

# Waterside Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115899
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312097
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Dickinson HMI

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	177
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Martin Stokes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lynne Thorne - Acting Headteacher
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 January 2002
<b>School address</b>	Ashford Crescent Butts Ash Wood Hythe Southampton SO45 3GQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	02380 842143
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Waterside Primary School opened in January 2005 as a new primary school, when the former Langdown Infant School changed its character to incorporate the junior school. During its first eighteen months, pupils had several moves between sites whilst the building work was carried out. All pupils moved to the new school building in September 2006. The school serves a mixed area. A greater proportion of pupils enters and leaves the school during each year than is usually the case. Almost all pupils are of white British origin. The school has a Healthy Schools Award. The proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. When children enter Reception, their attainment is lower than is normally found, particularly in their language and social skills. The school has been through a period of high staff turnover, including senior leadership and six out of eight full-time teachers have been appointed since September 2006. The school is currently led by an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. A permanent headteacher has been appointed from January 2008.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Waterside provides a satisfactory standard of education and is getting better. Pupils enjoy school and are proud of their new building. Pupils' behaviour has improved and is now good. A group of older pupils, when asked to sum up their school, came up with 'Waterside is a fun, cheerful, friendly school that welcomes you as you walk through the door.' The great majority of parents are pleased about the school's work and many wrote to comment upon the recent improvements they had noted.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and results in satisfactory achievement for pupils. The youngest children get off to a good start in Reception and make good progress. Here, teachers plan an interesting range of activities to help children learn and develop. There are pockets of good teaching, mostly towards the upper end of the school, and this leads to accelerated progress for these pupils. Teaching does not always cater well for pupils' differing levels of attainment and some lessons provide too little variety and interest to make learning lively and enjoyable.

There is widespread agreement from governors, senior leaders and staff that the school has improved considerably since September. They recognise that some pupils have not achieved as well as they should have done since the school opened and that standards should be higher. They are right to hold this view. Standards are below average because some pupils have not made secure enough progress over the last two years. More should reach or exceed the nationally expected standard by Year 2 and Year 6. Teaching is improving but there is not enough consistently good teaching. The acting headteacher and teachers have worked hard to improve key aspects of the school's provision. Those with learning difficulties, for example, have much better plans to help them with their specific needs. There is also greater consistency in how reading and writing are taught. All these developments are boosting pupils' progress.

Clear improvement has been made in checking pupils' reading levels and setting up a tighter system for assessing writing but there are weaknesses in how the school assesses pupils and tracks their progress. It does not set challenging targets for each pupil so that teachers can plan work at the right level to move them on in their learning. This lack of information is one reason why teaching is satisfactory rather than good and why fewer pupils reach higher levels than they do nationally.

The acting headteacher has played a pivotal role in bringing about improvement by focusing on the most important priorities and doing things well rather than going for a quick fix. She has provided a clear sense of direction and sensitive guidance for what is largely a new team of staff. She is working closely with governors and the new headteacher, who starts in January, to enable a smooth changeover. The teachers with leadership responsibilities, many of whom are new to their role, have worked hard to improve provision. A lot has been accomplished since September but they do not yet have sufficient impact on raising pupils' achievement and standards. There is a strong, shared determination to improve the school further and morale is high. The school can demonstrate that the things that have been done are improving pupils' achievement and, for this reason, it has satisfactory capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children settle in well to the Reception class. They are taught well and are helped to develop confidence and independence. Teachers place particular emphasis on promoting personal and

social development and children make good progress in this area. They develop positive attitudes to learning and exploring. Teaching is adapted successfully to help children develop at the right speed for them. Occasionally, children that are more able could be encouraged to try harder things. Some children have particular difficulties with their speaking and language development. Teachers help by giving children time to think and valuing their answers. There is a good balance between allowing children to make choices about what they will do and planning more directed activities. Teachers are developing appropriate records to monitor each child's progress although some of these are at an early stage.

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

- Check the levels that pupils have reached and set challenging targets for all pupils, to promote good achievement.
- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching and ensure that all teachers draw upon a variety of teaching methods to engage and interest pupils.
- Strengthen the impact of subject leaders so that they have more influence on pupils' standards and achievement.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards in Years 2 and 6 are below average but there are signs that pupils are making better progress since September. Over the last two years, test results in Years 2 and 6 have been significantly below average. However, the Year 6 test results must be treated cautiously because the school is relatively new and pupils in Year 6 were not educated in this school throughout Key Stage 2. The school has been right to focus on raising standards, particularly in writing, and there are signs that these are steadily improving. Pupils are also beginning to make better headway in their reading, helped by regular focused sessions in small groups. The school's leaders have rightly identified that more pupils should be reaching the higher levels by Year 2 and 6.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils enjoy school and work hard. They relate well to one another when asked to work together in pairs or groups. They particularly enjoy lessons that involve practical tasks, such as making Greek masks or cam machines, or acting out a story. All these are examples of things pupils say they have liked over recent weeks. Pupils behave well. They play safely in the playground and look out for one another. Pupils take regular exercise in school and many try to eat healthily. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are willing to take responsibility. They offer ideas, through the School Council, on how the school can be improved. They are pleased, for example, that they can make suggestions about how the pond and woodland area could be developed. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their next stage of education and future lives.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning has improved, with more good teaching and less inadequate teaching, but there is still some way to go before pupils' learning is consistently good. The good or better teaching is typified by lively, varied activities that enthuse and involve the pupils. Teachers maintain a good focus on the main learning points and use different ways of reinforcing these. The pupils like lessons where they are actively involved. This was evident during the inspection in some science and literacy lessons. Some lessons though are uninspiring, especially when the teacher talks for a long time. Pupils become restless and teachers then need to speak to them about concentrating and sitting still, and this disturbs the flow of learning. Teachers' planning is not always tailored closely enough to the level pupils have already reached. This means tasks are sometimes too easy for the higher attaining pupils. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils' learning in most lessons. Teachers' marking is inconsistent. It often praises pupils for what they have achieved but rarely gives them clear guidance on what they need to do to improve.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum broadly meets the needs of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The plans for these pupils have been improved to identify what they should focus on to help them achieve. The school recognises that the curriculum does not cater as well for the higher attaining pupils. The school had a subject inspection for information and communication technology (ICT) in January 2006, which was critical. The school has made some progress in improving equipment and building teachers' confidence. Pupils report they use computers for a range of purposes but ICT is not yet embedded across different subjects. The school organises a range of activities, apart from lessons, to support pupils' learning. The programme of visits and visitors, and a residential trip to Ferny Croft Activity Centre, add extra enjoyment and make a clear contribution to pupils' social development.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Pupils are well cared for and supported. Arrangements for making sure pupils are safe are securely in place. Pupils say they are confident that they can talk to an adult in school should they have a concern. Vulnerable pupils are also well looked after. Although pupils receive good personal support and guidance, their academic development is not as well supported. The school has started to improve this aspect by checking the levels that pupils have reached in reading and writing. This has provided a secure picture of where pupils are in these two areas. Pupils have also been given clear guidance on what they have to do in their writing to reach a particular level. They are now given short-term targets to work towards, for example learning their four times table, or remembering to use capital letters and full stops. These developments are relatively recent and are having a more beneficial effect in some classes than others. The school is not setting challenging longer-term targets for each pupil to help raise standards.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The new leadership team has made a clear difference to the school since September. The acting headteacher quickly established where the priorities lay. She has enabled teachers with leadership responsibilities to develop their areas, whilst ensuring that teachers have not felt bombarded by too many new initiatives. Several developments are having a positive impact upon pupils' learning. The 'rocketing writing' books are a good example, where pupils' writing is checked regularly against the different levels. The acting headteacher is keeping the governing body well informed. Governors are gaining an increasingly detailed knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They too have played a role in promoting improvement. Governors queried, for example, whether the school's reading scheme was being used to best effect. This led to focused training for all teachers and teaching assistants. Reading sessions are well structured and organised and pupils are enjoying succeeding in their reading. There are two key areas that are not yet effective. Subject leaders do not have sufficient involvement in monitoring pupils' standards and progress to identify what needs to be improved further. The school does not have a full and secure picture of the levels that each pupil has reached in the past. It is therefore not using targets effectively to predict what each pupil could reach by the time they leave the school.

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## Annex A

## 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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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	3

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

26 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Waterside Primary School, Southampton, SO45 3GQ

You may remember that we visited your school recently to look at all the things you do. We enjoyed our time in your beautiful new school and we felt very welcome. We would particularly like to thank the School Council, and the group of Year 5 and Year 6 children, who offered to meet with us and tell us about your school.

I wanted to write and let you know what we found out. Your school is satisfactory and there are several things that are getting better. Firstly, we found that your behaviour has improved. Well done! Mrs Thorne and all the teachers and teaching assistants have worked hard to help your school improve. The children in Reception are doing well. You are all getting better at reading and writing. The children who do reading most mornings are working really hard. Most of you have targets in the back of your writing books and I want to encourage you to keep looking at these so that as many as possible do well in your writing.

Many of you told us you enjoyed lessons that were active and fun and we have asked the school to make more lessons like this so that you learn well and make good progress. We want the teachers to decide the levels that they think each of you can reach and then help you to achieve these. Finally, we have asked the teachers who have special responsibilities to look really carefully at your work, and the progress you are making, to see if they can spot things that could be even better.

Thank you once again for giving us a warm welcome and helping us in our work.

We would like to wish you all well for the future.

With best wishes

Margaret Dickinson

Her Majesty's Inspector