

Woolston Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116110
Local Authority	Southampton
Inspection number	357883
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Reporting inspector	David Shears

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Stegge
Headteacher	Julie Swanston
Date of previous school inspection	28 January 2008
School address	Florence Road Southampton SO19 9DB
Telephone number	02380 444447
Fax number	02380 399980
Email address	info@woolston-inf.southampton.sch.uk

Age group	4–7
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Inspection number	357883

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

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

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons taught by seven different teachers, and held meetings with representative members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at policies, planning documentation, assessment data and pupils' work. They analysed the questionnaires returned by 81 parents and carers and 10 members of staff.

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

- The quality of teaching and learning and whether it consistently helps all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to make good progress.
- How effectively writing skills are developed.
- How effectively leaders and managers, at all levels, identify, monitor and evaluate specific areas of development to ensure better progress.
- The effectiveness of strategies being used to promote better attendance.
- Children's progress in all aspects of communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Woolston is smaller than the average infant school. The very large majority of pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than the national average; their needs are mostly moderate learning difficulties, but a few pupils have speech, language and communication needs. A very small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language and, of these, a very few are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. A privately run pre-school provision is available on site, but this is subject to separate inspection. After-school care is available for pupils at the school and is managed by the governing body. The school has achieved Healthy School status, the Activemark, the Eco-school bronze award, the Information and Communication Technology mark (ICT) and the Quality mark.

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

Woolston Infant is a good school. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. As a result, attainment at the end of Year 2 is above average. Leaders and managers at all levels have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and are effective in making improvements. For example, through the analysis of data, they had identified that more-able pupils were not always making enough progress. To address this, teachers further developed their planning to ensure that higher-order questioning challenged these pupils. A particular strategy was introduced to enable more-able pupils to improve their skills in applying their mathematical learning in solving problems. As a result, they made better progress.

There are outstanding links with parents and carers. These consistent and productive partnerships ensure that parents and carers are strongly engaged with their children's learning and the school's work. Through this excellent partnership, senior leaders and managers have taken a strong lead in tackling low rates of attendance; for example, by regularly publishing the attendance for each class and cutting down authorised periods of absence. Families for whom attendance is an ongoing difficulty are being supported very effectively and there are examples of recently rapidly improving attendance as a result. However, as yet, this trend has not yet been maintained over a longer period of time, which is why attendance is graded as being low overall and an area for continued improvement. Nonetheless, attendance has rapidly improved this term.

As a result of the above, effective self-evaluation, and improving teaching, learning and achievement, the school demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.

The good progress made is the result of effective teaching, which engages and enthuses pupils. Pupils enjoy school and are excited about their learning. The school has rightly focused on improving writing, as communication, language and literacy skills are a key area of concern on entry to the school. An appropriate emphasis on speaking and listening skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage has enabled children to make a good start in their literacy skills and provides a firm foundation for the development of their reading and writing skills. This is successfully built on in Years 1 and 2, although the school has recognised that their writing skills are not consistently practised through the wider curriculum and is already developing these links. Pupils have writing targets although they do not always understand what they mean because they are not expressed in child-friendly language. Pupils do receive much encouragement from teachers orally and in their books, although there is a lack of consistency in sharing with pupils the next steps in their learning, so that they know how to improve. While leaders and managers monitor teaching and learning in a rigorous way, this is not always focused clearly enough on the school's priorities and makes it difficult for them to assess the impact of particular initiatives, such as improving rates of attendance, on the progress of pupils.

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

Pupils are well cared for and feel safe and secure in school. The care and support for vulnerable pupils are outstanding. There are highly successful relationships between staff and pupils and these extend to their parents and carers who are highly supportive of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the trend for improving attendance so that attendance is average overall by July 2011.
- Raise the quality of writing across the school by:
 - embedding the practising of writing skills across the wider curriculum.
 - rewording pupils' targets so that they are easily understood and used.
 - improving the quality of marking so that pupils know the next steps in their learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by ensuring that monitoring is specifically focused on identified areas for improvement, including evaluating the effectiveness of current improvement in attendance on the progress being made by pupils and by more precisely monitoring the quality of teachers' marking.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school with levels of attainment are lower than expected and this is especially so in their communication, language and literacy skills. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, entering Year 1 broadly in line with national expectations in all areas except for writing, which is below average. In Years 1 and 2, good progress is maintained so that by the end of Year 2 standards are above average and pupils achieve well, although results in reading and mathematics are better than in writing. As writing and attendance are identified for improvement, this is the reason why the preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is judged to be satisfactory rather than good overall. ♦

There are no marked differences between the progress of different groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, a group of children were given good support by a learning support assistant who played a game with a spider who was catching individual letters for children to say. The children enjoyed the game and were learning their letters and sounds (phonics) well, which aids their good progress in reading. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make the same progress as their peers. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with speech and language difficulties also, with support, make good progress. More-able pupils are challenged well. For example, in one class pupils were learning how to multiply by jumping along a number line. In the same lesson more-able pupils were working out a harder multiplication sum and identifying corresponding multiplication and division sentences using the same numbers.

Pupils enjoy school and have a positive attitude towards their learning. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. They make a positive contribution to the

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

school both as individuals, such as being the 'special assistant' for the day, and through the school council. Pupils are involved with the local community, such as taking part in various events at the local church. Pupils behave well and at times their behaviour is exemplary, such as during assemblies, where there are good opportunities for spiritual development. Pupils noticeably get on well with each other, promoting their social and moral skills, and they are gaining an increasingly good knowledge of different cultures.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Staff plan effective lessons that enable pupils to make good progress. Teachers provide interesting activities for pupils to do, which helps them to be keen learners who work well together, for example in talking with each other about their learning. As a result, the standard of their speaking and listening skills is above average. In some lessons seen, teachers sometimes missed the opportunity to translate pupils' good speaking skills into writing by showing them how to do this. Overall, teachers explain new learning well but sometimes keep pupils for too long on the carpet, which slows the pace of the lesson, and consequently pupils do not always have enough time to demonstrate how much they have learnt in their individual work. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and used well to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and challenge more-able pupils. Teachers explain clearly what pupils are expected to learn and this is re-visited at the end of the lesson. Pupils have targets in their books, although these are not always

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

clearly understood by them. Vibrant classroom displays are helpful in supporting pupils' learning with tips and pointers to help them with their work. ICT resources are used well to support teaching and help pupils to focus well in lessons. Teachers are aware of how well pupils are achieving and re-focus future lessons to meet their needs.

The curriculum is well organised and makes good cross-curricular links, including ICT, through the development of imaginative themes. There is a good range of enrichment activities to make learning more relevant for pupils, including visits out and special visitors to the school. In particular, the school is working to make maximum use of its spacious grounds to enhance learning. Pupils can choose from a range of extra-curricular activities and these are well supported. Although there are opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects these are not routinely planned in enough depth to maximise their effectiveness.

Pupils say that teachers look after them well. In particular, those for whom circumstances make them vulnerable are given outstanding support and as a result make good gains in developing confidence and self-esteem. This is having a positive impact on their academic progress. For example, as a result of the school's intervention with the support of the parent support advisor, the attendance of a number of pupils has significantly improved this term. There are positive links with the pre-school provision that meets on the school site and good induction procedures for children starting school and moving between year groups. The preparation for pupils moving on at the end of Year 2 is improving. Pupils are cared for well in the after-school provision and there is a good variety of activities to engage them.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers track the progress of pupils well, including how well groups of pupils achieve. This information is used carefully to identify specific areas of need and target support. Individual pupils are also tracked each half-term so that if any are at risk of underachievement they are given extra support in order to reach their targets, giving clear evidence that senior leaders drive improvement well. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and innovative, always looking for ways to capture pupils' interest and engage them in their learning. Together, leaders work well to help the school to improve.

The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and both supports and challenges the school well. However, monitoring activities undertaken by senior leaders and governors are not always focused highly

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

enough on identified areas of improvement, such as reviewing pupils' books to check whether marking is consistently telling pupils how to improve.

The school promotes equal opportunities well, as evident in the improving provision for the most-able pupils. Rigorous action is taken to tackle any form of discrimination, so that all groups achieve equally well. For example, the reading skills of boys in Year 2 have been identified this year as an area to improve and work is well underway on this. Safeguarding arrangements are robust. In particular, risk assessments are completed well, including specific ones relating to individuals with particular needs, to ensure pupils' safety.

An audit of community cohesion informs the school's work well in this area. In particular, community cohesion within the school and the pupils' understanding of the local area are very strong. Activities to promote this are exciting, such as the Caribbean carnival, where the road was closed for the whole school to parade accompanied by a steel drum band from the local secondary school, a culmination of the arts week in the school. There are some well-established international links, especially for such things as raising money for the Christmas Shoebox appeal. Community cohesion is good overall with clear plans in place to further strengthen pupils' understanding of the United Kingdom in the future. ♦

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start in school because they are well prepared and supported. Excellent relationships are developed with both parents and carers, and children. For example, staff visit all homes prior to children beginning school and develop positive relationships with parents who value the opportunity to talk about their hopes and concerns. Children are well looked after and feel safe and secure in school and in the

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

after-school club. Their love of learning is awakened through exciting displays that attract their attention. Enthusiastic staff engage well with them, helping to develop a sense of belonging. Planning for lessons is clear and relates to all six areas of learning, both indoors and outside. Ongoing assessment is used to amend plans to ensure that the needs of the children are met. Individual children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and given appropriate support. However, the school has identified the need to analyse data further to identify groups of children who need further support in their personal development to enable them to make even better academic progress. Leaders in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a clear understanding of the strengths of the provision and an action plan identifies what needs to improve and how this is to be achieved.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

A higher than average proportion of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive in their views about the school. All agreed that their children enjoyed school, made good progress and that they were well informed and supported in helping their children improve. All agreed that the school meets their children's needs and encouraged a healthy lifestyle. All agreed that the school was well managed. A very few parents and carers were concerned about the management of behaviour. Inspectors found that behaviour during the inspection was good and, at times, outstanding. Where an individual pupil occasionally found this a challenge, it was managed well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woolston Infant 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 161 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	67	83	14	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	74	19	23	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	48	59	33	41	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	58	72	23	28	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	59	73	21	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	57	70	24	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	67	26	32	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)	44	54	32	40	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	54	67	27	33	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	47	37	46	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	43	42	52	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	60	74	20	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	68	84	13	16	0	0	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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



10 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woolston Infant School, Southampton SO19 9DB

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and finding out about your good school.

You told us that you like coming to school and that your teachers look after you well. You have a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy and behave well, both in the classroom and on the playground. We particularly liked the way in which you worked together, helping each other in lessons.

We think that your teachers work very closely with your parents and carers to help you make the most of your learning.

You do well in many things such as reading and writing and in the way that you do things for the community and learn to respect others, please keep this up.

We have asked your teachers to improve the following things:

- help you to make better progress in your writing with more opportunities to practise these skills, have targets that you can all understand and let you know how you can improve your writing
- check how well the school is doing as carefully as possible
- keep working with you all to make your attendance as good as possible.

You can help as well by remembering your writing targets and by working hard on these. Well done to those of you who come to school very regularly and for those who do not, please try really hard to come every day. ♦

Thank you again for making our visit so enjoyable. Please continue to work hard.

Yours sincerely

David Shears

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.