

Wood Lane Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Unique reference number | 124057 |
| Local authority | Staffordshire |
| Inspection number | 380789 |
| Inspection dates | 27–28 February 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Mike Thompson |

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

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 108 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | John Deakin |
| Headteacher | Gaynor Rogers |
| Date of previous school inspection | 3 February 2009 |
| School address | Wood Lane Bignall End Stoke-on-Trent ST7 8PH |
| Telephone number | 01782 720487 |
| Fax number | 01782 720487 |
| Email address | headteacher@woodlane.staffs.sch.uk |

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Introduction

Inspection team

Mike Thompson

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector sampled four and a half hours of teaching in nine lessons taught by five teachers. He looked at the work in pupils' books, heard a sample of pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6 and held discussions with pupils about many aspects of school life. He held meetings with the headteacher, members of the teaching staff and representatives of the governing body. He took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documents including the school's improvement planning and data showing the progress made by pupils. His scrutiny of safeguarding procedures included a detailed evaluation of pupils' behaviour. The inspector analysed questionnaires completed by 66 parents and carers, 56 pupils in Key Stage 2 and 19 members of staff, and held informal discussions with parents and carers.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than most primary schools. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes, including one for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All of the pupils are White British. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than is normally found in a school of this size. The proportion of pupils who either leave or join the school other than at the normal points for entry and exit is well above average. The school meets the current floor standard set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

The school has achieved the intermediate level International School Award and has Healthy School status.

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. Standards at the end of Year 6 are steadily rising. Parents and carers greatly appreciate the high quality of care and the good teaching provided for their children. The school is good and not outstanding because teaching is good rather than outstanding. Pupils achieve well. From low starting points when children join the Nursery year group, pupils make good progress. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, their overall attainment is average.
- Teaching enthuses the pupils. Teachers' accurate assessments of pupils' attainment usually enables them to pitch work at different levels so that pupils are suitably challenged. However, the progress of the lowest attaining Year 1 pupils slows slightly in mathematics because the curriculum at this point does not provide enough opportunities for practical investigations that are pitched at a suitable level. Throughout the school, reading skills are taught well. Pupils receive a lot of individual attention because of the good ratio of adults to pupils in the classroom. The use of 'learning journals' in the Nursery and Reception to record achievement is not yet fully effective.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. Instances of bullying of any type are rare. All of the pupils who completed the inspection questionnaire said that they feel safe at school.
- The headteacher gives strong leadership, particularly in relation to making improvements in teachers' performance and providing relevant opportunities for professional development. She is well supported by staff and governors. The curriculum is good. It provides pupils with exciting topics, and is enriched through regular class visits and the expertise of visitors. These include staff from a local high school for teaching in French and music. The school has tackled the issues from the previous inspection well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- With immediate effect, introduce practical investigations for Year 1 pupils that enable the least able to consolidate and build on Early Years Foundation Stage learning experiences in mathematics.

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- By September 2012, develop high quality records of individual children's achievements in the Nursery and Reception class, ensuring that these:
 - provide clear evaluations of children's progress
 - detail the next steps in learning to be tackled
 - are used regularly by parents and carers as partners in their children's record of learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

All of the parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire consider that their children make good progress and all of the pupils surveyed feel that they learn a lot in lessons. Inspection evidence confirms these views.

Each year, only a very small minority of children have skills and knowledge at the levels expected for three year-olds when they join the Nursery year group. In most cases attainment is, at best, below expectations and in many instances children are significantly below. Despite making good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, only about half of the children are securely within the goals expected by the end of the Reception year. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. This includes the many later entrants who join the school with gaps in their knowledge and skills. Their good progress is the result of good teaching, close monitoring of pupils' learning and well-targeted, good quality additional help provided whenever it is needed. Last year, all groups of pupils in Key Stage 2 made better progress than their peers nationally. In some instances, progress was significantly better than the national norm. Standards at the end of Year 6 have risen steadily over the past three years. In 2011, they were in line with the national average in mathematics and above average in English.

It was clear from the lessons observed that all groups of pupils, regardless of gender, ability or background, learn well. Some of the disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have difficulty in concentrating while others have limited understanding because of their lack of vocabulary. However, in all instances observed, these barriers to learning were successfully countered through good quality individual support. This occurs through the sensitive interventions of teachers and skilled teaching assistants, who use questioning well to gently steer pupils towards the intended learning without providing the answers for them. Progress in English and mathematics is further accelerated in Years 5 and 6 through the 'setting' of pupils according to ability. This results in small teaching groups, in which pupils benefit greatly from the increased amount of individual attention they receive.

Pupils' skills in reading are developed well. Attainment in reading is typically below average at the end of Year 2 and above by the end of Year 6. Phonics (the sounds made by letters) are taught well from an early age. This learning is supplemented by

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regular guided reading sessions in which teachers help develop pupils' understanding of the text. For example, during a lesson in the Year 3/4 class, the teacher made good use of a series of postcards in order to develop pupils' skills in using picture cues. The challenge, to deduce the location of each of the photographs provoked some thoughtful responses and well-reasoned answers.

Quality of teaching

Inspection evidence confirms the positive views about teaching expressed by all parents and carers and all pupils who completed the inspection questionnaires.

Teachers carefully plan interesting activities that capture pupils' imaginations. They manage their pupils well, explain new learning clearly, and use questioning effectively to develop pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils are highly motivated, behave well and sustain good levels of concentration in completing their tasks. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are consistently good. Teachers ensure that pupils know precisely what they have to achieve in lessons. Their marking of pupils' work provides clear pointers for further improvement. One of the key factors in ensuring the effective learning in lessons is the good ratio of adults to pupils. However, over-ambitious planning sometimes results in too many activities for the time available, and this reduces opportunities for the teacher to directly influence learning. In these instances, the pace of learning slows. One of the main barriers to learning, which the school successfully addresses, is the limited general knowledge of many pupils. Therefore, in a Year 6 English lesson, the teacher needed to make good use of video footage and a mountaineer's 'blog' to give pupils some understanding of what living at altitude entails. Through her dialogue, encouragement and persistence, the teacher skilfully developed the theme. As a result, pupils suggested interesting phrases such as 'a frozen sea of clouds' as they planned their writing task. Lessons such as this also have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, by prompting pupils to use their imagination and creativity in learning.

The planned curriculum has a positive impact on pupils' achievement by providing extra interest and enjoyment wherever possible and ensuring that pupils benefit from all available sources of subject expertise. For example, the weekly design and technology and science sessions at a local high school are eagerly anticipated and greatly enjoyed. The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. It provides many opportunities for learning through investigation, and there is a good balance between activities directed by adults and those chosen by the children.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most of the parents and carers and the pupils think that behaviour both in lessons and around the school is good. Inspection evidence confirms these views. Teachers are consistent in their application of rewards and sanctions, and pupils know very clearly what is expected of them. Pupils say that there are very few instances of bullying or unacceptable behaviour. For example, the last reported instance of racist behaviour occurred two years ago, and there have been no reported instances of any

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form of bullying within the last year. Whenever minor upsets occur, pupils feel that they are quickly and sensitively dealt with. There have been no exclusions. All of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire say that their children feel safe in school and are well looked-after. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe, and safe practices, such as the careful use of equipment, were observed in all lessons. The school's 'nurture room' provides a useful area in which pupils experiencing emotional and social difficulties are able to benefit from reflection during periods of stress. There is a clear moral code within the school, and pupils know right from wrong. Pupils' social development is good. They work and play together amicably, respect the feelings and ideas of others and have a well-developed sense of fair play. Attendance rates are broadly in line with the national average. Any instances of late arrival, and these are rare, invariably involve pupils who have to travel to school by bus or car.

Leadership and management

The clear direction provided in driving improvement stems from the good partnership between the headteacher, staff and the governing body. The effectiveness of subject leaders has improved significantly since the last inspection as a result of the training provided. The school development plan sets out a clear agenda for improvement, based on accurate self-evaluation. The impact of teaching on pupils' learning is regularly monitored and closely tracked. The good leadership of teaching and the management of teachers' performance have resulted in year-on-year improvements in pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. The improvements made since the last inspection clearly demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further.

This is a school in which all pupils are warmly welcomed and equally valued, and in which discrimination has no place. The school effectively promotes a broad, balanced curriculum that clearly upholds these values. It also provides an exciting range of learning opportunities, such as topics that involve parents in supporting and sharing their children's learning. There are regular first-hand learning experiences, for instance a recent visit to Stratford-upon-Avon for pupils in Years 5 and 6, and opportunities for public performance. These experiences make a significant contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Similarly, activities related to the International School award, such as email correspondence with pupils in the Netherlands and France, help broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils' clear understanding of the importance of diet and exercise is celebrated through the Healthy School status.

The governing body is well organised, and its members take a keen interest in the work of the school. A number of new governors have been appointed and new arrangements for governors' monitoring of provision are now in place. Procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils are robust, and the governing body is vigilant in ensuring that policies to ensure the safeguarding of pupils are carefully enforced.

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.



29 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wood Lane Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 8PH

I would like to thank you very much for being so helpful when I came to visit your school. I really enjoyed meeting you and looking at your work. You told me that you go to a good school, and I agree.

Here is a list of some of the things that your school does best.

- You learn well in lessons and make good progress because you are taught well.
- You develop your personal skills well. This is important in helping you to become good citizens in the future. You know how to keep yourselves healthy, and you behave well.
- You told me that you enjoy and learn a lot from the interesting and exciting activities your teachers plan for you.
- You also said that you feel safe. This is because all of the adults in your school look after you well.
- The people who run your school are doing a good job.

Every school has something that could be improved, and this is what I have asked your school to do next.

- Some of you find the work difficult when you move from Reception to Year 1, particularly in mathematics. So, I have asked the people in charge of your school to make sure that you have different work to do so that you learn more quickly.
- Those of you in Nursery and Reception will have a more detailed record of how well you are getting on at school. This will help your parents and carers to find out how to help you learn more.

I would like you to play your part in helping the school to become even better. The best way for you to do this is to carry on doing your very best to achieve the targets your teachers set for you.

Yours sincerely

Mike Thompson
Lead inspector

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