

Waterman Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114940
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	354763
Inspection dates	30 November 2010–1 December 2010
Reporting inspector	David Jones HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Becky Thomas
Headteacher	Rachael Welch
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2009
School address	The Boulevard Rochford SS4 1QF
Telephone number	01702 546237
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, groups of pupils, the school improvement partner, the executive headteacher and the acting headteacher. HMI observed the school's work, looked at the pupils' assessment records, the school's analysis of pupils' progress, samples of pupils' work, the school's behaviour policy, staff planning and recent monitoring evidence. The school's three teachers were seen teaching on three separate occasions during this inspection.

HMI reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of recent initiatives to raise attainment and accelerate learning and progress for all groups of pupils.
- How successfully the school is improving the quality of teaching in order to ensure consistently good progress for all pupils.
- The effectiveness of target-setting and tracking procedures in helping to eliminate underachievement.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers in developing capacity for sustained improvement and overcoming the barriers to good progress.

Information about the school

Waterman Primary School was found to require special measures in June 2009. The school was visited by HMI on three previous occasions in November 2009, February and June 2010.

Waterman Primary is significantly smaller than the average primary school and draws most of its pupils from the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is above average; however, the percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is more than twice the national figure.

All pupils are of White British or European heritage and represent a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The school has been led by an acting headteacher in partnership with an executive headteacher from an outstanding local school. Two new staff took up their posts in September 2010.

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

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The attainment of pupils remains below the national average but is rising rapidly. However, as there are only 48 pupils on roll comparisons to the 2010 Key Stage 2 national tests must be treated with caution. HMI reviewed the standards and achievement data for the 2010 Year 6 cohort; although standards must be considered below average, the progress they made was at least satisfactory and two thirds of the group made good progress. HMI led the senior team in a detailed review of current progress and compared this data with a scrutiny of the pupils' work in each year group. There was clear evidence that pupils were responding positively and making rapid progress as a direct result of the improvements in teaching and learning made since the beginning of the new school year. The scrutiny of work produced showed that the majority of pupils in each year group, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Equality of opportunity is outstanding and provision for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and those who find learning difficult is good.

Inadequate teaching has been eliminated and the impact of effective teaching on the quality of learning is evident in the pupils' current work. Teaching is good and the monitoring and evaluation of teaching by senior staff is outstanding. Marking is satisfactory with some good practice in evidence. In every lesson the match of task to the pupils' learning needs is a positive factor.

The curriculum changes and intervention strategies implemented in the spring term have had a positive impact on pupils' progress; standards have improved because teaching provides a consistent focus on literacy and numeracy skills.

Behaviour is good; this is a reflection of the school's caring ethos and the value placed on positive pupil/staff relationships by the headteacher. The school has worked hard, and to considerable effect, to improve attendance which is above the national average. The care, welfare and guidance provided are outstanding and this has been a key factor in the significant improvements secured in behaviour and attendance. Two young ladies returning from a snowy playtime explained to HMI, 'Its nice here now, we know what's right and wrong and people care about you.'

Governance is good; the governing body has worked hard to re-establish the school within its community. In this respect and in so many more, the Chair of the Governing Body has been at the heart of the regeneration of this school. HMI took the opportunity to speak with the parents and carers enjoying a coffee morning on the first day of this inspection. All concerned were pleased with the improvements secured and commented on how happy their children were in school.

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The current leadership team has done very well to secure the substantial improvements in standards, teaching and learning, equality of provision, behaviour and attendance. Securing the continuity of the leadership and partnership arrangements that have been the key to the school's survival remains of critical importance; capacity to improve is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure the continuity of leadership by appointing an appropriately qualified substantive headteacher as soon as possible.
- Continue to raise standards by ensuring all lessons maintain a focus on developing subject specific vocabulary through oral work and effective marking.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment on entry has been well below average in recent years. Although the 2010 Key Stage 2 outcomes remain below the national average, such comparisons are unreliable when there were only seven pupils involved. All pupils made satisfactory progress often from very low starting points and five of the seven pupils made good progress in relation to their abilities. This progress was directly related to the quality of the intervention work provided by the school and noted by HMI during previous monitoring visits. All pupils have now begun to work at levels to be expected for their age and ability. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable have benefited significantly from the quality of the one-to-one intervention work that lies at the heart of the school's strong focus on equality of opportunity.

In most lessons, pupils make good progress and some make outstanding progress. Lesson outcomes are strongest where there is a clear focus on what the pupils are expected to learn and pupils respond very well to this challenge. Enjoyment and achievement are good overall, with strengths evident in individual achievement, improved attendance and good behaviour.

HMI found the pupils to be very positive on 'feeling safe' and observed excellent staff/pupil relationships to support this view. A good range of healthy school meals, including a breakfast club, were available and the number of pupils engaged in sport is impressive in such a small school. The pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is satisfactory and improving significantly. Overall, the range of skills the pupils develop towards their future economic well-being are satisfactory.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have responded well to a range of social and cultural opportunities; the emergence of the moral and social maturity displayed by the pupils during recent monitoring visits and in this inspection has been a pleasure to watch.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good overall and has improved significantly since the beginning of the school year. Eight out of the nine lessons visited by HMI were graded good. In a Year 5/6 literacy lesson, pupils were drawn into developing a class story with the teacher as the script writer. Questioning was skilful and learning was driven forward at a brisk pace. The strong emphasis on the quality of the language used encouraged pupils to listen to their peers before offering a contribution. Such positive attitudes to learning were a significant development. In a Year 3/4 science and mathematics lesson, pupils were exploring weight and mass. The teacher's consistent pursuit of the higher level response created a competitive classroom environment which all enjoyed. She was quick to draw pupils back from a practical task when she noted that subject vocabulary based misconceptions needed to be addressed. Marking has improved noticeably and provides satisfactory guidance on how to improve.

The curriculum changes introduced in September provide a greater focus on addressing the gaps in pupils' prior knowledge within an appropriate range of subject-based topics. Specialist days have brought in curators from the museum service and children's authors whilst the mathematics 'master class' run by the school involved staff and pupils from other local schools.

At the heart of the school's pastoral care system are high expectations and a well-judged behaviour policy. Communication with parents and carers is good and the beginning and

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end of the school day consistently feature well-taken opportunities for care, guidance and support that involve the whole staff.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The working relationship between the acting headteacher and executive headteacher, provided by the partnership with another school, has been characterised by an effective professional relationship that has embedded ambition and driven improvement. The Chair of the Governing Body, who is a member of staff, has been a key player by providing a strong link with parents and carers and the wider local community, facilitating progress at every turn.

The partnership with a local high performing school has brought stability to the leadership and management of the school and helped to recruit the experienced staff vital to the school's future. Senior staff use the school's robust assessment database very well to plan interventions and monitor pupils' progress and they now share this expertise with other local schools. The strength of this targeted intervention work has been a key element in the outstanding equality of opportunity provided. The strength of the school's work on community cohesion has been the key to addressing the previous decline in the number of pupils on roll, whilst curriculum developments have established positive links with a school in Kenya. Safeguarding procedures are good and the work with pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is exemplary.

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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	1
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	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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

One of the significant improvements evident since the beginning of the new school year has been the impact of high quality Reception class provision on children's progress. This warm and engaging learning environment makes good use of the space and facilities available. Teaching is consistently good and the rising number of children is a testament to the positive reputation that has been rapidly established. In the first session of the day, good use was made of song to establish sequencing and pronunciation skills before kinaesthetic exercises were used to introduce the letter shape of the day. A vibrant new dimension to the school is being established.

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

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Views of parents and carers

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



2 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Waterman Primary School, Rochford, SS4 1QF

As many of you will remember, I have been visiting your school for over a year now. I have really enjoyed meeting you all and watching you learn; I don't think I will ever forget the African drumming lesson I visited!

It has been a pleasure to watch your behaviour and attendance improve and to see how sensible you were when it snowed during my most recent visit, well done! Your school has improved so much I have written a report to say it is now a 'good school'. I can see how well you are learning and how much support all of the adults in the school provide for you.

I have asked your headteacher to help you improve further by making sure you understand the key words needed in each lesson and how to use them.

It has been a real pleasure to meet so many of you and I look forward to hearing about your future successes.

Yours sincerely

David Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector

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