

Waterloo Primary School

Crosby Road North, Waterloo, Merseyside, L22 0LD

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Achievement in the early years and Key Stage 1 requires improvement.
- Pupils' achievement in writing across the school is not as good as in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils across the school do not have enough exciting and stimulating opportunities to write independently. They often do not know how to make their writing more varied and interesting in order to reach higher standards.
- The quality of teaching over time is not yet consistently good or better across the school.
- Ongoing assessment is not always used well enough to check that pupils understand what they are learning and to plan carefully for what they need to do next.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently show pupils exactly how to make their work better. Pupils do not have regular opportunities to respond to teachers' comments.
- When senior and middle leaders check on the quality of teaching, they do not pinpoint precisely enough what teachers need to do in order to improve pupils' learning and raise standards further.

The school has the following strengths

- This is a happy school where everyone is made to feel welcome, whatever their needs. Pupils are helped to believe in themselves and develop the confidence to 'have a go'.
- Achievement in reading has improved throughout the school and standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are now slightly above average.
- Pupils' progress speeds up in Key Stage 2, due to better teaching, and pupils make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those in the resourced provision, make good progress because of the individual support that they receive.
- Teaching assistants play a valuable role in helping pupils who need additional support, in order to help them to make good progress.
- Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They say that they feel safe and well looked after. The 'Anti-bullying Ambassadors' help to ensure that the school is a safe place to be.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. They show high levels of respect and have a keen sense of right and wrong.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders are aware of what still needs to be done to improve. They are committed to doing the best for all pupils.
- Governors are knowledgeable and well informed about the school. They support and challenge senior leaders. The school is therefore well placed to improve further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in many lessons, including two observations carried out jointly with senior leaders. They observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils reading. They observed teaching in the resourced provision and in small support groups. They looked at examples of pupils' work to gain a view of teaching over time. They observed and talked to pupils at lunchtime, during their break times and in the breakfast club.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 40 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own surveys of parents' views, and 27 responses returned by staff.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's most recent data on pupils' attainment and progress across the school, the school's own view of its effectiveness and its plans for improvement, and information relating to checks on the quality of teaching.
- The inspectors looked at the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and at records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Christine Potter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Eithne Proffitt	Additional Inspector
Peter Martin	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school, and has increased in size since the previous inspection.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, who are those eligible for the pupil premium, is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school houses a specially resourced provision (the ASD bases) for pupils with special educational needs, currently providing education for 27 pupils with autism.
- A significant number of pupils join and leave the school in different year groups.
- The Reception classes provide full-time early years provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has close links with the Waterloo Children's Centre and 'Next Steps' nursery, which operate on the school site.
- The school is part of the Capital Network of schools, and has taken the lead in the 'School Readiness' project for Sefton.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better, in order to raise standards further, particularly in the early years and Key Stage 1, by:
 - ensuring that, when senior and middle leaders carry out checks on the quality of teaching, they pinpoint precisely what teachers need to do to improve pupils' learning
 - using ongoing assessment more effectively to check that pupils understand what they are learning and to plan work that is at the right level for what they need to do next
 - making sure that teachers' marking consistently shows pupils exactly how to make their work better and that pupils have time to respond to teachers' comments.
- Improve achievement in writing throughout the school, by:
 - giving pupils, including children in the early years, a much wider variety of exciting and stimulating opportunities to write
 - consistently ensuring that pupils know exactly how to make their writing more varied and interesting in order to reach higher standards.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Senior and middle leaders do not yet have a strong enough impact on improving teaching and pupils' achievement. They watch lessons, look at pupils' work and talk to pupils about their learning. However, when they carry out these checks on the quality of teaching, they do not pinpoint precisely what teachers need to do, in order to improve pupils' learning and raise standards further.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work closely together, and are clearly deeply committed to improving what they do for the pupils. They have recognised the leadership potential of other staff, who share this same enthusiasm and are developing their skills and effectiveness. The literacy leader, in particular, has organised staff training and put in place a much more consistent approach to teaching writing, which in a short time is already resulting in better progress.
- Pupils' progress is tracked carefully by senior leaders, through termly pupil progress meetings with class teachers. Individual pupils who are not making expected progress are identified, and they are provided with well-planned additional support for their learning. Pupils themselves are involved in the process through mentoring meetings where they can help to set their personal targets.
- Leadership and management of the ASD bases is good. The leader ensures that all staff adopt a consistent approach and monitors pupils' progress in each class. She identifies where specific programmes of support are required and helps staff in planning these. She works closely with class teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that pupils from the bases integrate seamlessly within mainstream classes, wherever possible. Parents are closely involved as partners in their children's education, through daily home-school diaries and regular coffee afternoons where visiting speakers share their expertise on subjects such as speech and language development.
- The curriculum is planned well to interest and involve pupils. They say how much they enjoy topics where they can go on trips and do lots of practical activities, and they 'love' opportunities to use the computers. However, pupils across the school do not have enough stimulating and exciting opportunities to write.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Photographic displays of positive real-life role models around the school raise pupils' aspirations and encourage pupils to 'aim high'. Pupils reflect deeply on moral values and know that they are responsible for their own actions. They are therefore well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school uses the primary school sport funding well. Pupils now have more opportunities to take part in a range of sports which they might not previously have considered, such as tennis and cricket. Staff have been able to work alongside a gymnastics coach to improve their skills. The school is rightly proud that more pupils now take part in swimming. The most able swimmers practise each week at the pool in a neighbouring private school and have just won their first trophy.
- The school works hard to involve parents in the life of the school and their children's learning, through assemblies and curriculum workshops. Parents are very supportive of the school's work, and the way in which it cares for their children.
- The school has worked successfully over the past year with the 'Next Steps' nursery and Children's Centre, to develop the 'School Readiness' project across Sefton schools. This has helped to improve children's skills when they start school.
- Leaders make sure that the pupil premium funding is spent on supporting disadvantaged pupils so that the gaps between their achievement and that of other pupils are narrowing. This demonstrates the school's good promotion of equality of opportunity and the effective steps it takes to tackle discrimination. Leaders acknowledge that they still need to ensure that pupils achieve equally well across all key stages and subjects.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for the school, and has given specific support to help develop the early years provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are proud of the school and the pupils. They make sure that they are well informed. As well as receiving regular reports from the headteacher and other leaders, they take part in 'learning walks' and attend School Council meetings. The governors' pupil progress panel meets regularly to look at school data and case study information, which helps them to understand issues in particular year groups and to inform their financial planning. The minutes of meetings clearly demonstrate that, while they offer good support to the school, governors also ask very challenging questions, so that they contribute successfully to driving improvements.
 - Governors have a good understanding of what teaching is like in the school. They have made sure that only teachers who have met their performance management targets and made a good enough

contribution to the school receive pay increases. They also ensure that money spent on staff training is directly related to the needs of the school. Governors are keenly aware of their statutory responsibilities and ensure that safeguarding requirements are fully met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and friendly. They look after each other as they move around the school, holding doors open and standing back for one another on narrow staircases. They enjoy taking responsibility and they were genuinely concerned to make sure that inspectors should find their way around the school.
- Pupils almost invariably have positive attitudes to learning and most of them work hard in lessons. Just occasionally, when they are less sure of what is expected of them, or the work is not at the right level, they lose interest and become restless.
- Pupils' behaviour within the ASD bases is managed well. Individual pupil passports and behaviour support plans are shared with all staff. This means that they understand pupils' needs and respond consistently if pupils are finding it hard to cope. Older pupils are helped to develop strategies to manage their own feelings and behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to face situations which they may find difficult, such as disappointment, within a secure and caring environment.
- The school is a happy community, where pupils work and play together well. They enjoy opportunities to share ideas with each other as they learn. They understand that everyone is different and their high levels of respect and tolerance mean that pupils from the ASD bases are fully accepted into school life.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils feel well looked after in school and trust adults to keep them safe and secure. They know that they will be listened to and helped if they are worried or upset. Parents wholeheartedly agree that the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying in the school. If it does occur, they know how important it is to tell someone, and any incidents are dealt with promptly. Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying and know that it is wrong to call people names. The 'Anti-bullying Ambassadors' play an active role in looking after other pupils and the school has won a national award for its work in helping to be a safe place for pupils.
- The school places a strong emphasis on making sure that pupils know how to stay safe in different situations. Pupils talk knowledgeably about internet safety, and the school's website contains a wealth of extremely useful information for parents about e-safety.
- Attendance has improved over the past three years and is now close to average. The home-school liaison officer works effectively to support families, including collecting pupils from home where necessary. Parents are reminded regularly through newsletters of the importance of good attendance. The introduction of the 'walking bus' and the warm and welcoming environment at the breakfast club help pupils attend regularly and on time.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Progress in pupils' books and the school's assessment information for all year groups indicate that the quality of teaching over time requires improvement.
- Ongoing assessment is not used well enough to check that pupils understand what they are learning in order to plan what they need to do next. This means that work is sometimes too hard for some pupils and too easy for others. Pupils' work shows that teachers' marking does not consistently indicate to pupils exactly how to make their work better. Pupils do not have regular opportunities to respond to teachers' comments.
- There are good relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils say how much they enjoy their lessons and want to do well, because they receive a lot of praise and encouragement.
- The teaching of reading has improved. Younger pupils develop basic skills in reading words through carefully structured and planned activities. Throughout the school, pupils read a broad range of well-chosen texts, from *The Gruffalo* to *Macbeth*. They learn to read these carefully and with good

understanding.

- Activities are usually planned well to interest pupils and gain their attention. For example, Year 6 pupils had been highly motivated by a video clip from the film *Toy Story 3*. They were totally engrossed in their work as they produced sensitive and well-thought-out written evidence about the personality and background of Lotso bear to present at his 'trial'.
- In most lessons, resources and equipment are well organised, and classroom routines are well established. Pupils know what is expected of them and they move quickly between activities so that time is not wasted and learning is not interrupted.
- Where questioning is used most effectively, it gives pupils good opportunities to extend their thinking and the confidence to explain their ideas. For example, searching questions helped pupils in Year 5, who were drafting a play script, to consider who the audience would be, in order to adapt their writing accordingly.
- Enthusiastic and highly committed teaching assistants play a significant role in helping pupils, particularly those who need extra support, to make good progress. They know the pupils well, work alongside class teachers to plan appropriate activities and make sure that these are adapted if necessary to address individual needs more fully.
- Teaching in the ASD bases is good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils' time in school is structured carefully so that pupils know exactly what to expect. Their learning is moved forward swiftly through well-planned and absorbing activities, which use a range of different sensory experiences, such as when the youngest group used actions and sound effects to support a counting activity. Pupils' achievements are celebrated and they are rightly helped to feel proud of themselves.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- From their low starting points on entry to Year 1, pupils do not make good enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics across Key Stage 1. While most of them make steady progress, few of them do better than this. The proportion of pupils reaching the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is therefore consistently below average. Only a very small proportion of pupils achieve standards that are better than this.
- Pupils' achievement in writing across the school is much lower than in reading and mathematics. New 'marking ladders' have been introduced recently, and there is evidence in pupils' work that their progress is now starting to improve. However, pupils still do not consistently know exactly how to make their written work more varied and interesting in order to reach higher standards.
- Progress speeds up rapidly in Key Stage 2 so that, from starting points in Year 3 that are below average, they usually reach standards overall, and in reading and mathematics, which are broadly in line with the national average by the end of Year 6. This represents good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2. There was a significant dip in standards and progress in writing in 2014, but the school's own data show that this was due to the significant proportion of pupils with complex special needs in this group.
- Pupils' progress in reading has improved since the previous inspection and is now good in Key Stage 2, although it still requires improvement in Key Stage 1. The youngest children now have a better understanding of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) and can use their skills to read whole words and sentences. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check, although still below average, has risen steadily over the past three years. Standards in reading by the end of Key Stage 2 were slightly above average in 2014.
- Work in pupils' books shows that the most able pupils in Key Stage 2 are usually given appropriately challenging work, which helps them to apply their skills in different ways. They therefore make good progress. In 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching standards above those expected for their age in reading was above average. A small number of pupils successfully achieved the highest Level 6 in mathematics. However, in line with other pupils, they do not achieve well enough in Key Stage 1, with few of them reaching levels above those expected for their age.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive a range of support, both within and outside lessons. This is organised in a flexible way to make sure that it meets their differing needs well. The school's tracking information shows that these pupils mostly make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Pupils in the ASD bases benefit from highly personalised learning programmes which are tightly focused on moving their learning forward, step by step. Most of them therefore make good, and often outstanding, progress.
- Many pupils join the school in year groups other than Reception, or leave before the end of Year 6, and

this can lead to fluctuations in achievement figures. However, new pupils' needs are assessed quickly; where their starting points are low, timely support is provided to help them to catch up with other pupils.

- Disadvantaged pupils make progress in reading, writing and mathematics which is similar to that of other non-disadvantaged pupils in the school. Their progress in writing is not as strong as that of other non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, but their progress in reading in 2014 was slightly better than that of other non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school are closing. Disadvantaged pupils who left the school in Year 6 in 2014 were approximately two terms behind other pupils in mathematics, half a term behind in reading and half a term above in writing. Compared to other non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, they were three terms behind in mathematics and writing, and half a term behind in reading.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children enter the early years with a wide range of skills and knowledge. For the majority, these are below those which are typically expected for children of their age and a small proportion have significant special needs. An increasing number start school with skills in many areas of learning, including those that help early reading and writing. Children make slower progress than might be typically expected and therefore they do not all catch up quickly enough. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception class has been well below average.
- The early years leader has a clear vision for future development to improve children's achievement. While current data show that this is beginning to have an impact on some children's progress, particularly the more able children, improvements for others are not yet sufficiently rapid to close the gaps in children's attainment and make sure that they are all ready for Year 1.
- There are now clearer systems to record and track children's progress. However, adults do not consistently assess how well children are learning. Therefore, although they have high expectations and fill children's learning time with interesting and attractive activities, these are not sharply enough focused on what children need to do and learn next, in order to ensure that they all make rapid progress.
- Actions taken have led to many improvements in the quality of activities on offer for the children, both indoors and outdoors, such as the writing activities observed by inspectors during the inspection. Children were utterly absorbed in composing invitations to the Gruffalo, and chattered excitedly as they created 'story maps' about the Gruffalo's adventures. However, exciting opportunities for children to write are not yet consistently part of the daily provision.
- Children's good behaviour shows that they are happy, keen to learn and relish coming to school. They have quickly settled into routines and are kind and caring towards their friends. Good systems are in place to make sure that children are looked after well and are kept safe and secure. Parents now participate more in their children's learning and plans are in place to further involve them in supporting their children at home.

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	104870
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	448892

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	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maria Moss
Headteacher	Ruth Baldwin
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2010
Telephone number	0151 928 4274
Fax number	0151 928 6803
Email address	admin.waterloo@schools.sefton.gov.uk

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