

# Waterside School

Robert Street, Greenwich, London, SE18 7NB

## Inspection dates

23–24 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Very good support from staff ensures that pupils make quick progress in learning to manage their own behaviour both in school and at home.
- School improvement has been sustained despite changes in the complexity of pupils' needs and in staffing.
- Pupils of different ages, backgrounds and abilities make good progress. They achieve well, particularly in the development of their communication and social skills and are well prepared for their secondary education.
- Teachers mostly provide activities that engage pupils' interest. They mark pupils' work regularly and accurately, ensuring that pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils feel extremely safe and secure, they enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning and support each other very well.
- The school is well led, there is a successful focus on improving teaching and learning.
- The pupil premium is used to good effect in making the curriculum more interesting and relevant for pupils.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, the questions teachers ask pupils do not help them to deepen their understanding.
- Senior leaders and governors do not make the best use of information about pupils' progress to check that they are closing the gaps with all pupils nationally.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons. All seven teachers were observed. The majority of these were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, a number of other short visits were made to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with the school council and other pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and school staff including senior and middle managers.
- The inspector took account of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. During the inspection the school's analysis of its own questionnaire responses from parents and carers and pupils was used to provide a clearer picture of their views.
- The work of the school was observed and a range of documents were looked at, including the school's own information on pupils' past and current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Stuart Charlton, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Waterside is a small special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). Many have associated speech, language and communication needs. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs, or are being assessed for one.
- Most pupils are from White British or Black British/Caribbean heritages, with a range of other minority ethnic heritages represented. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium is very high.
- On behalf of the local authority, the school manages an outreach support service to teachers and pupils in mainstream schools.
- The senior leadership team consists of the headteacher, the Waterside school deputy and the deputy with responsibility for the outreach service.

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

- Make sure that, in all lessons, the questions teachers ask pupils helps them to deepen their understanding.
- Ensure that senior leaders and governors make the best use of information about pupils' progress to check that the pupils are closing the gaps with all pupils nationally.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Before they enter Waterside, pupils have experienced disruption to their education and consequently their starting points are low, and often very low. In their time in school, pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills are developed well, so that the attainment for the majority is closer to that expected for their age. Challenging targets are set for pupils so that they achieve well irrespective of their special educational needs, gender or ethnic origin.
- On entry to the school, pupils' needs are carefully assessed and the support pupils require clearly identified. They settle quickly into their new school due to the high quality support they receive from staff. When pupils move to their new secondary schools at the age of 11, the transition is managed very well so that learning is not disrupted.
- Many pupils, particularly those in the younger classes, use pictorial and visual prompts to aid communication. Generally, they apply these skills, and their numeracy and personal skills, very well across different areas of learning.
- By Year 6, pupils use oral approaches to communicate, depending on their needs. They learn to recognise numbers and develop basic number concepts. Pupils make particularly good progress in developing their skills in communication and they learn to express their views effectively. Pupils' reading skills and writing skills are developed particularly well with those pupils for whom it is appropriate. Nevertheless, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading and writing remains below expectations in spite of their good progress.
- Throughout their time at Waterside, the high emphasis placed on developing pupils' self-esteem and confidence and on learning to manage their own behaviour pays off and pupils leave with greatly improved social skills. In a Year 4 art lesson, for example, the teacher managed pupils' behaviour extremely well so that any disruption was ignored by pupils and learning was not disrupted.
- Parents and carers report that they are very pleased with the progress their children make and their view is consistent with the inspection findings that pupils make at least good progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure systematic development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. They are very effective in teaching pupils with complex behavioural difficulties. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and pupils receive extremely high quality care, guidance and support. The seamless way in which teachers and support staff work together is integral to the success pupils achieve.
- Staff are effective in building pupils' confidence so that pupils are keen to try new things, which makes an important contribution to the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Rigorous and thorough systems to record pupils' progress have been developed, including observations and photographs of their achievements. This information is used well to help teachers to plan lessons that meet individual needs, and shows that teaching and learning over time have been good. The school is very effective in helping parents and carers to understand and to support the learning needs of pupils with complex learning difficulties at home.
- Across the school, there are examples of high quality teaching where staff set the highest expectations for pupils and use a very wide range of teaching activities to ensure excellent outcomes. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson, the teacher used questioning very effectively to consolidate earlier learning and to develop pupils' understanding of fair testing. Through very focused questioning she ensured that pupils used the correct technical language for the range of practical techniques they used and developed mathematical skills related to sharing and proportions. Pupils' learning was extremely well supported by the learning support assistant.

- Such exemplary practice is not entirely secure across the school and in a small minority of lessons teachers do not always use sufficiently open-ended questioning to help every pupil to deepen their understanding.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The school makes substantial improvements to the lives of pupils, both at school and at home, through developing positive attitudes to learning and in helping them to manage their own behaviour.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attendance at Waterside is broadly average, which is a significant change compared with that at their previous primary school.
- The school's records and reports from parents and carers confirm the improvements the school makes to pupils' behaviour. A significant proportion of the pupils were new to the school in September 2012. Consequently, there were isolated instances during the inspection when staff had to explain the school's expectations of behaviour to these pupils and although they responded to this well they did not always immediately recognise how they needed to change their behaviour.
- Pupils say they make good friends in school and there is a calm and harmonious working atmosphere throughout. All staff receive extensive training in how to best manage pupils' behaviour and use the school's system effectively to ensure improvements in pupils' behaviour from when pupils first start at Waterside.
- Pupils are respected as individuals, and staff use praise and rewards to best effect to reinforce progress in personal and academic development. As a result, there have been no recent exclusions and, overall, pupils' behaviour is good.
- Parents and carers indicate that they feel their children are safe and secure at all times and that any type of bullying is extremely rare; records show that any such instances are dealt with appropriately. This view is supported by the pupils themselves. Staff devote a great deal of time to helping pupils to listen carefully to instructions and respond to the feelings of others.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher sets high expectations for staff and pupils. She has a very clear vision about how the provision should develop and is very well supported by senior leaders and other staff.
- She has established a real sense of purpose across the school. Crucial to this is the high quality teamwork which has been developed. The policies and practices that have been introduced are having a very positive and immediate effect on improving pupils' performance.
- The emphasis placed on the professional development of staff expertise ensures ongoing improvement in classroom practice and an enthusiasm from staff about improving the way they meet pupils' needs. Rigorous checks on teaching and learning ensure that performance management is effective and full account is taken of national teaching standards. However, senior leaders and governors do not always use information about pupils' progress to check that gaps are closing with all pupils nationally.
- Across the school, the newly-developed topic-based curriculum ensures the systematic development of pupils' basic skills. It is interesting and meets pupils' needs well.
- The wide range of enrichment activities and the annual residential are easily accessible to all pupils. These aspects of the curriculum are effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The breadth of these activities and their accessibility show that the school values every one of its pupils regardless of their difficulties and tackles discrimination with determination and vigour. These values are at the heart of everything the school does and, as a result, all groups of pupils achieve equally well.
- The involvement and support of all agencies ensure that pupils quickly receive the extra help they need. The outreach team is effective in identifying pupils' needs across the authority and in

supporting Waterside pupils when they re-integrate into mainstream schools. It provides support and advice for teachers in other schools which is much appreciated.

- The issues identified at the previous inspection have been tackled and significant improvements have been made to the provision even though the complexity of pupils' needs has increased and there have been staff changes including senior leaders and governors. This shows that the school has good capacity to improve further.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body challenges the school well and uses resources effectively. It ensures that policies and procedures, including those relating to safeguarding, are of the highest quality and have a positive impact on the life of the school. The arrangements for managing the performance of teachers are thorough and carefully linked to the professional development of all staff, so that the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievements continue to improve even though the complexity of pupils' needs is increasing. Staff move through the salary scales appropriately. Governors have ensured that the school has used the additional funding it received from the pupil premium initiative very effectively to make the curriculum more responsive to pupils' needs, so that the outcomes for pupils continuously improve.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133401
<b>Local authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	402574

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	29
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Offerman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Vernoit
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4–5 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 831 77659
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