

# Whittingham Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131011
<b>Local Authority</b>	Waltham Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	328547
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	475
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Karen King
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Dena Lawrence (acting)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 July 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Higham Hill Road Walthamstow London E17 5QX

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 July 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- What are leaders doing to ensure that mathematics standards rise to meet those attained in English?
- Is teaching and learning better than good?
- What are the key factors in leadership and management that are contributing to the school's highly successful track record?

Evidence was gathered from the analysis of school documentation, observation of lessons, conversations with pupils and discussions with teachers and senior staff. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than usually found. Over 70% of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost 40% of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having moderate behavioural and speech and language learning difficulties is high, and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has designated provision for the inclusion of pupils with behavioural, emotional and social needs (6 places). The school has attained the Activemark Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Whittingham Primary provides its pupils with an outstanding education and is led by a quietly charismatic acting headteacher. Her knowledge of the curriculum, teaching and learning and the care of pupils is a model the other staff try to emulate. Parents too are appreciative of the school with 96% of the questions asked in the inspection survey being answered as positive. As one parent said, 'I think the school is doing a very good job'. In fact, in the absence of the substantive headteacher, senior leaders have done an excellent job of running the school. They have ensured that standards have continued to improve and that the rates of progress pupils make have remained high. The school's own tracking data in English and provisional 2009 results in mathematics and science show that standards are broadly average. Considering the low starting points of significant proportions of pupils, this represents outstanding achievement. Learners meet and exceed highly challenging targets. This is testament to outstanding teaching. The school works as an establishment where all leaders and managers, including the governing body, share a common vision. Simply put, they want the very best for each individual in the school's community. Governors give clear direction to the school and there is high-quality teamwork between them and the senior management team.

Since the time of the previous inspection, the school has worked hard to improve achievement in mathematics. It has succeeded through developing approaches that develop the skills of using and applying mathematics. This was observed during the inspection where pupils explained their reasoning and answered challenging questions posed by the teacher. Pupils make rapid progress in mathematical understanding because teachers' subject knowledge is secure. As a result, standards in mathematics have made up significant ground on those attained in English. Improvement in the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is excellent. In light of this track record, and outstanding leadership and management, the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement.

Pupils said to inspectors that they think they are well looked after and are given help that they value. They feel that they can go to teachers for help and support. The school cleverly helps to build pupils' confidence and their desire to do well. This contributes towards raising standards and towards the pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Behaviour is exemplary, reflecting pupils' exceptional enjoyment of school. They are considerate to each other, listen intently to what the others are saying and are respectful of other people's views. The commitment to reducing the absence rate has been very effective and pupils are keen to attend regularly. As one parent wrote, 'When my child was ill she refused to stay at home as she has an amazing time at school and it is like another home to her'.

An excellent curriculum also contributes towards pupils' personal development and enjoyment. The wide range of clubs (some of them quite unusual) and sporting activities aids the development of healthy lifestyles. Some clubs reflect the school's close proximity to the 'Olympic Village' and a local football team contributes to this. This is reflected in the school's Activemark award. A topic-based approach and creative teaching ensure that pupils achieve very well. This is constantly being reviewed to improve and refine the already effective cross-curricular links. Pupils created a newspaper using specialist software to produce extended pieces of writing about King Henry VIII and Boudicca. These were of high quality. Commitment to the creative arts is a feature of the school, with pupils studying dance and drama. Music is a strength and the school has an orchestra, several chamber groups, a boys' choir and a full choir. The curriculum reflects the needs, cultures and experiences of pupils as a pathway to new experiences,

knowledge and enjoyment. It also reflects the diversity of experience and the heritage within the school's own community and Britain more widely. Strategies used to promote community cohesion are good. The school has strong links with the local community and is in itself a very strong community. Less well developed are the links with the wider and international communities, an area identified by the school for improvement.

Teachers plan carefully to ensure that pupils have a range of interesting and stimulating activities, some of which include the use of information and communication technology (ICT). This contributes very well towards the curriculum and raising standards. The impact of the school's actions to raise standards in mathematics is evident in each classroom. Pupils enjoy learning new skills and learn quickly how to apply these to improve their work. Teachers make effective use of electronic whiteboards and pupils have the opportunity to use these too. Because of a real focus in all lessons on speaking and listening, pupils who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress and writing continues to improve. Marking is regularly carried out and feedback ensures pupils know what level they are working at and what they should do to get to the next level. This makes an excellent contribution towards the overall outstanding academic guidance pupils receive. Support and guidance received by pupils in the classroom from learning support assistants is excellent and ensures that those pupils who have behavioural and moderate learning difficulties make excellent progress in their learning.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children start school with skills and capabilities that are significantly below those expected for their ages. However, they get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make outstanding progress so that many reach standards that are in line with those attained nationally by the end of the Reception Year. This is the result of the excellent leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Historically, this has not always been evident and improvements in recent years have raised standards substantially. This is the result of planning that is well informed by highly skilled observation and assessments, the stimulating curriculum and consistently good and outstanding teaching. The environment both indoors and outdoors provides children with a rich range of learning experiences. Children enjoy a variety of stimulating activities, developing their language and communication skills. There is an excellent balance of teacher-led activities and opportunities for children to learn through independent play. Consequently, children make excellent progress in their personal development and well-being. The staff quickly establish a rapport with the parents through an initial home visit prior to children joining the Nursery or Reception. This begins an excellent partnership with parents, teachers, support staff and external agencies that contributes to high levels of care and to the children's well-being. Parents voice very strong praise for the arrangements for the care and welfare of their children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They also comment on how the school encourages children from different backgrounds to mix and get on so well together.

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

- Develop strategies to promote community cohesion beyond the school's immediate locality.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

**Achievement and standards**

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

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<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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

15 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whittingham Community Primary School, London, E17 5QX

Thank you for making our recent visit to your school such a memorable one, we really enjoyed it! We thought that you behaved exceptionally well and were very polite and well-mannered; you are a credit to your school. We were very interested to hear about how well the school looks after you and ensures that you are safe and happy. You understand what you need to do to stay healthy and fit. We think the school council does a very good job and were pleased to see that you raise money for charity; this is highly commendable, well done.

We think, along with the vast majority of your parents, that Whittingham is an outstanding school. This means that it provides you all with an excellent education where you can all succeed. This is because your headteacher and her staff work very hard to make sure that you receive every opportunity to do well. Your teachers take time and effort to provide interesting and exciting lessons for you. You have the opportunity to visit places of interest and to participate in a wide range of clubs. You told us that you enjoy these very much. Music is particularly of high quality and many of you take part in playing instruments, singing, dancing and drama.

Even though your school is outstanding, there is always something more to do. Your school has many links with the local area around your school and you all get on well together and appreciate many different cultures and people. We have now asked that your school ensures that it spreads these links and activities further afield, in Britain and other countries.

We wish you all the best for the future and hope that you continue to enjoy attending Whittingham Primary.

Yours faithfully

Glynis Bradley-Peat

Lead Inspector