

Watton Westfield Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120996
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	313827
Inspection date	27 February 2008
Reporting inspector	John Messer

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brian Lawrence
Headteacher	Miss Susan Davis
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
School address	West Road Watton Thetford Norfolk IP25 6AU
Telephone number	01953882669
Fax number	01953881602

Age group	3-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector over one day. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the progress made in English and mathematics. Evidence was gathered from classroom visits, discussions with staff and pupils and examination of school documents, especially assessment data. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This school is smaller than average. There are more boys than girls, especially in Year 1. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A few are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly from Portugal and Eastern Europe, and most of these speak English as an additional language. A small proportion is at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Children's attainment on entry to the school is below national expectations, especially in communication, language and literacy. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school part way through this phase of their education is well above average. A children's centre has just been established on site to support children and their families. The school has achieved the Active Mark and the Healthy Schools Award.

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 because teaching from Nursery through to Year 2 is consistently good. Consequently, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding build cumulatively year on year so that by Year 2 standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. All groups of pupils, including those who find learning difficult, those with disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. Several pupils who arrived quite recently and spoke no English are now reading and writing fluently. Staff have high expectations of all pupils and work hard to ensure that all achieve success. In the national assessments for pupils in Year 2, the school's performance has always been above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Faster learners make good progress and the proportion of pupils who attain the higher Level 3 standard is above national averages. The most able pupils are identified and challenging work is provided so that they also achieve well.

The consistency in the quality of teaching is achieved through effective liaison between teachers and especially through their close collaboration in planning lessons. Teachers and classroom assistants work closely together as effective teams. A purposeful, productive learning ethos has been established in all classrooms. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Staff give pupils much praise and encouragement. This helps to foster their self-esteem and encourages them to develop a love of learning.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils enjoy school. Attendance is satisfactory and the school works hard to promote good attendance. However, a small number of parents are not good at ensuring regular attendance and some take their children on holiday during term time. Pupils are encouraged to be self-confident and sensible. They like homework because they say, 'It helps us to learn'. They appreciate their teachers and say, 'Our teachers are very talented'. The academic skills they develop, together with their good attitudes to learning, prepare them well for the next phase of their education. Nearly all pupils behave well but a few present very challenging behaviour. This is managed well but their outbursts of difficult behaviour make others uncomfortable. Pupils are courteous and sensitive to the needs of others. They are keen to take on responsibilities and they make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school. They have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. Pupils know how to stay safe and look after themselves. They have a good understanding of environmental issues and willingly support the school's recycling initiatives. This underpins their moral development and helps them to understand their responsibilities towards the wider community.

The good curriculum is enriched by a wide range of after-school activities and visits to places of interest. Visits from theatre and music groups help to promote pupils' enjoyment in learning. There is a strong emphasis on developing language skills in order to compensate for the relatively narrow vocabulary that many pupils exhibit. They are encouraged to discuss ideas with each other and staff grasp opportunities to introduce pupils to new words and explain their meaning. The school has made a start on developing a curriculum that includes interesting projects designed to match pupils' interests. However, there are too few opportunities for imaginative role-play, make believe and drama to fully stimulate children's imaginations. Although projects are planned in some detail, themes are not always explored in sufficient depth to fire pupils' imaginations and stimulate their curiosity.

Good care, guidance and support helps pupils to understand what they should do if they are upset or worried about anything. They receive good guidance, particularly about what they need to do to improve their work in English and mathematics. Many can recite their targets. One pupil said, 'Mine is to use good adjectives to make my sentences more interesting'. They rise to the challenges set and are successful at meeting their targets.

Good leadership and management provide the school with clear direction. The new headteacher and deputy headteacher are already working well as a team, committed to further improving standards. A positive climate for learning has been firmly established and all staff are keen to work together to further improve provision. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The governing body supports the school well and monitors its performance thoroughly.

Parents are pleased with the education provided for their children. One comment was typical, 'I am very pleased with the school and I am happy that my child is receiving a high standard of care and education'. The school works hard to involve parents in a partnership to extend pupils' learning. Parents particularly appreciated a recent 'maths evening' that explained how mathematics is taught. The new children's centre has been established to support the partnership in learning between home and school. The school has identified the need to develop a clear programme designed to forge closer links with parents so that pupils' learning is supported even more positively. The school's consistent track record of helping pupils to attain standards that are above average demonstrates that it has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children thoroughly enjoy the stimulating learning environment that has been established in the Nursery. Teaching is good and helps the children to become confident learners. Relationships between staff and children are warm and friendly. Technology, such as digital photography, is used well to record children's experiences and to support learning. Planning is clear and defines what children are expected to learn. Record keeping is thorough and is used well to tailor learning programmes to individual needs. Teaching is good in the Reception classes and interactive white boards are used well to support learning but some activities, whilst providing valuable experiences, do not include enough challenge to stretch children. The team of teachers and support staff place strong emphasis on developing early reading and writing skills. A good programme to teach children the links between letters and the sounds they make is proving successful. Teachers encourage all to make good progress. Children achieve well and standards are close to those expected by the end of the Reception year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the curriculum to include more opportunities for in-depth investigations and imaginative role-play.
- In liaison with the new children's centre, develop a programme to engage parents more closely as partners in their children's learning.

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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 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 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	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	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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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.

Annex A

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 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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Children

Inspection of Watton Westfield Infant and Nursery School, Watton, Norwich, IP25 6AU

I thoroughly enjoyed my short time with you. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful. There are lots of good things about your school. Here are some of them:

- Good teaching from the Nursery to Year 2 helps you to learn well and so you make good progress.
- Teachers and classroom helpers are especially good at helping you to learn to read and write so that you reach standards that are above average.
- You like number work and enjoy exploring shapes and patterns so you reach standards that are above average in numeracy.
- You sing together beautifully in the hall.
- You are looked after well and everybody makes sure that you are safe in school.
- Some of you said that you love doing homework and this proves that you really like learning.
- I visited every classroom and in each one there was a feeling of calm as everyone was concentrating hard on learning new things.
- You know how to stay safe and look after yourselves and you are very sensitive to the feelings of others.
- You are polite and your behaviour is good but you don't like it when a very small number of boys spoil things by misbehaving.

I have asked Miss Davis to make sure that you have more opportunities to have fun by acting and playing imaginary games and by exploring projects in greater detail so that you can become real explorers and experts. I have also asked her to make good links with the new children's centre so that the school can work even more closely with your parents to help you learn. I wish you every success in the future and hope that you continue to enjoy your learning.

All best wishes

John Messer

Inspector