

# Watergate School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	100766
<b>Local authority</b>	Lewisham
<b>Inspection number</b>	376450
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Smith

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	90
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carl Handley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rob Munro
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15–16 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Lushington Road Bellingham London SE6 3WG
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8695 6555
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8695 8280
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<b>Age group</b>	2–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	21–22 June 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	376450



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## Introduction

Inspection team

David Smith

Additional inspector

Lily Evans

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors jointly observed with senior leaders teaching and learning in 11 lessons. These lessons were taught by 11 different teachers. In addition, inspectors also spent short periods of time in lessons evaluating the development of the pupils' literacy skills. Meetings were held with senior leaders, members of the governing body, headteachers from partner schools, students and teachers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' work, school planning documents, pupils' progress data and safeguarding documents. Inspectors analysed questionnaire responses from 38 parents and carers, and those completed by the pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This is a medium-sized special school. There are twice as many boys as girls on roll. All of the pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils have severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties and an increasing number have autistic spectrum conditions. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. There are a very small number of looked after children. Nearly half of the pupils are Black African and Caribbean, a quarter are White British and the remaining are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. English is an additional language for a third of the pupils. A small number of pupils have dual placements with local primary schools. Their out-of-school provision is managed by the governing body. Watergate is federated with Greenvale School to which most pupils transfer at age 11. It has recently formed a Cooperative Trust with Brent Knoll School. Each of the schools in the federation and trust has their own headteacher, governing body and budget. The school has National Healthy School status.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. There are many significant strengths, including the excellent promotion of the pupils’ communication skills. Partnerships are at the heart of the school’s work and, for example, they make a very strong contribution to staff development
- Pupils’ achievement is outstanding. Typically, pupils join the school with skills, knowledge and understanding which are well below those expected for their age. Given these starting points, all groups of pupils make outstanding progress. This is also the case in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the excellent induction arrangements help the children to settle very quickly into the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The excellent leadership of teaching ensures that it is never less than consistently good and much is outstanding. When teaching is outstanding, the pace of learning is very brisk and the pupils are constantly challenged. When teaching is good, there is sometimes a slight loss of teaching time, leading to good rather than outstanding progress.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding. They enjoy coming to school and attend whenever they can, leading to above-average attendance. The staff know the pupils exceptionally well and provide them with the highest levels of care which encourages the pupils to have excellent attitudes to their learning and to feel safe and valued. This also gives the pupils the security and confidence to tackle the challenges of their learning in a safe environment.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The inspirational leadership of senior leaders ensures that expectations are very high across the school. The staff team share the vision and drive for continual improvement. The processes used for monitoring and evaluation to improve staff and school performance, including teaching, are robust and very effective. The excellent curriculum

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makes an outstanding contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Boost progress in an increased percentage of lessons to outstanding by using all of the available time for learning in every lesson.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

The achievement of the pupils in the main school and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls, and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals match the excellent achievement of their peers in the school. Also, the achievement of pupils from differing ethnic backgrounds and of pupils who speak English as an additional language is outstanding. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers that completed a questionnaire are confident that their child is making good progress. As one parent commented, 'My child from starting at school has developed greatly. We are pleased with his progress.' The focus on literacy has had a significant impact and this is reflected in the exceptional progress made by many of the pupils. The promotion of communication is woven into all aspects of learning. This starts in the Early Years Foundation Stage where an extensive range of strategies and resources are used to motivate the children. They made clear progress working with each other when accurately matching a range of objects. In another lesson, they demonstrated good skills when using a paint brush and selecting colours with appropriate levels of adult support.

There is a very well-planned balance between directed activity and purposeful play which promotes outstanding progress. Year 1 pupils made clear choices from a range of objects by using pictorial or oral responses. Year 5 pupils visited a local museum to extend their study of Africa and followed this up enthusiastically in class by the production of a very colourful group collage of good quality. During the inspection, a group of visitors from South Africa contributed to the pupils' study of their country and this was much appreciated by the pupils. Pupils show considerable interest in books and the more-able pupils make excellent progress and become good readers by the end of Year 6, taking into account their learning difficulties. They read with confidence and expression. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made excellent progress in their ability to communicate by the use of pictorial prompts, signing or communication aids. Progress in mathematics is excellent and this was observed in a lesson when Year 5 pupils accurately sorted a range of coins of different values. Year 4 pupils worked exceptionally hard and with success when sorting objects by shape,

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colour and number. The imaginative use of new technology helped Year 6 pupils to make progress in their counting. Pupils use a wide range of skills, including their communication and numeracy skills, across the curriculum, which is excellent preparation for their move to secondary education. The balance of collaborative and independent work was excellent in a Year 3 class where pupils created their own art, based on artefacts from Africa. Opportunities for pupils to learn alongside mainstream peers help to promote excellent progress. Members of the school council mentioned that they enjoy all lessons, but swimming is their favourite. The annual residential trip provides excellent opportunities for the pupils to use their knowledge, skills and abilities with increased confidence in outdoor settings.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching and learning for the pupils and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Parents and carers are clear that their child is taught well. Where teaching and learning are outstanding, learning is brisk, expectations are very high and the pupils are enthusiastic. A very wide range of strategies and skills are used to fully meet the pupils' complex needs. Questioning challenges the pupils very effectively, helping to extend and consolidate their progress. Imaginative teaching promotes the pupils' curiosity and participation in their learning. The staff teams work exceptionally well together and are excellent role models for the pupils, which helps to promote such positive relationships. Progress towards challenging targets is systematically assessed and this ensures that strategies are put in place to sustain rapid progress. The excellent focus on developing the pupils' communication and numeracy skills accelerates the pupils' progress in all subjects.

Excellent use is made of the available time in lessons where teaching is outstanding but learning finishes a little early in some lessons, limiting progress to good. The learning environment is attractive and stimulating, and the extensive use of outdoor provision helps to extend and enrich the curriculum. A wide range of therapies makes a very valuable contribution to the pupils' progress. Additional staff provide a blend of support and challenge in their various roles and help to promote excellent progress. The very skilled teaching of reading by the use of phonics (the sounds that letters make) ensures that the more-able pupils make excellent progress in their reading. Teaching consistently very strongly promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The reporting of progress data to parents and carers is now easier to understand, which is a clear improvement since the previous inspection.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour and safety are outstanding. There is an atmosphere of respect and dignity which is apparent right from the start of the day, when the pupils are warmly welcomed into the school. All parents and carers who completed a questionnaire are confident that their child feels safe in school. The staff team work hard and successfully to make pupils aware of all types of bullying. Consequently, pupils

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develop an acute understanding of different forms of bullying and how to keep themselves safe. Pupils who may find certain situations very difficult are given strategies to learn to manage their own behaviour more effectively. They respond very well to the structure and consistency provided by the staff team. Pupils make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. They relish the opportunity to work independently and collaborate exceptionally well in group tasks.

Pupils feel very safe in the school and staff work very hard to integrate the wide range of needs to ensure that pupils whose circumstances make them most vulnerable are not put at risk. The pupils thoroughly enjoy and care for their attractive and stimulating school environment. Pupils' attitudes to learning and conduct around the school are excellent and this is reflected in the fact that there have been no exclusions. Scrutiny of behavioural records and discussions show this is the case over time too. Breaks are well staffed and some pupils are happy to play independently, others play in groups, while some require adult support. There is a very strong focus on safe arrangements for the dropping off and collection of pupils. Visitors and pupils from other schools are made very welcome in this very inclusive school. The attendance of a small number of the most medically vulnerable pupils remains low. Despite this, attendance is above average.

### **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management are outstanding. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers would recommend the school to another parent. As one parent wrote, 'My child has thoroughly enjoyed his time here and has an extremely positive experience of education.' There are the highest levels of ambition for the progress made by the pupils. The school has a rigorous focus on the continued improvement of teaching and learning through the highly effective monitoring and leadership of teaching, and the school's judgements on the quality of teaching are accurate. Staff benefit considerably from opportunities to observe each other teaching. There is an excellent understanding of strengths and areas for development across the school, and this information forms the basis for their challenging school improvement agenda. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly confident in the leadership and management of the school. There is a very strong focus on the professional development of all staff in the challenge of meeting the pupils' increasingly complex needs. The recently formed trust has the foundations of the well-established federation to build on and these partnerships contribute very significantly to the school's excellent capacity to improve. Also, members of the governing body provide an excellent blend of support and challenge as they, like school leaders and staff, want only the best for the pupils.

The curriculum is carefully tailored to meet the pupils' wide range of needs exceptionally well. Rich opportunities for high-quality learning and a culture of safety are promoted through the curriculum. A wealth of enrichment activities makes a valuable contribution to the excellent promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This includes residential trips which extend the pupils' social development. The out-of-school club provides an excellent range of activities and makes a clear contribution to the pupils' progress and personal development.

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Dual placements and visiting pupils benefit Watergate’s pupils and their partner schools. The school has outstanding links with parents and carers, and provides training opportunities which, for example, reinforce the school’s approach to communication. The school works exceptionally well with external agencies to provide for the pupils’ complex needs. Equality and tackling discrimination are central and evident in all aspects of the school’s work. Safeguarding arrangements are fully met and child protection procedures are exemplary.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



25 June 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Watergate School, Lewisham SE6 3WG**

Thank you for making my colleague and me so welcome when we visited your school. It was clear that you all thoroughly enjoy school and the excellent activities that you are provided with. Thank you to those of you that gave up some of your lunchtime to tell us about your school. Also, some of you completed questionnaires which gave a very positive view of the school. You told us that swimming is one of your favourite activities and it is good that you have a pool at the school. We enjoyed watching you all so busy enjoying yourselves during your breaks.

We think that you go to an outstanding school and are impressed with the rapid progress that you make. We were also very pleased with your excellent attitudes and behaviour. All of the staff help you feel very safe and make sure that all of your needs are met exceptionally well. The activities on the residential trip sound very exciting. You are provided with outstanding teaching by an excellent staff team and this ensures that you make so much progress. The headteacher, staff and governors share the ambition to keep improving your excellent school to provide you with the very best opportunities.

We have asked your school to make sure that all of your time in class is fully used for learning with your activities continuing to the end of the lessons. This will help even more of your lessons to be outstanding. All of you can help by attending school whenever you can and continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

David Smith  
Lead inspector

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