

# Westacre Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104312
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	308570
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Westall

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	282
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Judith Mapp
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Finchfield Hill Finchfield Wolverhampton WV3 9EP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 558532
<b>Fax number</b>	01902 765753

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Westacre is a larger than average infant school. About two thirds of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The remainder are from a range of minority ethnic groups, the majority being Indian. Only a small number of pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the percentage identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## 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 where pupils achieve well and their personal development is a key strength. Pupils learn to work hard, to behave exceptionally well and to respect the feelings of others. Staff establish very positive relationships with pupils and help them to develop into kind, caring and cooperative individuals. The school is a happy and harmonious community where pupils enjoy their education and get on well together. The school's success is quickly sensed by the visitor, who is met by pupils who are keen to learn, by attractive displays of pupils' work and by staff who strive to provide well for all in their care. Parents recognise that the school is effective. A typical remark to an inspector included, 'The teachers are experienced and good, and will go the extra mile to make sure children learn well.' In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the school is popular and oversubscribed. From starting points that are generally a little above those expected on entry to the Foundation Stage, pupils make good progress across the school and achieve well. As a result, overall standards are well above average at the end of Year 2. There is no complacency in this school. For example, pupils achieve well in science, but the school believes that pupils' scientific enquiry skills could be better and is taking well judged actions to secure improvements. Pupils' good progress stems from effective teaching and learning. Teachers' commitment and professionalism shine through in lessons. Their planning is good, reflecting their accurate assessments of pupils' next steps in learning, and they use questions effectively to probe pupils' understanding. Teachers are particularly well informed about the development of pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy, and this helps pupils to do well. However, sometimes teachers make too many decisions for the pupils in lessons, and this restricts pupils' opportunities to develop initiative and to take responsibility for their own learning. The curriculum is satisfactory. There are notable strengths in the provision for literacy and numeracy, in pupils' personal development and in the support of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, pupils have too few opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) to support their work in other subjects. In addition, provision in the Foundation Stage is inhibited by the lack of children's ready access to the outside environment. The quality of care, guidance and support is good and contributes to pupils' positive attitudes to school. They are polite, readily listen to others and accept differences of opinion. Good leadership and management are at the heart of the school's success. Selfevaluation procedures are rigorous and mean that the school has an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development. Strategic planning is well focused and has a beneficial impact on pupils' learning. For example, recent initiatives to improve pupils' mathematical problem-solving skills have helped to raise standards. The headteacher keeps her finger firmly on the pulse of the school. She works tenaciously to improve pupils' learning and communicates her high expectations to staff persuasively so that they have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team. Responsibility is delegated wisely and the senior management team fulfils its role well. Governors provide sound support, but recognise the need for more focused visits to see the school in operation. The school's record of success and the quality of the teaching, leadership and management means that it is well placed to get even better.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery. They quickly settle into school routines and grow in confidence and independence. This is a direct result of good teaching. Children continue to make good progress in the Reception classes, with their mathematical development being

particularly strong. Teaching in Reception focuses well on helping children to develop early literacy and numeracy skills, although opportunities for children to be independent and use their initiative are more limited. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the vast majority of children reach the expected goals for their age and many exceed them. A weakness in the otherwise good provision in the Foundation Stage is the limited opportunity for children to work and play in the outside areas.

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

- Provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop and use their ICT skills in work in other subjects.
- Develop the outside provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes so that all have easy access to an enclosed outside area.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and develop their independence in lessons.

### **Achievement and standards**

#### **Grade: 2**

Children's good progress in the Foundation Stage means they are well prepared for learning in Key Stage 1. By the end of Reception, most children express themselves clearly with good vocabulary, listen attentively and have well developed mathematical skills. The results of statutory assessments in 2007 in Year 2 were well above the national average and exceptionally high in reading. The school's tracking procedures confirm the good progress of the pupils from their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. Current standards in Year 2 are similarly high, and also reflect pupils' good achievement. In order to reach these results, the school sets challenging targets for pupils' achievement and ensures that these are met through effective teaching.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school and are confident and happy because they are valued and cared for well by the staff. Their positive attitudes are reflected in their good attendance and hard work in lessons. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils work together amicably and have a well developed sense of fair play. They are sensitive to the needs of others and safety conscious. Pupils appreciate the rich variety of cultural traditions represented in their school and in British society today. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds get on well together. Pupils take on some responsibilities in the school, such as serving at lunchtimes and taking registers to the office, and manage these well. They have rather few opportunities to routinely show initiative and act independently in lessons. The exception to this is the Nursery, where children plan and initiate their own activities. Pupils make a contribution to the wider community, donating their harvest gifts to the local women's refuge, for example. Pupils know how to stay healthy and enjoy the healthy school lunches and opportunities for exercise. Their good personal development, together with their good academic progress, means that they are well equipped for the future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers know exactly what they expect pupils to learn and their explanations are clear so that pupils are confident about tackling their work. Because teachers have good subject knowledge and a thorough awareness of the needs of individuals, they are often able to pinpoint areas for improvement in pupils' work and to target these very accurately. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language are also taught well. Teaching assistants have good expertise, work in close partnership with teachers, and provide pupils with valuable help. Support teachers work successfully with groups of pupils who need assistance to accelerate their progress towards their targets in learning. Nevertheless, there are some areas for improvement. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows when pupils spend too much time practising key skills rather than applying and developing these through more interesting work. In addition, teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to develop their decision-making skills, and often give more direction than pupils really need.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

Work is planned and adapted effectively to match all pupils' needs, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the small number learning English as an additional language. In particular, good planning for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy underpins good achievement in these areas. Work is enhanced effectively by visitors to the school, who help to bring learning alive. A good example of this is a recent visit from RSPB staff, which really captured pupils' interest. Resources for ICT have improved since the last inspection. Nevertheless, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use computers to support their work across the curriculum. The scope for planning for all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage is limited by lack of easy access to an enclosed outside area.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

A strong feature of the work in this area is the focus on the needs of individual children. All teachers and assistants know the pupils in their classes very well and provide good care, support and guidance for everyone. This is seen in the good links that the school has with outside agencies, the extra support in class for individuals and small groups, and the extra time teachers give to pupils at lunchtimes to hear them read. Child protection procedures are robust, and regular health and safety checks are carried out. Pupils feel safe and know that the staff will listen if they have any problems. They are clear about how well they are doing and know what they need to do to move forward. Some parents do not always feel so well informed about their children's learning and this limits the support that they provide at home. Thorough and effective procedures help children to settle in quickly into the Foundation Stage and to transfer confidently to the nearby junior school.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The school has a clear sense of direction and the improvement plan includes sensible priorities, but it does not yet include written planning beyond the current educational year. The professional development of staff is good. They benefit from helpful feedback about their performance from the headteacher and senior staff. Consequently, areas for improvement are identified, discussed and addressed. The school uses a wide range of monitoring procedures and these inform school actions effectively. For example, pupils' progress is tracked meticulously and those who may be falling behind are quickly identified and given additional support. Governance is satisfactory and statutory requirements are fully met. However, most governors do not visit the school enough to observe teaching and learning, and to talk with pupils.

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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 the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is 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	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 the learners' needs?	2
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

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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	3
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

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

- 25 January 2008 Dear Children Inspection of Westacre Infant School, Wolverhampton, WV3 9EP Thank you for welcoming us into your school and for being so friendly, polite and helpful. Here are some of the things we found out.
- You think Westacre Infants is a good school and we agree with you.
- You enjoy school, like your teachers and have lots of friends.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- The grown-ups take very good care of you.
- You are doing well with your school work because the teaching is good.
- The school is well organised and you have many opportunities to learn different things. We found a few things that the school needs to do to make it even better.
- You need to use computers more often to help you with your work.
- Those of you in the Nursery and Reception classes need to work and play outside more often.
- You need the chance to make more decisions in lessons. It was good to meet you. We really enjoyed our time at your lovely school. Best wishes David Westall Lead inspector

25 January 2008

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Best wishes

David Westall  
Lead inspector