

The Waterloo School

Warfield Avenue, Waterlooville, PO7 7JJ

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- The unforeseen need for changes in leadership and management of the school has limited the capacity the school has had to improve overall provision.
- Changes in membership of the governing body have, until recently, led to inconsistencies in the effectiveness of how well governance has been able to challenge and support the school to continue to improve provision overall.

The school has the following strengths:

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points to the end of Year 6, particularly in English and in mathematics. They make significant improvements in their reading.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan their lessons very well and make sure the work is hard enough and at the right level of difficulty for each pupil. All have individual learning targets for each lesson, including for literacy.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. This is as a result of highly effective classroom management and all-round care and support provided by staff.
- In their responses to a recent whole-school questionnaire, the great majority of pupils say they feel safe and happy at the school. This is confirmed by their parents' and carers' responses to Parent View.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons taught by six different teachers. Four of the lessons were observed jointly with the interim executive headteacher.
- A meeting was held with small group of Year 6 pupils. Meetings were also held with the interim executive headteacher, members of the new senior leadership team, the vice-chair of the governing body, who also discussed safeguarding responsibilities, the home school link worker and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own recent parents and carers' questionnaire, the school's recent pupil questionnaire and 13 responses to the staff questionnaire. In addition, the inspector had a telephone discussion in response to a parent or carer's request.
- The inspector observed the school's practice and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's checks on how well it is doing and improvement planning, information on pupils' progress, documents used by senior leaders to check the school's work, governing body documentation, as well as records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Inspection team

James Bowden, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Waterloo School provides for pupils with a statement of special educational needs related to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A minority have autistic spectrum disorders or have other difficulties such as speech, language and communication difficulties. A few have moderate learning difficulties.
- Currently the very large majority of pupils are boys and there are very few girls. Almost all are of White British background with a very few of mixed backgrounds. No pupils are from families where English is not the home language.
- Pupils join the school at different times during the year. A very few pupils are in Key Stage 1, almost all being in Years 5 and 6.
- The proportion of pupils at The Waterloo School eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and children from service families, is well above the national average. Currently, there are very few in local authority care.
- Pupils are transported from all areas of Hampshire, with a few travelling from Southampton. Some travel for up to one hour to get to school.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- A new Chair of the Governing Body and vice-chair have recently been elected.
- After the recent unforeseen serious illness of the headteacher during the last term, an acting headteacher from within the school was appointed. Following the death of the headteacher towards the end of the summer holiday, a consultant headteacher supported the acting headteacher from May. Subsequently, an interim executive headteacher was appointed in October 2013 and a new leadership and management structure was put in place.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed, secure and sustain effective leadership, management and governance in order to enable the school to become outstanding in all areas.
- Improve the quality of teaching and make it all as good as the best by making sure that:
 - all pupils understand clearly what their next steps in learning are
 - there is greater consistency in the display and use of subject-specific vocabulary to deepen pupils' understanding in all subjects taught.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Prior to joining the school, many pupils have experienced disruption in their education and had negative experiences of mainstream schools. Consequently, their attainment on entry is well below that of their classmates in mainstream schools. Although the gap closes, attainment by the time they leave remains below average. Nevertheless, in relation to their starting points on entry, pupils, whatever their abilities and from all backgrounds, make good progress and achieve well by the time they leave.
- As a result of effective support for all pupils, there are no significant differences in the rates of progress made by those with different levels of learning difficulties, boys and the very few girls or those supported by pupil premium funding. School data confirm that pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the very few looked after by local authorities achieve as well as others. The extra support and resources provided help these pupils make good progress, in line with their classmates.
- Good progress is made in English and mathematics, and literacy skills, in particular speaking, listening, reading and writing, are reinforced in all lessons. Many pupils have made significant progress in their reading as a result of the school's purchase and use of a commercially produced programme to improve reading skills.
- At the end of Year 6, pupils transfer to secondary special schools and sustain their placements. Recently, a very few have reintegrated to either mainstream primary or secondary schools.
- In almost all lessons seen, progress was at least good. This confirms the school's judgement based on checking how well pupils are doing on arrival and over time. In a mathematics lesson, pupils went outside to collect data about car colours, returned to collate this information and then successfully produced a bar chart to show the outcomes of their work. Extra challenging tasks were also completed by the higher-attaining pupils. In a lesson to retell The Three Little Pigs story, younger pupils made significant progress in their speaking, listening and reading skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching throughout the school promotes good learning for all. Teaching in English and mathematics is effective. In all lessons seen, pupils were encouraged to read aloud and did so with confidence and, when needed, sounded out letters and groups of letters to help them recognise difficult words. This was particularly evident in an English lesson where pupils were planning to write a story with a focus on using adjectives and adverbs.
- All lessons include general literacy targets for all. However, there is an inconsistent focus on making sure pupils have opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding of different subject-specific vocabulary.
- The major strength of teaching is how effectively teachers and other adults supporting in lessons work together. Their calm and sensitive approach, together with appropriate use of praise and encouragement, helps pupils stay on task; this despite the difficulties some have in maintaining their concentration. In a mathematics lesson, this was very effective where pupils were moving around to different activity tables throughout the lesson and working either as individuals or as pairs and small groups.
- All adults are adept at asking questions to test pupils' knowledge and understanding of the task at hand. In a history lesson, this was particularly effective when pupils were learning about the reasons for Henry VIII's divorce from Catherine of Aragon.
- At the start of lessons, pupils know what the overall learning aims are, as well as their individual learning targets. Pupils' work is promptly marked and assessed and written targets always set for the next lesson. These targets for pupils' next steps in learning are, however, not written in language that is easy for pupils to understand what it is exactly they should do.

- Pupils told the inspector that lessons are interesting and fun. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly pleased with the progress their children make.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good overall. This is as a result of effective management of pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. There are consistent routines and high expectations of behaviour throughout the day. Pupils arrive with a positive frame of mind and settle quickly to breakfast, which is followed by a short daily session of physical exercise. This calm and purposeful start to the day prepares pupils well for when lessons begin. Very positive staff pupil relationships support pupils' behaviour, including during whole-school lunchtime in the main hall.
- Typically, behaviour over time has been good. There have been no permanent exclusions. Since the last inspection, there have been very few recorded instances of racism or bullying and no instances of homophobia.
- There are still instances where pupils have not been allowed to go to school for short periods of time because of poor behaviour. A pupil told the inspector, 'There was a kerfuffle when we didn't have a proper headteacher', adding that, 'things had got better since the new headteacher arrived'.
- In their responses to the school's recent pupil questionnaire, almost all said they felt safe at school and would report if they were being bullied. Pupils told the inspector they are taught about the importance of e-safety.
- Because lessons are interesting and good behaviour is rewarded with stickers and opportunities to choose an independent activity, pupils' attitudes to learning in lessons are positive.
- Attendance, regardless of pupils' circumstances, is average and punctuality to school is not an issue as all are provided with transport.
- Without exception, parents and carers' responses to Parent View show they are happy with the school's care for their children. This is also confirmed by the school's own parents and carers' questionnaires.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The very unfortunate demise of the previous headteacher had a significant impact on the leadership of the school. The new interim executive headteacher has introduced a revised leadership structure and has produced insightful self-evaluation to support her planning for improvements in overall leadership, teaching and pupils' achievement and progress in English and mathematics. Leadership is not yet good because in addition to the need to restructure the senior team there are some key elements within the governance of the school which have restricted the school's momentum. While improvements are identified well and action on them is in hand, it is too early to judge the impact on pupils' good progress and achievement. However, there are early positive signs.
- As a result of the school's strong commitment to equality, it ensures there is no discrimination of any kind. All pupils, regardless of circumstances or needs, have continued to make good progress in relation to their starting points in their learning and personal development. The areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection have been successfully dealt with. All staff are highly committed and want the best outcomes possible for all pupils.
- The subjects and topics pupils study are the same as in mainstream schools. Because teachers make sure these are planned to match the individual needs and abilities of pupils, all are provided with equal opportunities to succeed. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education as a result of their good all-round personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although all pupils have short daily sessions of physical activity as well as weekly physical education lessons, the interim executive headteacher has plans to use the very recently received funding for the support of primary physical education and

school sport to provide extra activities taught by specialist coaches.

- The developing role of the home school link worker has been successful in supporting parents and carers and engaging them in the education of their children.
- After the previous inspection, the local authority provided light touch support for the school. Since the recent changes in leadership, the local authority has provided appropriate support to meet the needs of the school. It is supporting the new interim executive headteacher and the governing body in planning for the appointment of a new headteacher.

■ **The governance of the school:**

Since the previous inspection, there have been considerable changes in the membership of the governing body. As a result, it has been too inconsistent in its monitoring role, in challenging senior leaders regarding pupils' progress and in making decisions about how well teachers are working. Consequently, actions that needed to be taken over training opportunities and pay have not been robust. Governors are now aware of how they can be more effective in challenging and supporting the work of the school and are developing further their own skills to improve their effectiveness. Notwithstanding this, governors have taken their safeguarding responsibilities seriously, ensuring that the school is a safe place in which to work and learn. They have made sure the school's finances are balanced and overseen the use and impact of pupil premium funding. This is currently being used to provide extra support to ensure that all students, regardless of their circumstances, make the best possible progress in English and mathematics.

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

Unique reference number	116633
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	401608

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bob Bedford
Headteacher	Nicky Cunningham
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 January 2010
Telephone number	02392 255956
Fax number	02392 241150
Email address	admin@waterloo.hants.sch.uk

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