



# Whitings Hill Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 101304  
**Local Authority** Barnet  
**Inspection number** 286023  
**Inspection dates** 12–13 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Natalia Power

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Whitings Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Barnet
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		EN5 2QY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02084497635
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	230	<b>Fax number</b>	02084408589
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr. Richard Jeffries
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Richard Maudsely
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Whittings Hill Primary School is slightly smaller than average. Pupils come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Just over half the pupils are from a White British background; the next largest group are Black African. Over a quarter of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is much higher than average. A much higher proportion of pupils than average are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is higher than average. Attainment of pupils at entry into reception is below average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Whittings Hill Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education with some significant areas of strength. Within the Foundation Stage the nursery is outstanding. Pupils enter the Foundation Stage with exceptionally low standards and make good progress. At Years 2 and 6 standards are below average. Inspectors agree with the school that pupils' progress overall is satisfactory.

The leaders and managers of the school cater well for pupils' personal development. However, they do not sufficiently develop effective policies to raise achievement and drive up standards. The leaders are approachable and have the well-being of pupils at heart. They are less effective in inspiring teachers to expect the most from their pupils. The resulting impact on pupils' progress is that too few of them are challenged to do as well as they possibly can.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, though inspectors saw some good lessons where pupils really enjoyed their learning. The care and guidance that the school provides for its pupils are satisfactory overall. Leaders and managers do not sufficiently take account of national and other test results. As a result targets are too general and do not focus on the individual child.

Pupils report that they feel safe and happy in the school and that they welcome its focus on healthy living. They enjoy being given responsibility for others, such as through the school council and involvement in the playground buddy system. These measures help pupils to contribute to the community and go some way towards preparing them for their future role in the workplace. Parents, too, have high levels of satisfaction with the school, as was clear from the questionnaires received. One parent wrote enthusiastically that her son and "can't wait" to get to the nursery each morning and that he feels safe and happy there. Another parent reported that she was "very happy" that her son attends the school. Parents who spoke to inspectors conveyed confidence in the school as a haven of peace and security for their children.

The focus on the personal development and well-being of pupils produces confident and polite individuals. They behave well in the classroom and around the school and playground. They are taught well to respect one another.

The school has shown satisfactory capacity for improvement by tackling some of the issues identified in the last inspection.

### What the school should do to improve further

- \* Raise expectations of what pupils are capable of among all staff.
- \* Set more challenging tasks and targets so that all pupils are able to do as well as they possibly can.
- \* Raise standards through better use of information from national and other tests.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils begin school with exceptionally low standards and leave with standards still below average overall. In the most recent national tests for Year 6, more girls than boys attained higher standards in English, but boys performed better in mathematics and science. Nevertheless there is some evidence of underachievement among girls. Pupils tend to do better overall from entry into the Foundation Stage to the end of Year 2, than between Year 3 and 6. Improved test results for Year 2 in English show that a sustained drive to raise standards in literacy has borne fruit. Though significant numbers of pupils join and leave all year groups, this does not appear to harm pupils' progress overall, and incomers do as well in the long run as the others. Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from specialist support, and achieve well, as do pupils with English as an additional language. There are relatively few higher attainers, and these make satisfactory progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy school and feel part of the community. Behaviour is good, and the small number of exclusions is dealt with effectively using links with another school. Considerable effort has gone into improving attendance, although the level of attendance remains below the national average. In the Foundation Stage the strong level of personal care provided for each pupil is established early, and children who require support are quickly identified and helped. Support given to all pupils, by the learning mentors and other members of staff, effectively develops their emotional health. The school provides good guidance on healthy lifestyles, and pupils eat healthily and enjoy taking exercise. The school teaches safe practices effectively and pupils report that they feel safe at school and know which adult to turn to if they have a problem. They are appreciative of what the school has done for them and are prepared to take on the responsibility of helping others by performing useful tasks and taking part in the flourishing school council. These responsibilities effectively prepare them for their future role in the wider community. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good: pupils enjoy learning co-operatively and actively, and they respect one another.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, though inspectors saw some good lessons. In these, pupils were fully engaged in their learning and showed evidence of considerable enjoyment. They were also encouraged to investigate topics in depth and to write extensively. However, in the majority of lessons seen pupils were

insufficiently challenged to make their best effort and were rewarded too readily. Some teachers set too little work for pupils, and some comments in workbooks are descriptive, making it difficult for pupils to measure how much progress they are making. The school works in effective partnership with parents to share information about how their children are doing. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress with the help of effective teaching assistants. Pupils' behaviour is well managed by teachers and assistants.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum overall is satisfactory, though there are areas of strength, such as the good range of clubs, and the effective use of ICT in all subject areas. The extra time in the classroom given to literacy is effective. Numeracy and science, however, lag behind. In the Foundation Stage the dedicated staff give considerable thought to providing resources to stretch pupils' attainment. Pupils with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language are effectively supported by dedicated teaching assistants. However, in general, pupils are not always provided for so effectively in lessons. This is largely because targets based on what pupils already know are not used consistently to ensure an appropriate level of challenge.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The quality of care, guidance and support offered to pupils overall is satisfactory, with physical and emotional support being stronger than academic support and guidance. All teachers and teaching assistants are committed to the safeguarding, care and welfare of pupils. Within the Foundation Stage care of pupils in the nursery is especially effective. Pupils at risk are identified very early and effective arrangements are put in place to safeguard them and provide physical and emotional support. Overall the school does not always set sufficiently challenging targets to enable individual pupils to do as well as they can.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Overall the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The school is managed efficiently and runs well on a daily basis. The headteacher leads by example. Leaders and managers share a common approach and work well as a team. A strength of the leadership is the creation of good lines of communication. Leaders display some understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through their self-evaluation. The impact of leadership on providing for the welfare and personal development of pupils is good. The impact on raising expectations and improving standards is satisfactory. The leadership and management have addressed some of the issues identified at the time of the last inspection and English results have improved in Year

2. This shows that leaders and managers have a satisfactory capacity to improve the school.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

We very much enjoyed visiting your school and having a look at what you were doing. We liked the way you were confident and cheerful. Thank you for welcoming us to your school.

Your school gives you a satisfactory quality of education and there are many things it does well.

You are very lucky to have a school which gives you so many chances to get involved through the school council, the playground buddy scheme, and so on. We're glad that so many of you take the chance to help out.

You told us that your school looks after you well, and we agree with you that this is the case. You feel safe and happy, and if there's ever a problem you know which adult to turn to for help.

We feel that you could work harder, and have asked your teachers to set you even more interesting and exciting things to do. We want you to be sure you know how well you're doing, compared to other children of your age, so we have asked the school to give you clear targets to aim for. In exchange, we'd like you to take these targets seriously and do your very best. We're glad that many of you are doing well in reading and writing. Now we'd like you to do as well as you can in mathematics and science too, and we have asked the school to find ways of helping you reach these goals.

Very best wishes from both of us, and thank you again for being so friendly and helpful.

Dr Natalia Power

Lead inspector