

# Waterside Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123993
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stoke-On-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	340468
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kevin Johnson

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	212
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Karl Lawton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Hilary Pickin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Eastwood Road Hanley Stoke-on-Trent ST1 3JS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 234630
<b>Fax number</b>	01782 234631
<b>Email address</b>	waterside@sgfl.org.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 13 lessons taught by nine teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at national assessment data and the school's own assessments, policies, minutes of governors' meetings and monitoring files including documentation related to safeguarding. The inspection team analysed 41 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether standards, particularly in English, have been improved since the last inspection
- the quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language
- how successfully the school has built on improvements seen at the last inspection.

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. Just over half of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A significant number start the school unable to speak English. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is almost twice the national average. The school has most recently achieved Healthy Schools status and also gained the Eco-Bronze award in recognition of its conservation work.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This thriving school serves its pupils well. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive in their support not least because of the outstanding care provided for all of their children. Leaders have focused sharply on improvement and successfully steered the school from the grade of satisfactory at its last inspection to the grade of good now. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given a good start to school life. From starting points which are well below those typical for their age in Nursery, attainment rises to average by the end of Year 6. The good progress occurs because of the good, and at times outstanding, quality of teaching. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language make good progress because they are well supported by skilled teaching assistants who are very sensitive to pupils' needs. Pupils perform well in mathematics and the recent focus on writing has boosted standards in English but attainment in science falls below the other two subjects.

The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to practise and improve literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. A good range of activities broadens horizons, adds enjoyment and fosters good personal development. This contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the school's work by senior leaders and governors contributes strongly to the school's success and provides an accurate picture of its progress. Subject leaders, however, do not contribute enough to the monitoring and evaluation of performance in their subjects. Excellent systems for checking academic progress in English and mathematics are used effectively by all teachers to raise expectations and set increasingly challenging targets. The good improvement since the last inspection, coupled with the effective systems for evaluating the school's overall effectiveness, amply demonstrates the school's good capacity to sustain improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in science by:
  - ensuring that pupils are more engaged in planning, conducting, and recording investigations independently
  - making better use of the range of ICT resources to support learning in science.
- Enable subject leaders to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision so that areas for improvement for each subject are identified and acted upon.

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## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well. Good behaviour is a strong factor in their good learning. They are attentive and work hard. They take responsibility for their learning, for example when solving problems with a partner, and set their own standards by evaluating what they have done. Pupils are keen to do well and enjoy the opportunities they have to work creatively, such as when using computers to create good-quality writing

Progress is good throughout the school, due to the pace and urgency seen in lessons. The increasing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well provided for by teaching staff. A growing library of dual language books helps those at the earliest stages of learning, and careful monitoring and support means that pupils progress well and achieve as well as others by the end of Year 6. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are equally well provided for. Their needs are quickly assessed and a good range of support is planned to ensure that their needs are met. Attainment in mathematics has improved steadily because there is a good emphasis on applying skills to real-life problems. Inspection evidence indicates a large majority of pupils are on track to reach at least the expected standards. Following a dip in the 2009 national test results at Year 6, English standards have risen to average with an increased proportion likely to reach the higher level. Scrutiny of pupils work in science, however, does not show the same rate of improvement. It is below average and is a planned target area for the school.

Pupils are consistently polite and well mannered. They are mindful of one another and respect the richness of the many cultural differences within their school. They say the school is a safe place and take pride in helping to keep it clean and tidy and a friendly place to be. Pupils contribute well to school affairs through the active school council and take a strong interest in community matters. Their idea for a walkway across the canal to provide a safe link between the school and a nearby area was successfully adopted by the local authority. Pupils currently display their work in the windows of local properties destined for regeneration in a bid to reduce vandalism. Their average attendance and their acquisition of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills contributes to their satisfactory preparation for the future world of work. Pupils understand the main factors which contribute to a healthy lifestyle and how to keep themselves safe and generally take advantage of opportunities for sport and healthy food choices while in school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers make good use of assessment information and their own understanding of pupils' needs to plan for the varying abilities. As a result, each pupil is suitably challenged and their pace of learning is usually good. Teaching assistants are valued members of the teaching team. They are well informed and make a skilful contribution to pupils' learning and progress. Electronic whiteboards and other resources are used well to provide clear visual support for learning and the use of computers is increasingly a feature of lessons. Methods are chosen because they are best suited to pupils' needs and there is a good measure of practical activity to make learning more purposeful. A good example was seen in the organisation of a Key Stage 1 geography lesson which incorporated ICT research skills, art and written work to ensure that all pupils reached their objective which was to learn the main features of an island. Teachers question pupils well to check their learning and most lessons include time for pupils to assess their own work. Occasionally the pace of learning is slower than it should be because teachers do not make the objective clear enough so pupils are not sure of what is expected of them.

The curriculum is stimulating and provides pupils with many interesting opportunities to learn. Improvements to the way reading and writing are taught have produced better attainment in English. Not enough is done, however, to widen opportunities for science investigation. A good range of activities, including a residential visit, support pupils' topic work and promote good development of personal skills. A popular selection of after-school clubs helps pupils to foster their different interests. Pupils' personal, health and social education is well provided for so that they are well prepared to make

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informed decisions about their own well-being and relationships.

Outstanding care, guidance and support are fully endorsed by parents' and carers' views and those of the pupils themselves. Pastoral support for pupils and families is a major strength in ensuring that pupils access the learning they need. Cultural needs are openly discussed with parents and carers, and solutions are found. Consequently, strong relationships are forged which strengthen the school community. Support for the significant groups of pupils who have additional needs is exceptionally well managed and accounts for their good and sometimes rapid progress. The school works tirelessly to meet higher attendance targets which are reducing absence. The school's engagement with parents and carers is good. They are very happy with the information they receive from school and are very appreciative of the 'drop-in' opportunities they have to sit in on lessons to find out how their children learn, and how they can help at home. Induction to the school is very well managed and transfer arrangements ensure a smooth passage for pupils to their next stages of education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Strong and determined leadership from the headteacher and governing body, combined with very able support from senior leaders, has secured improvement over the past four years. Astute appointments made by governors and a strong focus on the professional development of staff has strengthened the teaching force and established a committed team that is ambitious for the success of all pupils. Monitoring and evaluation of standards and progress by senior staff is incisive but subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in the process of driving through progress in their own subjects. Leaders promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination well. The school fully embraces the cultural diversity within its community and is watchful over the progress of all pupils to ensure that all are provided with the opportunities they need to achieve their individual best. There are clear policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils and all staff members are conscious of their roles. Governors check safeguarding regularly and robustly to ensure that the quality of systems is maintained. The school has taken stock of its position with regard to community cohesion and has an action plan in place based on the particular context of the school. Local community links are strong but there has been too little evaluation of the impact of the tentative links which the school has formed with others in the United Kingdom.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage has firmly established good practice and provision which leads to children's good progress.

Many children start in Nursery with well below the expected levels of skill for their age in all areas of learning. For a significant number English is an additional language, and some do not speak any English. Children make good progress so that by the end of Reception most work within the early learning goals and some exceed them. Teachers create a rich and exciting environment for children with lots of activities to encourage them to use their senses and to become familiar with new language experiences both spoken and printed. Staff members engage with children well to encourage talk and stimulate imaginative exploration and play. A particularly helpful prop in one activity, especially for those who speak English as an additional language, was the use of voice recorders so that children could say what they thought about the different fruits they tasted then listen to what they had said. Teaching of letters and sounds and early number skills is good. There are many opportunities for children to follow up their learning through activities which they choose themselves both inside and in the outdoor learning area. Regular staff meetings ensure that children's progress is carefully checked and their next steps are planned.

Children's welfare is given the highest priority. Key workers are very conscientious over the safety and well-being of those in their care. Parents and carers are welcomed and encouraged to help in the learning and development process. Staff members are ambitious and keen to develop provision further. They recognise the benefits, for



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example, that an even greater free-flow between Nursery and Reception classes could bring, and of involving parents and carers more actively in their children's learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Approximately one fifth of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Overall, their views of the school are overwhelmingly positive. Some commented particularly on the high-quality care and support provided for vulnerable children, a view with which inspectors fully agree. A very small number of parents and carers expressed more cautious views about the behaviour of a few pupils; inspectors found no evidence to suggest that behaviour in school is not well managed.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Waterside Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 212 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	61	16	39	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	66	13	32	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	59	16	39	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	51	19	46	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	51	19	46	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	51	18	44	2	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	49	21	51	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	39	22	54	3	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	49	19	46	2	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	49	16	39	5	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	46	20	49	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	54	17	41	2	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	63	14	34	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Waterside Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 3JS

Thank you for making us so welcome when my colleague and I inspected your school recently. We could see that you are very proud of your new building. You take care of it very well. It was a pleasure to talk to you about your school because you are all so polite and well mannered. We also noticed how well behaved you are in the playground and in lessons. We are also happy that your attendance is improving. All of those things are very important so do keep them up.

Your school has improved well since it was last inspected and Waterside is now a good school. Your attainment in English and mathematics is rising but in science it is not improving as quickly as it should. Your teachers work very hard to help you to learn and make good progress, and we agree with you that they make your lessons fun. All of the grown-ups take excellent care of you which is why you learn well, enjoy school and take such good care of each other.

Your parents and carers, teachers and school governors are as proud of your school as you are and, like yourselves, they are keen to make it even better. To help that to happen I have asked your teachers and headteacher to do two things. The first is to help you to reach better standards in science by giving you more chances to plan and carry out science investigations in your own way and make better use of ICT. The second thing is for teachers to check on how well you are learning in the different subjects they are responsible for, so they can measure your progress and improve the quality of your education even more.

Thank you once again and best wishes and good luck to all of you.

Yours sincerely

Mr Kevin Johnson

Lead inspector

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