

Water Orton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125620
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	293311
Inspection date	7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Janet Thompson HMI

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 on roll	
School	329
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Reilly
Headteacher	Carl Lewis
Date of previous school inspection	12 June 2002
School address	Attleboro Lane Water Orton Birmingham B46 1SB
Telephone number	0121 7472851
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Water Orton is a large village school. The area served by the school is moderately advantaged in terms of social and economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is very low. 87% of pupils are from White British backgrounds and there are a few more girls than boys. The proportion of pupils with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The school hosts a local authority run support unit for pupils with dyslexia. The centre provides support for a number of children from within the school, with five designated pupils accessing the higher level provision.

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 with some outstanding features. Pupils are extremely enthusiastic about their learning and are very complimentary about teachers and the quality of lessons. As one pupil commented, 'Teachers here make us work hard but also make learning fun – you get to do things as well as read and write about them'. The shared pride in the school is fundamental to the highly positive and supportive ethos. Positive relationships between staff and pupils are based on respect and a belief that everyone has a part to play in the smooth running and development of the school. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils behave extremely well and learn to assert their views in a considerate and suitable manner. A good number of pupils reach and exceed levels expected for their age in English, mathematics and science and the vast majority of pupils make good progress from their starting points. There are particular strengths in the progress pupils make in communication, language and literacy in the Foundation Stage as well as reading at Key Stage 1 and English at Key Stage 2.

Pupils make good progress across the school because of good teaching which is engaging and well targeted. Children get off to a positive start in the Foundation Stage, where they learn in a stimulating environment and attain standards that are above those of children of their age. Activities are carefully planned to develop previous learning. Recent improvements to curriculum planning make sure there is an effective combination of direct teaching and imaginative activities which build on children's interest and help them to learn. Across the school, teachers plan a good range of activities using different styles of learning within each lesson, helping to maintain a good pace. This in turn supports pupils well in gaining new skills and consolidating those already learnt. Care, guidance and support are good. Tracking of assessment information has been refined and teachers use the information well to ensure expectations of pupils' work are good and the levels of challenge are relevant for pupils of all abilities. Occasionally, there is insufficient emphasis on ensuring pupils use their own understanding to think more deeply and work things out for themselves. Careful planning for mixed-age classes ensures that pupils in both age groups are catered for well. Many lessons have good opportunities for pupils to assess and review their own learning but this is not consistently planned in a structured way. The curriculum is good because it is carefully structured to ensure progress and continuity and effective links are made across different subjects. The school has made good improvements in information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection. The progress pupils make is in line with other subjects but opportunities to use ICT as a tool within other subjects is underdeveloped. There are many popular activities that support the curriculum, including after-school clubs, residential trips and other visits, as well as visitors to school, and these all support the curriculum themes and provide good opportunities for spiritual and cultural development.

Parents are very supportive of the school and well over a third of parents replied to the Ofsted questionnaire. The vast majority of these were very positive; this was summed up by one parent who said, 'Staff have found a good balance between pushing and challenging and supporting pupils'. A few parents expressed concern about the use of mixed-age classes and a few felt the school had not sought their views sufficiently.

Leadership and management are good. There is effective evaluation carried out based on careful and focused monitoring of provision and analysis of pupils' progress. The school has successfully addressed areas identified as requiring improvement at the last inspection and has also continued to build on its strengths. Within the cycle of evaluation, staff are very good at identifying areas

for development and ensuring good practice is maintained. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Establish greater consistency in lessons to enable pupils to review and evaluate their own work effectively and regularly.
- Plan the use of ICT as a tool for learning across the curriculum.
- Provide opportunities for developing pupils' thinking skills and problem-solving by developing whole-school strategies for questioning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils start at the school with levels that reflect those expected for their age. They make good progress as they move through the school and they leave with levels above those expected. Where achievement has dipped in the past, for example, progress in mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 during 2006, the school took swift action and, as a result, pupils are once again making good progress. The vast majority of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because support is well planned and clearly focused. The school has maintained an emphasis on expecting high standards of work in other subjects as well as English, mathematics and science. Progress in these subjects is also good and this is illustrated in recorded work and by the high quality displays of pupils' work around the school. The good standards that pupils attain in the key literacy and numeracy skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Very good relationships and the positive ethos of the school support pupils in making outstanding progress in their personal development and well-being. Pupils are very well behaved and develop into articulate young people with an extremely good understanding of responsibility and a sense of justice appropriate to their age. When individual pupils find it difficult to reach the expected high standards of behaviour they are given highly effective support from staff and pupils and, as a result, learn to cooperate and improve their own behaviour. At all ages, pupils express pride in their school and demonstrate great enthusiasm for learning, and are keen to tell visitors about their work. They are actively involved in the running and development of the school. Attendance is good and pupils give each other a high level of support within lessons and at other times during the day. The recent achievement of healthy schools status gives recognition to the high levels of understanding pupils have about how to lead healthy lifestyles. This is supported by having nutritious food available and many very good opportunities for physical and emotional development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons motivate pupils to work hard and build on their enthusiasm for learning. By using interesting subjects and ways of teaching, lessons are fun but also have a very clear learning focus which is fully understood by the pupils. Teachers and

pupils have very good relationships based on trust and respect. Good assessment underpins planning and teachers are adept in making sure they give different levels of challenge to pupils of different abilities and ages. Occasionally, there are some missed opportunities to stimulate pupils to think more deeply about their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is well planned to make explicit links across most subjects. Planning for the use of ICT as a tool for learning in other subjects is not as well developed as some of the other links. Additional activities enhance the curriculum and ensure that it is good. Work about the environment, including recycling, as well as sports and arts clubs, are examples of activities that motivate pupils to learn more skills and increase their understanding and awareness of current issues.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Good tracking of achievement helps the school to effectively identify pupils who need additional support. There is suitable planning for subsequent action and other professionals are involved when required. Pupils receiving support from the dyslexia centre are very positive about the help they receive and it helps them to make good progress. Pupils are motivated by their targets and relish being involved in review meetings. Pupils are usually very clear about what they are learning but do not always have sufficient opportunities to evaluate the quality of their own work. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Pupils develop a good understanding of health and safety considerations through personal, social and health education as well as in day-to-day contexts. Transition arrangements from pre-school providers support appropriately children's personal and learning needs. Similarly, links with a local secondary school help pupils to feel more confident about moving on to their next school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good at all levels at the school. The senior team, teachers and support staff are involved in evaluating all that the school does. There are some very good examples of staff involvement, such as the standards team challenging the progress made by different groups of pupils and helping to establish more effective tracking across subjects to help raise expectations.

Pupils are consulted via the active and highly effective school council, pupil conferencing and surveys. Their views are reflected in many of the subsequent actions taken by the school. Parents have voiced some concerns about consultation. A parent forum has been established in response. This group discusses issues and forms of communication. It has proven successful and notes illustrate how the school has adapted what it does to reflect the views expressed.

Governors take an active role in the cycle of evaluation and keep respective roles of support and challenge well balanced and effective.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

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.

Annex A

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	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	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

12 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Water Orton Primary School, Water Orton, B46 1SB

I enjoyed talking to so many of you during the inspection and would like to thank you for making me so welcome. I found my visit very interesting and was impressed by the quality of your work. Water Orton is a good school that has some excellent features.

You behave very well and make excellent progress in your personal development and well-being. I think this is partly because you are so involved in the running and development of the school. Your views are sought and as one of you said, 'When we reach an agreement it happens...and quickly'. You develop a very good understanding of the needs of different people and learn how to support each other very effectively. When I went into lessons, it was pleasing to see you all involved and working hard.

You make good progress in lessons and over the years. You work hard because lessons are fun and also give you enough to think about. I would like teachers to challenge some of you a bit more in your thinking about more complex things and have asked them to decide upon some ways to do this. Teachers find out what you already know and plan work that helps you to learn more as well as making sure you practise the skills you already have. I would like to see more opportunities for you to look at your own work and decide how much you have learnt. You need to be able to work out how to improve your work even if it is already good. I have also asked teachers to plan to use information and communication technology (ICT) more often so that you can use it to help you with your work in different subjects.

The headteacher and staff keep finding out about things that are going well in the school and where they could make things better. I think they have identified the right things to work on and improve. You can help too by continuing to work hard and do your best. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Janet Thompson Her Majesty's Inspector