

Woodside Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110266
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	378072
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2012
Lead inspector	John Earish

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Stuart Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Harratt
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2008
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Earish

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited nine lessons taught by six teachers, together with a number of shorter observations. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, listened to pupils read, and scrutinised pupils' books, monitoring and assessment information and teachers' planning. Questionnaires from staff and pupils were scrutinised, as well as 77 received from parents and carers. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for the inspector to take into account when planning the inspection.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized junior school. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies from year to year but is higher than the national average. Their range of needs includes specific learning difficulties, language and behavioural and emotional difficulties. Seven pupils have statements of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The school meets the current floor standard. The school has achieved a number of external accreditations, including the Activemark, Healthy Schools' Award and the Basic Skills and Primary Science Quality Marks. There is a privately run breakfast and after-school club that did not form part of the inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It has improved well since the last inspection and has good capacity to continue improving.
- Achievement is good for all groups of pupils and their attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average.
- Pupils and their parents and carers agree the school has strengths in many aspects of its work and inspection evidence supports this.
- The school promotes pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are keen to learn, behave well and have a good understanding of how well they are progressing.
- Marking is regular and thorough but does not consistently provide clear advice on how pupils can improve their work.
- The curriculum is designed well to help pupils, whatever their need or ability, do their best. This, together with good teaching, helps them make good progress. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities for pupils, especially the higher attainers, to write for different purposes across the curriculum.
- The support for pupils, both academic and social, is good. As a result, bullying is rare and the school is a happy, secure and safe place to be.
- The school is well led by an effective headteacher, subject leaders and governing body, who have high expectations of themselves, the staff and the pupils.
- Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school’s work are rigorous and incorporate pupils’ and parents’ views well.
- The school’s challenging targets are fully reflected in the improvement plan to accelerate achievement for all groups of pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase levels of challenge by capitalising on opportunities for pupils, especially the higher attainers, to write for different purposes across the curriculum.

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- Ensure that teachers' marking consistently gives pupils a clear idea of what they need to do to improve their work.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement has improved since the school was previously inspected, when it was judged to be satisfactory. From starting points that are broadly average, pupils achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. Last year, all groups of pupils made good progress in mathematics and reading. In writing, girls made better progress than boys. An exhaustive analysis of accurate assessment information shows that all groups across the school are now making good progress and achieving well from their starting points and that the gap between boys and girls in writing has narrowed. Pupils in the current Year 6 are attaining at above expected levels in English and mathematics. Attainment is above average in reading because of the effective use of guided reading and the carefully targeted use of interventions with those who require additional support to accelerate their reading skills. Progress is accelerating in all year groups as a result of improvements made to the quality of teaching since the last inspection.

Pupils are well motivated and enthusiastic to learn new skills and concepts. They confidently use their reading, writing, communication and mathematics skills in a range of other subjects, ensuring that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. As a result of well-targeted support and good quality interventions, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well, with some making outstanding progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 3, pupils were examining a range of vocabulary to describe different arithmetic operations. One pupil, who was struggling to grasp new mathematical ideas, excitedly joined in and used new words and phrases confidently because of the support provided during the lesson. Another group of more able mathematicians worked independently to find new words and phrases such as 'reduced' and 'better than' to describe a price comparison mathematically. Pupils from all backgrounds achieve well because the school is good at meeting their individual learning needs. For example, a teacher in a Year 5 literacy lesson supported able pupils well to use ideas such as 'phenomena' and 'phenomenon' to analyse the devices used by journalists to create an effect through well-targeted open-ended questions. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are rightly confident that their children are achieving well.

Quality of teaching

Whilst teaching is good over time, there is an increasing amount of outstanding practice. In most lessons, teachers share the learning objective with the class so that all understand what they must do and achieve by the end of each session. For example, pupils in a mathematics lesson in Year 6 used success criteria well to help them prepare a review sheet based on the previous week's work. They identified the

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areas they had done well and recognised things they needed to reappraise and consolidate. They said this was very useful because 'it really helps us sort out the things we have got wrong and we can look at things in a different way.' Good quality assessment and tracking procedures help all staff to constantly check progress and adjust provision to meet pupils' needs. This underpins their success in raising attainment and dismantling barriers to learning. Intervention for those who need specific help is effective and constantly adjusted to maximise progress and achievement. However, there are some inconsistencies. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities for pupils, especially the higher attainers, to write using a range of genres to maximise learning and progress in writing across the curriculum. Pupils' work is regularly and supportively marked. There are excellent examples of marking in English and mathematics, with clear advice on how pupils can improve their work. However, this is not yet consistent across all subjects and classes. The extent to which it helps pupils to improve, therefore, is variable.

Underpinned by the effective curriculum, practical and interesting activities engage and motivate pupils to find out more about the world around them. Pupils say that opportunities for working independently are an effective way to improve their performance because 'you challenge yourself to do even better and it makes you want to solve problems on your own or with a friend.' Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are developed well. Pupils understand the consequences of their actions on themselves and others and the differences between right and wrong. They are open to new ideas and are developing a greater awareness for the cultural diversity within the United Kingdom and beyond. This is supported well through, for example, a link with a charity helping street children in Honduras and Guatemala. Parents and carers are confident that the teaching of their children at the school is good, and inspection findings support this view.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who answered the questionnaire said their children are safe in school. In discussions, pupils say they feel free from all forms of bullying and are confident that adults deal effectively with any concerns they may have. Inspection findings support these positive views and the school has effective procedures for dealing with any incidents of bullying that may occur. A very few pupils find managing their own behaviour a challenge, but as a result of teachers using strategies for managing behaviour consistently, a positive, calm and friendly atmosphere pervades all aspects of school life. As a consequence, lessons are rarely disrupted as a result of poor behaviour. Expectations are high and all adults share equally the responsibility for ensuring good behaviour and safety at all times. As a result, pupils say they feel very safe and well cared for. This was confirmed by one pupil, who sought out the inspector to tell him how well the adults had dealt with an issue when she started at the school.

Leadership and management

The good impact of leadership is seen in the way the headteacher and her deputy

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are embedding ambition and driving improvement. As a result, there has been significant improvement to a number of areas of the school's provision since the last inspection, including the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' progress and achievement and leadership and management. As a consequence, barriers to learning are being addressed effectively, enabling all groups of pupils to achieve well. Subject leaders are now effective at sustaining improvements in the quality of teaching and achievement by, for example, introducing opportunities for professional development in mathematics, reading and writing and monitoring the impact on pupils' progress. The governing body, too, are fully involved in strategic management and the cycle of self-review by acting as an effective critical friend. As a result of these positive features, the school has a good capacity to continue improving.

The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs well. It makes effective provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. School self-evaluation is accurate and the school improvement plan is focused on the right priorities for improvement. The headteacher monitors closely the performance of groups and individuals and holds teachers fully accountable for the progress made by the children in their care.

The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures are of excellent quality and that all statutory requirements, including child protection, are regularly reviewed and approved. Teachers and governors have an excellent understanding of the school and the community it serves. They are active and effective in tackling discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity. They are particularly successful in helping those pupils, for example, who need extra support with their learning by removing or overcoming barriers to their education through additional teaching and constructive partnerships with other local schools and agencies. The school also works successfully with parents and carers and assists them well in supporting their children's learning. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned inspection questionnaires expressed satisfaction with the school and would recommend it to others.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



3 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodside Junior School, Amersham HP6 6NW

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed looking at your work, seeing you in lessons and talking to so many of you. I was pleased to hear that you like your school very much and enjoy helping each other.

Yours is a good school. You behave well, which means that your teachers can get on with teaching you new and interesting things without the distraction of any misbehaviour. I particularly enjoyed talking to you about your work and was impressed with your enthusiasm for school and that you all want to do so well. The teaching in your school is good and sometimes better than this, and it means that, together with your positive attitudes to work, you make good progress and achieve well. Well done!

You told me that you find your lessons interesting and usually challenging. To make the learning even better, I have asked your teachers to give you even more opportunities to write in different ways in all your subjects so that you gain in confidence and enjoy writing even more than you do already. I have also asked them to make sure they always show you how to improve your work when marking your books because you find this valuable and encouraging. Both of these suggestions will help you make even faster progress.

Each of you can play your part in making this school even better by continuing to work hard to meet the challenging targets teachers set for you.

Yours sincerely

John Earish
Lead inspector

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