



# Whittingham Community Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 131011  
**LEA** Waltham Forest LEA  
**Inspection number** 282161  
**Inspection dates** 12 July 2006 to 13 July 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Martin Beale AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Higham Hill Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Walthamstow
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		London E17 5QX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02085233228
<b>Number on roll</b>	471	<b>Fax number</b>	02085232877
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Ms Karen King
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Christine Barry

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	12 July 2006 - 13 July 2006	282161

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Whittingham is a large primary school with a part-time Nursery. There are high levels of socio-economic deprivation in the area and 40% of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. A very high proportion of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and over 10% are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The main first languages of these pupils are Urdu and Turkish. There are a small number of Traveller children and several refugees or asylum seekers. A high proportion of the pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities and eleven pupils have statements of special educational needs. There is additional provision for seven pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

The inspection team agrees with the school's evaluation that Whittingham is a good and improving school with some outstanding features. It serves its diverse community well and provides good value for money. Pupils thrive in the harmonious environment where all are highly valued and receive outstanding care and support. Their excellent behaviour, very positive attitudes and care for each other contribute significantly to the calm and purposeful atmosphere. The school provides much support for families and has forged very strong links with parents, who are very pleased with all that the school does for their children.

The headteacher's inspirational leadership is complemented by the deputy headteacher, who has brought increased rigour to the school's work. They have high expectations of pupils and staff and take action to help all to improve. Staff are likeminded in doing all that they can to remove barriers to learning and use the very strong links with outside agencies wherever necessary to further this aim. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are generally identified early and they are given well focused support. The school is also very effective at engaging pupils who have been unsuccessful elsewhere and enabling them to be included in education again.

The school's accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses provides a very strong platform for further improvement. Good progress has been made in raising standards and dealing with shortcomings from the last inspection. Provision in the Foundation Stage has improved and is now good. Many children reach standards expected for their age by the end of Reception. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because teaching is good and staff constantly take steps to improve learning. Pupils make good progress and standards are broadly average by Year 6. Much attention has been successfully paid to improving achievement in English and science, but mathematics has received less attention and pupils consequently make slower but satisfactory progress.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

\* Improve achievement in mathematics by placing greater emphasis on developing the skills of using and applying mathematics.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make good and, in places, outstanding progress from a low starting point. Standards are rising throughout the school and are close to the national average by Year 6. There is no significant variation in the achievement of different groups of pupils because all aspects of the school's work focuses so well on meeting individual needs. Consequently, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress as do those learning English as an additional language and the small number

of Traveller children. Pupils are set challenging targets. Their progress is regularly monitored and intervention programmes adopted so that most pupils reach, and many exceed their targets.

A good balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated tasks helps Nursery and Reception children to make good progress. Many, but not all, reach expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. Broadly average test results in Years 2 and 6 in 2005 reflect the standards currently found. The action taken to improve achievement in English and science has been particularly effective. This has led to pupils making more rapid progress in English and science than in mathematics, which has received less attention in the recent past but has rightly been identified as a priority for the coming year. Weaknesses in pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) identified at the last inspection have also been tackled successfully, and standards are average.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and show very positive attitudes to learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Behaviour is of a high standard. Relationships are based on mutual respect, and pupils are particularly good at acknowledging the achievement of others. They appreciate music and show a clear understanding of the customs and values of others. The personal and social development of children in the Foundation Stage is exceptional so that, by the end of Reception, they interact well and are confident learners. The school has worked hard and to good effect to raise attendance levels, which are now average.

Pupils adopt safe practices. They understand the importance of choosing healthy foods and the need for regular exercise. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to responsibilities provided. Older pupils are keen and pleased to help others at lunchtime and hear younger pupils read. The school council has organised competitions and made improvements to playtime equipment. Pupils make valuable contributions to the wider community by raising funds for national and international charities. All pupils are acquiring basic literacy and ICT skills well. This, together with the ability to work collaboratively, prepares them well for the next stage of their education and later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school takes robust action to identify and share good practice as a means of improving teaching and learning. Staff changes have led to some variation in quality but no lessons are unsatisfactory, a large majority are good and some are outstanding. Pupils enjoy learning because many lessons are interesting and gain their attention throughout. In a few otherwise satisfactory lessons, teachers fail to engage pupils fully so their interest wanes. In the most effective lessons, high expectations and challenging

teaching drive learning forward. In these lessons, teachers use questioning skilfully, focus successfully on the development of language skills and give pupils the confidence by showing how much they value their responses. Whiteboards are used creatively to make lessons interesting. Assessment is thorough and used well to plan lessons that consistently meet the diverse learning needs of the pupils. The careful deployment and involvement of support staff contributes considerably to the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Marking is constructive and helps the pupils to see clearly what they need to do to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is broad and successfully promotes pupils' academic and personal development. It is matched carefully to the full range of pupils' capabilities and builds systematically on their prior attainment. The arts are well developed, reflecting the school's cultural diversity. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of key skills, and French is taught to all but the very youngest pupils. Pupils greatly enjoy the wide range of trips, visits and after-school clubs including sports activities.

The curriculum is under constant review and links are developing between learning in different subjects. The greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy in the Nursery and Reception classes has meant that the youngest children are well prepared for later learning. More opportunities for older pupils to develop personal writing and a wider range of practical activities have contributed to improved standards in literacy and science. The limited opportunity for mathematical investigation has been identified as a priority for the coming year.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school has the clear aim, shared by all and successfully achieved, to promote the personal and academic development of its pupils irrespective of their learning needs. The school works well with parents and other agencies to ensure that pupils make good progress. Teachers have a very clear understanding of each pupil and their particular needs. Pupils' progress is tracked rigorously to identify underachievers and plan intervention strategies. Consequently, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive carefully targeted support and guidance. Systems for improving behaviour are highly effective and a strong support team ensures that pupils with identified behaviour problems are very well supported. The safe and supportive learning environment enables pupils to rise to challenges. 'You can do it!' they are told. The targets set for individual pupils help them to know what they need to do to improve. Adults are very vigilant and are clear about the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. All staff are given regular training to ensure child protection procedures are clearly understood and implemented.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Strong leadership underpins the pupils' good progress and their outstanding personal development. The charismatic headteacher is very well respected by pupils, parents and staff. She has established a strong ethos, shared by all, that focuses on enabling all pupils to achieve their full potential. She knows the pupils and their families extremely well. One parent commented, 'The headteacher is inspirational, very caring and supportive'. She receives strong support from the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. The monitoring and development of teaching is particularly effective. Senior staff lead by example. They have a clear overview of strengths in teaching and take constructive action to ensure that shortcomings are remedied. Highly effective and much valued professional support and development is provided for newly qualified teachers. As a result, teaching and learning are improving.

Governors are supportive and well informed about the school's performance. They hold the school to account and ensure that statutory requirements are met. The school knows its strengths and takes effective action to improve the quality of provision and to raise pupils' achievement. With a strong leadership team and effective teamwork among the staff the school is very well placed to build on recent progress and secure further growth.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Pupils

I am writing to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers and watching you learn. There are very many aspects of your school that we liked. You and your parents are right in thinking that you go to a good school.

What we liked about your school: \* You receive outstanding care and attention. \* You are making good progress, particularly in English. \* Teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to make sure that those of you who need extra help with learning get the right sort of support you need. \* You enjoy school and taking part in the additional activities at lunchtime and the end of the day. \* Your behaviour is excellent. You play nicely with your friends at lunchtime and speak very politely to your teachers and visitors. \* You respect and support each other well and contribute much to improving your school. \* You benefit from good teaching. \* Your headteacher, staff and governors run the school very well and work together as a team.

We are very pleased to see how your teachers and governors are trying hard to improve the school further. We are asking them to give you opportunities to apply your mathematical skills more in investigations and solving problems. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Beale

Lead Inspector