

Waterfoot Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119199
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379751
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2012
Lead inspector	Louise Murphy

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	315
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Mills
Headteacher	Simon Jones
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Louise Murphy
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Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed learning and teaching in 20 lessons taught by 14 teachers. Discussions were held with the headteacher, school staff, pupils, and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. They observed pupils' work, listened to pupils read and looked at a wide range of documentation and web-based information including the school's system for tracking pupils' progress, documents regarding safeguarding and key policies. The responses to inspection questionnaires from 132 parents and carers were scrutinised, and those from school staff and pupils were also taken into account.

Information about the school

Waterfoot is an over-subscribed, larger than average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a few speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's expectations for attainment and progress.

Since the last inspection, the school has experienced a period of considerable change due to pupils and staff of two schools from diverse communities coming together in one building, followed by the recent move to a new school on a new site. There have also been an unusually high number of maternity leaves during the same period.

Waterfoot holds a number of awards, including silver Eco-schools and offers breakfast and before- and after-school provision.

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

- Waterfoot is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because although teaching is good, it is not yet strong enough to support sustained and rapid progress for all pupils.
- Overall, pupils achieve well. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that vary year-on-year. Pupils make good progress from their different starting points. Attainment has been broadly average by the end of Year 6, although in 2011 pupils attained well above average overall and pupils' tracking information indicates that this is likely to be maintained. Marking across different subjects is inconsistent in quality and does not always identify how pupils can make progress. This is particularly the case in mathematics.
- Teaching is good. There is a positive climate for learning across the school and pupils agree that they enjoy their learning because teachers are always ready to help. Work is mostly well matched to pupils' individual needs. In some lessons, the opportunity to link subjects and make use of information and communication technology (ICT) to encourage independence and interaction is missed.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and friendly. They are keen to show their accomplishments to visitors because they are so genuinely proud of their school. Pupils value and respect their teachers, each other and their new environment. They enjoy coming to school and have a positive attitude to learning. Pupils feel safe because they know they are cared for.
- Leadership and management are good. The governing body supports and challenges the school well. Leaders are taking effective steps to improve teaching, although staff have not had enough opportunities to observe outstanding practice, because of the substantial changes that have taken place.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding in order to improve pupils' progress by:
 - developing the use of marking which informs pupils how to improve their work, particularly in mathematics
 - increasing opportunities to link subjects and make further use of information and communication technology in order to improve pupils' independence and skills to work with others
 - providing more opportunities for teachers to observe outstanding practice.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children start in the Reception class with skills that vary year-on-year though the recent trend shows an improving picture. They make good progress within a well resourced, stimulating environment. The balance between adult-led and independent activities is good. Children consistently remain focused on tasks which support their development as independent learners. Communication with parents and carers regarding children's learning needs is important to staff and they regularly deliver subject specific workshops to enable parents and carers to support their child's learning. Pupils continue to make good progress relative to their starting point through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

The multi-sensory approach to teaching letters and the sounds that they make is having a positive impact on the development of pupils' reading skills. Reading is broadly average in Key Stage 1 and slightly above average at Key Stage 2.

The school has concentrated efforts on improving pupils' writing which consistently shows accurate use of correct grammar and punctuation. Pupils are introduced to a range of writing styles including narrative, instructional writing and poetry. When pupils achieve the 'next steps' in their learning they are awarded stickers that are collected in a book and provides a visual representation of progress which they find very motivating. Writing targets are regularly referred to in teachers' marking and this is having a positive impact on achievement. This practice is not consistent across all subjects, including in mathematics, and pupils do not always know how to improve their work.

Attainment in mathematics is above average in Key Stage 1 this year and is improving year-on-year at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils benefit from working in small groups where readily available help leads to effective learning.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support provided by teachers and teaching assistants during lessons and when working in small groups. In the best lessons, more-able pupils are provided with extension activities to ensure that they are challenged and this has resulted in an increase in the number of pupils achieving at the higher levels.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agreed that their children were making good progress at the school. This is an accurate view.

Quality of teaching

All parents and carers responding to the questionnaire agreed that their children are taught well, this was confirmed during the inspection when the majority of teaching observed was good or outstanding. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and cared for by teachers and adults in the school. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and all pupils demonstrate a positive attitude toward learning.

Teachers have good questioning skills which they use to stimulate pupils' imagination and encourage them to think carefully. They are also able to intervene effectively to bring about improvements or to correct misconceptions. For example, in one mathematics lesson pupils were given three numbers which they had to use to make up a multiplication and a division sum. One child was trying to start a multiplication sum with the biggest number; the teacher identified this error and used it as a teaching point for the group. In weaker lessons, teachers talk for too long and pupils' attention begins to drift but this picks up once activities begin.

There are lessons where opportunities are provided to link subjects. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson on healthy eating, the teacher asked the class to design a healthy snack. Pupils used their communication skills to find out which snacks others preferred and mathematical skills to keep a tally of answers. One pupil then used her knowledge of contemporary issues and suggested that a healthy snack could be a carrot made to look like an Olympic torch with peel for the flames. Teachers use ICT well as a teaching tool and there is evidence around the school and on the website that pupils also use ICT. However, this was not routinely seen during the inspection, resulting in opportunities to develop independent learning skills being missed.

During an English lesson in Year 1, the teacher read a story and pupils enthusiastically engaged with the reading. They joined in when sentences were repeated and were keen to offer ideas of what Billy might find in his bucket. In addition to reading taught in class, there are a number of initiatives to develop reading skills and the joy of reading. For example, Year 6 and Year 2 pupils read together and the headteacher listens to younger pupils read, supporting them to develop and practise their reading skills.

Teaching makes a positive contribution toward pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour which ensure they have a good idea of what is right and wrong. The curriculum provides some opportunities for pupils to talk to each other and share their thoughts. For example, in one Year 6 lesson pupils very maturely discussed their hopes and concerns regarding moving on to high school. One class studying India as their class topic invited a parent into school to demonstrate Indian cookery; watching the preparation and eating the food brought learning to life for pupils.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour overall is good and examples of outstanding behaviour were seen in some lessons and during the excellent assembly delivered by the headteacher. The school is highly inclusive and encourages pupils to value and respect themselves and others. Pupils feel safe in school. They are aware that the building is secure and that adults in school care for them. They also understand how to keep safe when using the internet.

Pupils are aware of different types of bullying. They agree that there is no bullying in school and that if there were they feel that adults would deal with it quickly and effectively. They also believe that behaviour is good in school and that learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour. The majority of parents and carers believe that behaviour is good in the school and that any bullying is dealt with effectively. All parents and carers responding to the questionnaire agree that their children feel safe in school. Observations and discussions undertaken by inspectors confirm these positive views.

Pupils are very proud of their new building and enjoy contributing to school life. For example, the school council is busy planning the end of year charity fun day and the gardening club is growing vegetables to sell at the school fair. There is a genuine family feel to the school and relationships are strong. Pupils want to come to school as shown by their above average attendance.

Leadership and management

The very strong leadership of the headteacher, well supported by senior and middle leaders, has ensured that the school has continued to improve through a period of substantial change. The governing body is actively involved in all aspects of school life, for example, individual governors linking with subjects and areas of school in which they have a particular interest. The governing body is kept well informed by the headteacher and staff and provides a good level of support and challenge. The school's leaders value the support of parents and carers and actively encourage learning at home. An effective mathematics learning resource is provided via the school website which pupils, parents and carers can access at home. Moreover, the well-motivated and enthusiastic subject leader has given a presentation to parents and carers on how to support learning in mathematics, which was extremely well attended.

The school has a good capacity to improve because improvements since the last inspection have been secured. It also recognises that though recent initiatives to improve pupils' progress are beginning to have an impact there is more to be done to sustain this over time. Regular monitoring and a planned programme of professional development have ensured that most teaching is at least good, but there have been limited opportunities for staff to observe outstanding teaching.

The curriculum is good. Topic work is designed to appeal to the interest of pupils. For example, the Olympic Games has led to a range of topic work, including researching the difference between modern and ancient games and comparing our culture with the ancient Spartan way of life. The curriculum is further enriched by a range of after-school opportunities, including sporting and musical activities. Visits and visitors provide memorable experiences for pupils. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is well promoted through the many opportunities during lessons and assemblies to reflect on issues and to demonstrate considerate, thoughtful attitudes.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. School leaders ensure that no discrimination is tolerated and equality and diversity are well promoted. Visitors to the school would not recognise that two schools with diverse ethnic and cultural mix had come together as one. Pupils and staff provide a warm welcoming atmosphere for all.

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 Waterfoot Primary School, Rochdale, BB4 9DA

Thank you for making us so welcome when the inspection team came to visit your school. We were pleased to hear about the many positive things you had to say. Thank you to those who completed questionnaires and spoke to us.

Yours is a good school. The teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and they plan many exciting activities for you. You told us that the school is a happy place and that the adults look after you well and make learning fun. We agree with you and so do your parents and carers. Your behaviour is good and you feel safe in school. I think that the headteacher leads the school very well and is greatly helped by all the staff and governors. It is a very happy learning community.

Even in a good school like yours, there are things that can be even better. We have asked the teachers to make sure that you know your next steps in learning so that you can improve your work. We have also asked that they provide even more opportunities for you to use information and communication and technology in your learning. You can help by always letting the teachers know what you do and do not understand. We have asked that teachers are given opportunities to observe some of the very best teaching so they can get ideas about how they can make every lesson even more effective.

Thank you for taking time to talk to us and we hope that you continue to enjoy your lovely new school with all the space that you need for you to play and learn.

Yours sincerely

Louise Murphy
Lead Inspector

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