

North Waltham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115932
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	395698
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2012
Lead inspector	Keith Sadler

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 of pupils on the school roll	145
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trish Wyatt
Headteacher	Jeff Maidment
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 May 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Keith Sadler

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in eleven lessons led by six different teachers or practitioners, totalling approximately five hours of observation. Five lesson observations were carried out jointly by the inspector and headteacher. The inspector held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation. This included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school's strategic plan, leaders' monitoring records, and pupils' work. The questionnaires completed by 121 parents and carers, together with others from staff and pupils, were analysed and their responses taken into account.

Information about the school

North Waltham is a much smaller than the average-sized primary school. In consequence, children in the Reception class are taught in a single age group and there are pupils from two age groups in the other four classes. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very low. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school meets the current floor standards set by the government, which determine the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has gained Healthy Schools and Eco School status.

The school provides after-school care called *Cool Kidz*. This is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- North Waltham is a good school where pupils achieve well because of good teaching. It is not yet outstanding because although almost all teaching is good, only a small proportion is outstanding. In consequence, achievement is good rather than outstanding.
- Pupils make good progress, particularly in Key Stage 2, and their attainment is significantly above average in writing, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. In reading, standards are high. Progress is slightly slower in mathematics at Key Stage 1, particularly in the development of pupils' mathematical investigational skills. In the Reception Year, although progress is good overall, it is slower in writing than in other areas.
- Teaching is good because in most lessons teachers build effectively on what the pupils already know and are able to do. Activities are usually pitched well to meet the learning needs of all groups of pupils. However, this is not always the case and, on occasion, work does not provide sufficient challenge for the more-able pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Furthermore, across the school, pupils are not always clear about how they reach the next level in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. Pupils enjoy lessons and learning because teachers plan activities which interest them. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in all classes and, consequently, lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils say they feel safe and parents and carers are unanimous in their agreement. Levels of attendance are high.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He is supported well by all the staff and governors and there is a strong team spirit. Good use is made of evaluations of the school's performance to plan further improvements. Effective performance management procedures, when linked to well-conceived professional development opportunities for staff, mean that the management of teaching is good.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By January 2014, accelerate pupils' learning and lift the quality of teaching so that much is outstanding in all key stages by ensuring that:
 - activities set consistently provide challenge for all groups of pupils, especially the more able
 - pupils know what they have to do to reach the next level in writing and mathematics
 - children's writing skills are strengthened in the Reception class
 - more opportunities are provided for pupils to undertake practical mathematics investigations in Years 1 and 2.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

On entry into the Reception class most children have skills and abilities that are above those expected. All groups of children make good progress over the year and achieve well in most areas of learning. This is because the children enjoy a good range of activities which are interesting and engaging for them. Although staff have placed a strong emphasis on strengthening provision for writing by, for example, extending opportunities in the outside area and providing more opportunities for children to write, children's achievement in this area remains satisfactory. This is because there remain insufficient opportunities for their incidental mark-making and writing.

Achievement continues to be good for all groups in Years 1 to 6. Following disappointing results in reading in 2011 at the end of Year 2, a successful and focused emphasis has been placed on strengthening reading skills. Additional curriculum time has been allocated and there has been a strong focus on the development of pupils' skills in using letters and sounds. This has resulted in the current Year 2 pupils attaining standards that are well above national expectations in both reading and writing. In mathematics, although Year 2 pupils' calculation skills are strong, senior staff are keenly aware that their application in practical mathematics is less well developed. This is now high on the school's agenda for improvement.

Inspection findings confirm the school's data that progress continues to be good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are engaged in their learning because teachers successfully provide a good context for the activities presented, typically linking many subjects to a theme. For example, in an outstanding Years 5/6 literacy lesson in which pupils were focusing on persuasive writing within the school's Olympics theme, the teacher raised what turned out to be a thorny issue of gender equality in sport. Working in pairs, pupils sensitively and thoughtfully developed their views regarding whether men and women should compete directly together. They then successfully developed high quality persuasive letters using each other's ideas. In Years 1 to 6 there is a

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very good range of writing across the curriculum. This allows pupils to practise and extend their skills. Progress in reading continues to be strong in Years 3 to 6 and results in standards that are high at the end of Year 6. A majority of the current Year 5 pupils already attains the standard expected at the end of Year 6 in both reading and writing. In reading, in particular, many have already attained the higher level expected at the end of Year 6.

All groups of pupils make good progress. Careful and close monitoring of the progress of each pupil ensures that any that are at risk of slipping behind are identified early and good quality programmes are put into place. This is particularly the case for disabled pupils and those that have special educational needs. They benefit from carefully modified tasks to ensure that they make good progress in line with their peers. Inspection findings confirm most parents' and carers' views that their children make good progress.

Quality of teaching

Most teaching is of good quality and some of high quality. These findings confirm the views of almost all parents and carers. Senior staff are keenly aware of the need to provide equal opportunities for all year groups in the mixed-aged classes. This is assured by the consistency and similarity in the approaches and methods that the teachers use. For example, teachers invariably make lesson objectives clear and provide a good context for the learning. In the best, pupils help to develop success criteria for the work being undertaken. Generally, teachers group pupils well to ensure that work provides a good level of challenge. However, this is not always the case, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Here, work is not always sufficiently challenging, especially for the more able pupils. Throughout the school, teachers make clear to pupils what is expected of them to meet lesson objectives. However, longer term targets are not always sufficiently defined and this hinders pupils' progress. Although marking is effective because it is comprehensive and focused well on lesson objectives, pupils are not always sure about what they need to do to reach the next level in both literacy and numeracy.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are provided with additional resources and tuition to help them to make good progress. Teaching assistants play a key role in this provision. This includes those that provide one-to-one dedicated support for individual pupils and also with small group work.

Pupils say that their teachers make learning interesting and fun. A strong feature of most lessons is the way in which the teachers stimulate and interest the pupils. For example, Reception children delighted in observing closely Brian, the class giant African snail. They then, with excitement, found information books about snails and some role played an Olympic snail race. A group of children related this to the book the class had been reading, *Ambrose goes for Gold*, and they decided that Brian would not be able to win a gold medal because his talents lay elsewhere!

The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is effective throughout the school and

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boosts reading standards. Reception children, for example, demonstrated highly-developed phonic skills by successfully building and reading very tricky words such as 'sandpit', 'lunchbox', 'shampoo' and 'chimpanzee'. Older pupils, including those who find reading hard, successfully sound-out and build words to aid their reading and writing. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted through a wide range of activities, not least in the current theme of the promotion of Olympic values that were clear in an outstanding singing assembly.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and learning and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance. Their behaviour is typically good, both in lessons and around the school; even so, on occasion when lessons are less engaging, pupils' attention can sometimes dip. Older pupils reflect on the school's effective management of behaviour in a mature and responsible manner. They also say that they feel safe in school and they trust their teachers to resolve any issues that may arise. As one Year 6 pupil said, 'Our teachers always take notice of us. They are almost like a friend, though they are not of course. But they do always help.'

The strong personal and social education curriculum ensures that pupils develop an appreciation of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and how to stay safe. This is aided by the annual visit to the nearby Bramley Army Camp in which pupils enjoy a Think Safe day when they learn about fire hazards, first aid and also have talks from the police. Pupils say that there is no bullying in the school. As another Year 6 pupil said, 'Bullying is not an issue. It's amazing. If we have a problem, we know to tell a prefect and they tell the teachers straight away.' Parents and carers are unanimous in saying that there is a good standard of behaviour in the school and that their children feel safe. School records indicate that incidents of racism are exceptionally rare. The school's very inclusive ethos, the skilful way in which teachers manage behaviour and the pupils' positive response ensure a harmonious school community.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's leadership and management are outstanding. His high ambition and commitment to continue to improve is exemplified by the improvements in teaching and learning since the last inspection. The headteacher is supported well by all the staff who make a good contribution to self-evaluation. Performance management procedures are rigorous and result in a wide range of continuing professional development opportunities. Senior staff effectively target support, training and coaching to make sure that teaching is effective in all classes, although some inconsistencies remain, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Provision and pupils' progress are monitored carefully and the arising data are used well to check progress against school priorities and help to establish new targets. Regular meetings are held with teachers to check how well groups and individuals are progressing. These meetings illustrate clearly the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Effective partnerships with other agencies

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and providers are well established. Accurate self-evaluation, when linked to improvements in provision and pupils' achievement, demonstrates the school's capacity for further improvement.

The governing body receives good quality information from senior staff and also maintains effective links with subject leaders. This information, along with regular visits to the school, enables members of the governing body to gain sufficient accurate detail to both support and challenge the school. The governing body ensures that safeguarding and staff vetting procedures are thorough.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and they are kept well informed about their children's progress and the many school events in which they are involved. The school's curriculum has been strengthened since the previous inspection and is now focused well on building on the pupils' interests. Pupils' reading and writing skills are successfully developed across the curriculum. Their spiritual, moral and social development is successfully fostered in all aspects of school life.

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).

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.

6 July 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of North Waltham Primary School, Basingstoke RG25 2BL

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school. I really enjoyed talking with you and watching you at work and at play. I particularly enjoyed your singing assembly. I thought your singing was brilliant! I hope that those lucky eight pupils who will be representing Ugandan children at the Olympic opening ceremony will be able to tell you all about it afterwards.

Yours is a good school. You told me that you enjoy school and learning and this is because your teachers work hard to make sure that they provide you with lots of interesting activities to do in lessons. They make sure that you have a good range of stimulating visits to make sure that your topics are really interesting. Teaching is good. Your teachers make sure that you know what the learning objectives are and also you are really skilled, particularly those of you in Oak and Fir classes, in helping to develop success criteria for your work. Teachers also make sure that your behaviour is good and that, in all the classes, you work productively and well together. Your achievement is good and whether you find learning easy or hard you all make good progress right from when you start in Ash class. Your headteacher is doing a really good job and he is helped by all the staff and your governors to make sure that your school becomes even better.

Even in a good school like yours, there are things to do to make it better. I have asked your headteacher and staff to do the following things. First, for your teachers to make sure that they always set work which is challenging for you. Second, for your teachers to make sure that you know what you have to do to move to the next level in writing and mathematics. Third, for the children in Ash class to have more chances to do writing activities. Finally, I have asked that those of you that are in Elm and Birch classes have more opportunities to do mathematics investigations.

You can all help by continuing to work hard. I hope that you continue to enjoy school and learning

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler
Lead inspector

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