



The Waterloo School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116633
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 290571
Inspection date 16 October 2006
Reporting inspector Kay Charlton

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Warfield Avenue
School category	Community special		Waterlooville
Age range of pupils	5-11		P07 7JJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02392255956
Number on roll (school)	43	Fax number	02392241150
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Chris Scott
		Headteacher	Ms Anna Brown
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Waterloo is a day special school with 43 pupils drawn from a wide geographical area. All have statements of special educational need mainly concerned with emotional and behavioural problems, but often allied to learning difficulties. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British origin and none speak English as an additional language. Most pupils have been transferred from mainstream schools and attainment on entry is well below average. The current headteacher has been in post since October 2005. Prior to that there were several changes in the school's leadership. The school has gained the Investors in People Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that is well placed to improve further because of its continual search for ever more interesting and exciting ways to engage pupils in learning. Comments made by parents such as 'I have nothing but praise for the staff at the school. They make the children shine' are fully justified. Pupils also hold the school in high regard as shown by the impressive way they look after the excellent accommodation. The way pupils enter classes with a smile on their faces is testimony to how much they enjoy school.

Pupils' progress is good as a result of good teaching and learning. They achieve well but standards remain well below average because of pupils' low starting points on entry. Staff expect the most of pupils whatever their needs and constantly praise and encourage them in their efforts. In turn, pupils of all ages show determination and try hard. They invariably meet or exceed their targets. The school places a strong emphasis on practical work in mathematics and science and pupils achieve particularly well in these areas. In literacy, pupils' achievements are generally good but they do not do as well as in other areas because teachers do not always challenge their thinking sufficiently. A strong programme for personal development along with a wide range of enrichment activities ensure that pupils make significant gains in developing their self-esteem, confidence and independence. Pupils' behaviour is very good and greatly improved from first starting school. As you walk around the school the calm and purposeful climate for learning is noticeable.

Care, guidance and support are good. Staff put the pupils' needs first. They establish outstanding links with others, including parents and mainstream schools. This ensures that pupils feel safe and secure and get every chance to re-integrate into mainstream education. Support for pupils' personal development is very good. Staff are very positive in their approach and never miss a chance to build on any small steps of improvement that pupils make. Support for pupils' academic development is good.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has won the confidence of staff and as result, the school has made very good improvement since her appointment. She provides a vision of excellence and has a clear view about the school's present strengths and weaknesses. Working with staff she has effectively highlighted the most important areas in need of improvement. However, the school's systems to track pupils' performance over time are not sufficiently developed in order for it to be able to evaluate its effectiveness. Consequently, it lacks the confidence to celebrate its success. There is a strong focus on staff development and staff are keen and enthusiastic to move forward.

What the school should do to improve further

- * Ensure that staff consistently challenge pupils to improve their achievement in literacy.
- * Develop the systems it uses to track pupils' performance over time so that it can fully evaluate its effectiveness.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils of different backgrounds and abilities make good progress and achieve well. The school generally meets or exceeds its challenging targets. Pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics and science and they use their skills in numeracy very well. A good example of this was seen when they worked out lengths required for their models in a construction project. Overall, pupils achieve well in literacy, but improvements can still be made since the progress they make is not as good as in other areas of their work. The school has rightly prioritised literacy as a key area for development. Already this is having a positive impact and is most noticeable in the development of pupils' skills in speaking and listening, and also in reading. Pupils say that they now enjoy reading, but they feel less positive about their achievements in writing and this is the area where most remains to be done.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The number of pupils who re-integrate into mainstream schools demonstrates the school's success. Learning to understand their rights, but also their responsibilities, is a cornerstone of the programme and pupils gain very good understanding of their feelings and how these affect others. They talk openly about improvements they have made in managing their emotions and can say why some of their previous reactions were inappropriate. They care for each other well and the school council plays a very active role in helping to improve provision. Pupils develop mature attitudes and make a strong contribution to the local community, for example through the links made with the local sports partnership. Attendance is also very good and pupils are keen to come to school. Pupils are aware of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle and they are very aware of the need to adopt safe practices. This was very evident when they gave advice to a new pupil about the use of the climbing equipment in the playground. Overall, the school prepares pupils well for their future economic well-being but pupils can still make more effective use of their literacy skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Staff work very well as a team and show a high level of commitment to every pupil. With a great sense of enthusiasm they encourage pupils in their learning and use resources very well to make learning fun. Staff use assessment well to make sure that work is matched effectively to the needs of individual pupils. Excellent relationships are established and pupils quickly learn that they can go to

staff if they need help. Staff manage pupils' behaviour extremely well and a calm and purposeful atmosphere pervades the school.

The techniques that staff use to develop literacy are not consistent across the school. A very successful lesson was observed in a Year 5/ 6 class that showed that there are already models of outstanding practice in the school from which other staff can learn. In other lessons, opportunities were missed to develop pupils' skills in literacy, particularly when staff taught subjects other than English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The school ensures that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced provision. There is a suitably high emphasis on pupils' personal development where most have the greatest needs. There is a very good programme of enrichment that is enhanced by the school's excellent links with the community as was seen when a local artist helped pupils create African masks. Pupils are very impressed with all of the extra activities they take part in and say that 'It is cool here, we do things like yoga and we go out on a lot of visits'. A recent 'sleep-over' in school had also been a great hit with pupils. There is a very systematic development of pupils' basic skills in numeracy. The school is rightly reviewing its provision because pupils' skills in literacy are not developed effectively in all subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care is very good as is the support for pupils' personal development. The staff show a high level of respect towards each pupil and use the school's policy of positive reinforcement very well to improve pupils' self-esteem. Procedures to protect pupils are good. Governors and staff carry out thorough risk assessments, and health and safety checks. Child protection procedures are robust and effective.

The support and guidance for pupils' academic development is good. Assessments are used well to set individual targets and help pupils improve. However, insufficient data has been built up over time to be able to identify patterns and trends in the achievement of either groups or individuals to be certain every pupil is achieving their very best.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. In the time since her appointment, the headteacher has earned the respect of pupils, parents and staff. She has a vision of how the school should improve and how this will be achieved. Responsibilities are distributed well amongst staff and leaders at all levels and all are well supported and proactive in their roles. Staff are very motivated to move forward and the school has a good capacity to improve. The school makes good use of the views of pupils, staff

and parents, and has identified where improvement is most needed. Resources are being targeted effectively to these key priorities to ensure that pupils' achievements continue to improve. The school's self-evaluation procedures are satisfactory. At present insufficient data has been built up over time for the school to be fully confident in its success. Consequently, its judgements about its own success tend to be over-cautious.

Governors are very supportive and they challenge the school well and hold it to account. They provide good opportunities for parents to express their views and contribute their ideas and they ensure that the school provides good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3
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	2
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 for your help when I came to inspect your school on 16 October 2006.

You said that The Waterloo School is a good school and you are very proud of it. You think that the staff help you to learn a lot so that you make good progress. The inspection agrees with your view that it is a good school.

I could see that you try hard and enjoy your work. You achieve well and usually reach or exceed your targets. You all show respect towards each other and you work together very well. Your behaviour is very good and you recognise that you have all improved a great deal in this area. Teaching is good. Staff work very well as a team and they make learning enjoyable. They organise a wide range of events and visits out of school for this reason. I am aware that you think that activities such as yoga and football are 'cool'. All of the staff look after you very well and you are well informed about the importance of trying to make sure you stay healthy.

The headteacher supports the staff very well and is helping everyone to develop their skills so that the school improves. At present, staff are working on improving the way you are taught the skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing. You have an important part to play to be sure that you achieve as well as you can in these areas. The staff are also trying to build up more information about how well you are all doing so that everyone can be proud of the school's successes.

Yours sincerely

Kay Charlton

Lead Inspector