Adults use their detailed knowledge of each child and pupil very effectively to provide a high standard of pastoral care. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English as their first language receive sensitive support that enables them to join in all activities. Pupils know their targets, and teachers provide them with clear guidance on how to make their work better, and care, guidance and support are good.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and very pleased with the standard of education it provides; one wrote, 'My child loves school. The staff are very approachable and work extremely hard to meet the needs of all children. My child is making excellent progress because the teaching is so good.'

Leadership and management are good and the school's recent record of improvement shows that it is well placed to become even better. The leadership of the headteacher is good and the deputy headteacher and subject leaders provide her with able support. Their determination to improve standards, through meeting the school's challenging targets, is shared enthusiastically by the staff.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception's stimulating atmosphere so that nearly all reach average standards by the time they start Year 1. Best progress is made in calculating because mathematics work is especially challenging. All children make good progress in personal development too but the level reached by girls is above that of the boys because some of the boys start school with levels of social skills well below those of the girls. Parents are correct when they say children receive high standards of care. One parent wrote, 'Every effort is made to get to know children and families well. My daughter is very happy and making wonderful academic progress.' Parents are pleased with the regular updates they receive about their child's progress and the well-planned induction procedures that ensure children settle quickly into the routines of school. Children relate well to each other and to adults and are self-confident and outgoing. Teaching is good because adults use assessments skilfully to plan appropriate work for each child. Children are provided with a wide range of stimulating activities that they thoroughly enjoy. Staff are particularly proficient at fostering children's independence. For example, so as not to interrupt their work, children can choose when it is best for them to take their milk and fruit break. The balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children is appropriate. The outdoor learning area is used well overall. However, it is too small for children to run around in, and the larger adjacent playground is underused to promote children's physical development. Leadership and management are good. Leaders provide effective training for staff to ensure they have a wide range of appropriate skills to promote children's learning and welfare.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the planning of longer pieces of written work so that pupils express their ideas clearly.
- Ensure pupils are challenged well throughout their lessons so that they always make good progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. Children's skills and experiences on entry to Reception are not at the levels expected for their age. Children make good progress in the Reception and good progress in Years 1 to 6. Standards in Year 6 are broadly average.

Pupils make good progress in English although progress in writing is less rapid than in reading. This is because pupils' ability to express their ideas clearly in longer pieces of writing is not as well developed as other areas of their written work, such as punctuation and spelling. Pupils' skills at using their knowledge and understanding of number to solve mathematical problems have improved rapidly over the last year and account for the rise in standards and good progress in mathematics. More opportunities to undertake experiments and investigations have accelerated progress in science. Standards in information and communication technology are average and improving now that pupils have regular access to up-to-date computers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils reflect maturely on their feelings. They respect each other, adults and the environment. Their good behaviour is founded on a very clear understanding of right and wrong. Occasionally their concentration wanders and they chatter when they are not sufficiently challenged in class. Pupils readily help each other and share resources. Their clear understanding of the diversity of British culture fosters their deep commitment to all people living harmoniously together, and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Pupils feel very safe in school, knowing that the very rare cases of bullying are effectively managed by the school. They know how to keep themselves safe, for example on the internet. Their understanding of their physical and emotional development and of relationships is less well developed. Pupils understand clearly why they need to keep themselves healthy and most do their best to take regular exercise and eat a balanced diet. Most pupils attend very regularly because they thoroughly enjoy their experience of school. They are keen to take responsibility, for example as buddies to children entering Reception. They talk proudly of the work of the school council in improving playground facilities. They collect generously for charity and look forward to participating in the town's traditional activities, such as the Easter Bonnet Parade and local arts events. Pupils' average standards and their positive attitudes mean that pupils' preparation for secondary school and future employment is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers use assessment well to plan a wide range of appropriate tasks that pupils enjoy. Many of these tasks, such as research and educational games, actively involve pupils in their learning and these especially accelerate progress. Teachers use computers well to engage pupils and promote their learning. Occasionally teachers do not maintain a high level of challenge throughout the lesson and pupils' progress slows. This happens, for example, when the teacher talks for too long so that pupils lose concentration or when they do not check that all pupils know exactly what they need to do to make a prompt start to their work. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Assemblies, health education, swimming and physical education lessons are some of the many ways that the curriculum provides good support for pupils' personal development. There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to practise applying the knowledge of number to solve mathematical problems. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to write stories and explanations. However the planning of this work does not consistently place sufficient emphasis on improving the way pupils express their ideas in this work. There are effective programmes for pupils with

learning difficulties and/or disabilities; those for gifted and talented pupils are less well developed. A wide range of popular sports and other clubs adds to pupils' enjoyment of school. Visits to Warwick are used especially well to extend classroom activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are very well cared for. They are confident that they can approach an adult with a concern, knowing their worries will be quickly resolved. The after-school club provides a high standard of care and a stimulating range of activities in which pupils enthusiastically participate. Child protection and health and safety procedures are robust and regularly reviewed. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support. For example, practical activities help pupils with low self-esteem quickly grow in confidence. The school works closely with a wide range of outside agencies to promote pupils' welfare and education. For example, they are working effectively with welfare officers to raise levels of attendance.

Pupils have a clear understanding of their targets and how to improve their work. Marking is good overall but it does not consistently show pupils how they can make the meaning of their written work clearer.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

A robust programme of monitoring and evaluation provides the school with a largely accurate assessment of its strengths and areas for development. Development plans have appropriate priorities but do not consistently use clear criteria to judge if actions have been successful. Subject leaders are having a positive effect in raising standards in their areas. For example, their training has sharpened staff's skills in teaching problem-solving in mathematics and experiments in science. The school assesses pupils' work very regularly and uses this information well to check progress and provide effective additional help for those who fall behind. Strategies to ensure pupils learn about different faiths and to work with parents and the local community are effective. Adults are used well to keep class numbers small so that pupils get more individual help with their learning. Governors work very hard on behalf of the school. They are well briefed and not afraid to hold the school to account.

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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 effectiveness of boarding provision	
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 is 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?	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

¹ 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

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
How well 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

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?	2

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?	2
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

5 December 2008



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westgate Primary School, Warwick, CV34 4DD

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed my visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. I think Westgate is a good school. I also think it is improving. Here are some of the things I found out.

- You make a good start to school in the Reception.
- Good teaching helps you make good progress in your lessons.
- Standards are average in English, mathematics and science.
- You really enjoy school and feel very safe and secure.
- You behave well and your attendance is satisfactory.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.
- The curriculum provides you with many exciting clubs and visits out of school.
- Adults look after you well and are always ready to help you.
- You have a clear understanding of how you can improve your work.
- The headteacher and adults are working hard to make sure the school gets better.

I have asked the school to do two things to help you do even better in your learning.

- Help you improve the way you express your ideas in your longer pieces of writing.
- Make sure you are always working hard in lessons.

You can help the school by continuing to behave well, trying your best in lessons and attending regularly.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin
Lead inspector