



# Whitehall Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103036  
**Local Authority** Waltham Forest  
**Inspection number** 286552  
**Inspection date** 27 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Judith Dawson

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Normanton Park
<b>School category</b>	Community		Chingford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11		London E4 6ES
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02085293813
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	412	<b>Fax number</b>	02085237113
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Jon McCormick
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Shirley Skinner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 April 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 3-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 27 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 286552
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Whitehall Primary School is larger than average and accommodates a Nursery and a partial hearing unit for 10 pupils. Over 40% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is above average. Few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. More pupils than average are eligible for free school meals and the number of pupils from disadvantaged households is higher than average. The number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is well above average because the school has ten pupils with limited hearing. Attainment on entry to school is well below average. The school was awarded Investors in People status in 2003 and has just been awarded Healthy Schools Status for the second time.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school provides a good education for its pupils because it is well led and managed. The leadership team understands the school's needs and takes effective action in response. Subject leaders are passionate about their subjects, monitoring and improving them so that pupils are given a wide range of interesting and stimulating opportunities. As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and have many opportunities to develop the skills they need for the future. Teaching is good and often outstanding. All pupils are given very clear guidance about how they can improve their work. As a result, pupils take some responsibility for their learning and make good progress throughout the school. The school's potential for further improvement is good.

The youngest children settle into the Nursery quickly. The stimulating environment encourages them to experiment and explore a range of activities. Throughout the Foundation Stage personal and social development is promoted very well.

Achievement is good, although because of children's limited skills on entry to school, standards by Year 2 are generally below average. Standards at the end of Year 6 were above average in 2005 and the present pupils in Year 6 are on track to attain average standards in the national tests. This represents good progress from Year 2. Few pupils in Year 2 or Year 6 attain the higher levels, especially in English, because they are not always given sufficiently challenging work. When the classes are large, as in 2004 and 2006, pupils do not do so well. This is due, in part, to the very small classrooms, making movement difficult. Pupils with statements of special educational needs, including those with hearing impairments, achieve well due to the very good provision.

Teachers are very good at planning the work to meet the needs of less able pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Very good support staff give these pupils the help they need. However, some tasks are not demanding quite enough of abler pupils to make sure they make the best possible progress. Some pupils do not have enough physical education during the week, compounding the impact of the cramped classrooms. The school is seeking ways to overcome this.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. These pupils celebrate diversity and have a very clear concept of justice and citizenship. Pupils know how to keep healthy and safe and many make an outstanding contribution to the school community and children in need across the world. As a parent said, 'The school teaches the children to have empathy with others and to think about the feelings of their peers.' Behaviour is good. The small minority of pupils with challenging behaviour are dealt with very effectively and incidences of poor behaviour are diminishing. The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support for its pupils.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standards of the most able pupils by providing them with more challenge.
- Ensure all pupils have adequate formal physical education time.
- Seek to enlarge the classrooms so all year groups have space to learn effectively.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good so standards are average by the end of the school. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage although few attain the expected standards (early learning goals) by Year 1. Their good progress continues but, by the end of Year 2, standards generally remain below average. There are variations from year to year. In 2006, the number of pupils attaining average standards in writing was close to the national average, improving significantly on the year before, but standards in reading fell slightly. The school is beginning to reverse a fall in standards in mathematics since 2002 when they were high.

Pupils continue to achieve well throughout the school. The many opportunities pupils have for using their English, mathematics and information and communication technology skills across the curriculum enable them to practise the skills they need for their future lives. Pupils' very good understanding of what they need to do to improve enables them to take pride in their achievements when they meet their targets. Some of the abler pupils lack sufficient challenge and few attain the higher levels. Standards by the end of Year 6 vary from year to year and there is clear evidence that the smaller the number of pupils in the classes, the better their achievements, especially in English, where almost all work is done in the small classrooms. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities have very good support and make good progress towards their targets.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The school's outstanding guidance and support enable pupils to deepen their self-esteem. As a result, pupils are proud of their achievements and those of their peers, especially when they achieve their targets. They show great concern for others less fortunate than themselves. Some wrote to the Prime Minister to ask him to help children in the Third World go to school. All funds generated through school council initiatives are shared with charities. Pupils enjoy the diversity of cultures within school and some learn French and Spanish to deepen their understanding.

Throughout the school, pupils work well together in pairs and groups, even in cramped conditions. Behaviour on the playground is generally very good and pupils are very clear what to do if there is any bullying or unacceptable behaviour. Miscreants are clear about the consequences of their behaviour. Although pupils enjoy school, attendance remains below average. Pupils feel safe in school and secure in the knowledge that there is an adult they can talk to.

The school council makes a significant contribution to the life of the school. They help plan menus for school lunches and run a fruit tuck shop to raise funds for their peace pergola. Class representatives make sure all pupils' views are heard. Older pupils run lunchtime clubs and prefects take their responsibilities very seriously.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and pupils respect each other and the best teachers help pupils feel that they are learning with them. This makes pupils think for themselves and take responsibility for their learning. The very good marking helps pupils know what is good about their work and how to make it better. Teachers plan their lessons well and pupils are told what they are expected to learn. Teaching assistants give very good support, especially for lower ability pupils or those with statements of special needs. However, some of the work planned for the most able pupils lacks sufficient challenge. Some pupils say that some of their work is too easy.

Most teachers make learning fun. Lessons generally proceed briskly and have a range of different activities within them that encourage pupils to discuss their learning. Sometimes these discussions are too long and pupils lose interest.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is wide-ranging and interesting and one of the reasons that pupils enjoy their learning. There is a specialist teacher for music, and other teachers and volunteers support provision for sports. Good links with the secondary school provide pupils with opportunities to use science equipment, for example. The school works hard to plan visits and arrange visitors to school to support pupils' learning. Subject leaders have adapted the curriculum to match pupils' interests, while making sure pupils learn the skills they need. Pupils really enjoy their modern foreign language lessons.

The curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education is very effective and aspects of this are reinforced across the subjects. Pupils are well-versed in the dangers of drug abuse, how to stay safe and keep healthy. Some are rightly concerned that they do not have enough physical education. Although the school provides a good range of sporting clubs, the extensive curriculum has resulted in less time for physical education lessons. Some pupils do not have the recommended amount of physical activity.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

This is a school that is committed to providing high quality care for pupils and adults. There are excellent systems for making sure new pupils settle quickly into school life. There are rigorous systems for ensuring the safety of pupils. The high quality behaviour policy, to which the pupils contributed, has been shared with other schools and is consistently applied. There are some pupils with significant emotional and behavioural difficulties and the school provides them with the strategies they need to help them

improve. The personal guidance given to pupils is outstanding. As a result, pupils thrive and become responsible and mature citizens of the school. The comprehensive tracking of pupils' progress enables teachers to give pupils sharply focussed targets for improvement. All pupils know their targets which are supported by the excellent marking.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Good self-evaluation ensures that the headteacher and senior management team have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have clear plans for improvement. They act swiftly in response to issues. For example, improvements in the support for pupils and teaching styles resulted in a big improvement in the writing of Year 2 pupils in 2006. Subject leadership has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Subject leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning and teachers' planning enables them to ensure a better match of provision to meet pupils' needs. Leaders have generated a strong sense of unity and commitment to provide the best for the pupils amongst all the staff. This is demonstrated in the outstanding care, guidance and support.

The Foundation Stage has a temporary leader. Links between the Nursery and Reception classes have improved and Reception children have good access to Nursery equipment. There is still some lack of continuity in the planning of the curriculum and assessment across the Foundation Stage.

Governors support the school well and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They are well-informed by the headteacher and subject leaders and evaluate progress towards plans for improvement. However, they are not yet fully involved in evaluating the impact of new initiatives.

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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>	2
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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**

Thank you very much for your friendliness and help during my visit to your school. I was very impressed with how hard you work. The way you care for and respect each other and your teachers is also very impressive. Your school council plays a very important part in the running of the school. I was delighted to hear about the ways you have devised to raise money for the peace pergola. Even more impressive is the way you will give half the proceeds to help children less fortunate than yourselves. Well done.

Thank you to those of you from each class who left your lessons to talk to me. You told me how much you enjoy school, how good your teachers are and how well you are cared for. I agree with you. You are taught well and have lots of interesting things to learn. You are extremely well cared for and your teachers give you excellent help to improve your work. You all know your targets and are very proud when you achieve them.

Some of you said that you did not think you had enough time for physical education. I agree with you and have asked your teachers to make sure that all classes have enough time for this. Some of the most able pupils amongst you said that sometimes your work is a little too easy. I have also asked your teachers to make sure that you have plenty of challenge. Make sure that you rise to the challenge!

You should be proud of your good school. Your headteacher and other teachers lead the school well and make sure that you continue to make good progress. They give you excellent support to help you behave well and most of you do. I know that many of you are squashed in your small classrooms and I want your teachers and governors to keep trying to get your accommodation improved.

Best wishes

Judy Dawson

Lead Inspector