

Woodside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114860
Local Authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	357639
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Canham

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	428
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Russell Robinson
Headteacher	Edward Caines
Date of previous school inspection	12 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, observed 15 teachers and held meetings with governors, staff, a group of pupils and talked with pupils in lessons. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including assessment and attendance information, lesson plans, safeguarding arrangements, school development planning, minutes of governing body meetings and pupils' work. Inspectors also scrutinised the 97 questionnaires received from parents and carers, as well as those from staff and a sample of pupils.

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

- To what extent are higher expectations increasing the level of challenge?
- How much have developments to assessment procedures improved monitoring and extended the accountability of staff and governors?
- To what extent are the senior leadership team, and the governing body, influencing the school's direction and performance?

Information about the school

Woodside is larger than most other primary schools. The very large majority of pupils are from families of White British heritage. Most other pupils come from Black African backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage into Nursery and Reception classes.

The school has achieved a number of awards and accreditations. These include: National Healthy School status; Investors in People status; International School Award; Artsmark Gold; Activemark; Every Child Matters Gold; and the Eco Schools Award.

The school has recently appointed additional staff to accommodate single-aged classes.

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 is a good school. It provides a caring and supportive environment that places a high priority on enhancing pupils' self-esteem and raising achievement within an harmonious school community. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe. They also make an outstanding contribution to the school and local community. Pupils, in the role of play leaders, run health-related activities. They have well-developed personal qualities. These include a keen interest in learning about others and a deep appreciation of different cultural heritages. Pupils' sheer enjoyment of learning is reflected in their excellent response to artistic and sporting opportunities.

The resolve of the school's senior leadership team is the key factor in driving improvement. Systematic monitoring and rigorous tracking systems have been established. As a consequence, governors and school leaders have developed a clear understanding of where the school is now and of the improvements needed. The school is well placed to move forward.

The push for consistently good teaching is evident in the continual review of classroom practice. Detailed assessments support successful teaching, which engages pupils and motivates them with well-paced and engaging activities. Strong relationships are used well to raise academic expectations. Consequently, pupils are progressing well in lessons that are, typically, pitched at the right level and lift pupils' interests. Children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although older ones do not always benefit from activities that are really challenging. Recent improvements to performance levels for pupils in Year 6, especially in English, reflect the good progress, effective teaching and the range of rich learning opportunities in an increasingly creative curriculum. On occasion, however, planning is not used as well as it could be to consistently stretch the more able at the beginning of lessons. Nevertheless, larger proportions of pupils reached the higher levels in the most recent national assessments and tests for pupils in Year 6, reflecting pupils' good progress. Intervention work, including well-tailored support for individual pupils, is successfully supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a range of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Pupils' outstanding personal outcomes are reflected in their considerate, and sometimes exemplary, behaviour and involvement in the many activities that support the smooth running of the school. Very popular clubs and after-school activities provide pupils with numerous opportunities to develop confidence, and refine their creative and performance skills. Through the school's good links with outside agencies, local schools and the community, pupils thrive on participating in events that lead to improvements to the local environment, for example. Pupils also willingly take a full part in sponsoring local and international charities.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure even more teaching is good or outstanding by ensuring staff always provide challenging tasks that are pitched at exactly the right level, particularly for the more able pupils, at the start of lessons.
 - Ensure that planned activities for older children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are always matched to their ability by:
 - making better use of assessment information
 - providing a well-constructed balance between those activities directed by the teacher and those which children choose for themselves.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children join the Nursery with below expected starting points, especially in communication and language development, and they make good gains through to the end of Reception. Throughout the school, pupils' enjoyment of learning, as seen particularly in their eagerness to become involved in lively and well-paced activities in English, mathematics, art and music, is characteristic of lessons. The pace of learning is good, although it is uneven with small differences between year groups and in some subjects. Pupils work very well in small groups and readily share information, showing a resolve in getting the tasks right. They work well independently of the teachers. Working in pairs and small groups, pupils are eager to discover the meanings of words and apply rules in mathematics to find answers. In English, they write imaginatively when given the opportunity to work creatively, comparing the language used in Shakespearean and modern-day play scripts. Pupils also show great satisfaction in completing the tasks and explaining the reasons behind their answers. There are no significant variations in the rates of progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and others, or by pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

Attainment is average, as indicated by the results of the 2010 national tests and assessments for pupils in Year 6. Following a dip in 2009, attainment levels rose substantially, with particular strengths in reading. School tracking data show that learning and progress are good and improving securely and quickly. Pupils in Year 6 are currently reaching higher levels of attainment than last year's cohort.

Pupils say they like coming to school because they feel secure and they are listened to in the supportive environment. These positive attitudes are evident in the above average attendance. Pupils show much interest and respect for different people's feelings, in their involvement in the international project for example. Pupils' exceptionally good understanding of living healthily is evident in the way they talk about the importance of eating different kinds of food and the need for regular exercise. Pupils are considerate towards each other, polite and courteous. School councils provide very good opportunities for pupils to represent the views of others and help make decisions regarding the school's involvement in community and cultural events, for example. Supported by the school's projects to encourage enterprise, including the making and selling of cakes for charity, pupils' personal skills give them a secure base on which to move to secondary school.

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

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?

Good relationships and lively activities are key strengths of teaching. Incisive and probing questioning often gives pupils opportunities to think about their work and reflect on the answers. Topics, such as those that encourage imaginative writing and link different subjects, successfully capture pupils' interest and hold their attention. Consequently, pupils willingly become interested in their learning and want to find out more for themselves. Typically, assessment procedures are used effectively to guide lesson planning and constructive marking helps pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. However, just occasionally, activities do not expect enough from pupils, particularly the most able at the beginning of lessons.

Attractive and informative displays give an insight into the richness and diversity of the curriculum which provides a balance between basic skills in English and mathematics and the development of pupils' performance and creative skills in subjects such as art, music, and physical education. The teaching of Spanish adds an additional positive dimension. A review is underway to increase the range of activities that link different subjects and to give pupils opportunities to reinforce their learning and develop skills through topics that make more use of the school's immediate natural environment and other local resources. The curriculum is supported by a well-planned programme for personal, social and health education. It is also underpinned by the very effective use of information and communications technology, which provides good opportunities for independent learning

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and gives pupils access to a wide range of resources. Pupils' learning experiences are further enriched by outside visitors, and visits to places of interest.

The good support for pupils' personal development and pastoral care is recognised and much valued by parents and carers. Staff know the pupils well and good links have been established with families. Attention to pupils' health and well-being is reflected not just in opportunities for physical activity, but also in the provision of healthy school meals. Individualised programmes of support are made for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable to underachievement, covering a broad range of personal and learning needs. Individual achievement is effectively managed through improved tracking of pupils' attainment and progress. Targets are realistic but challenging. Evaluations lead to well-timed interventions which reinforce pupils' literacy skills and successfully build confidence.

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?

Since the last inspection, the headteacher, with close support from governors and the senior leadership team, has sharpened the focus on key priorities. This change has led to a systematic approach to monitoring and a sharper awareness of the path the school needs to follow to build on the improvements. Effective collective leadership has developed a school that is committed not only to strengthening each pupil's confidence, but also to raising achievement. Secure systems have been established to ensure that this ethos is maintained even through staff changes. The promotion of equality and approaches to tackling any form of discrimination are good. As a result, groups of pupils make similar progress, although there are some limitations for a very small proportion of more able pupils in a few classes.

The governing body readily challenges the school's work, aided by information from the improved assessment and evaluation systems. It ensures that policies are systematically reviewed and resources are closely targeted at educational need. It gives a good strategic steer to the direction of the school. Attention to pupils' safety is integral to the school's work and safeguarding procedures are securely established. Local services and agencies are used well to enhance the safety and well-being of pupils experiencing difficult circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Community cohesion is strongly promoted within the school and in the local community. The school demonstrates a thorough understanding of local needs and challenges through its links with outside agencies and the way it evaluates its effectiveness. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to gain a thorough understanding about people's backgrounds and communities in other parts of the world. However, the school knows its links with other

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areas in this country are not of the same high calibre. It reaches out to parents and carers with the help of its informative website. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and play an active part in school events.

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	2
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

The provision is well managed and caring staff have successfully established a welcoming environment in which children are nurtured and cherished from the start. Children settle quickly, are eager to learn and make good progress. They make particularly good progress in their creative development and language and communication. Effective assessment procedures ensure that staff have accurate and reliable information about children's progress. This information is mostly used well in planning to pitch activities at the right level, especially in the Nursery. However, assessment information is not used so effectively to underpin the adult support for the older children. The school recognises that it still has more to do to ensure that older children are always given a sufficient range of stimulating activities that are consistently matched to their ability. They sometimes spend too long in activities they choose for themselves without enough adult intervention to ensure they learn enough from them. Support is good for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for those who are more vulnerable.

Children listen attentively and chatter enthusiastically about their work. The school makes effective use of both the indoor and outside areas, which provide a wide range of resources. Children happily move from one activity to another. Questioning is often used well, particularly for younger and less able children, to probe their understanding and capture their interest. Themed topics ensure all areas of learning are covered, with a particular focus on early reading, writing and number skills.

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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 broadly-average proportion of the school's parents and carers returned the questionnaires. The very large majority of responses were very positive. Just a few parents or carers made written comments and the majority of these expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. They included positive remarks about the caring and supportive environment and the quality of the staff. However, a very few questionnaires recorded reservations over a small number of issues. These included the amount of progress children are making and behaviour. The inspection found evidence to indicate that pupils are making more rapid progress than they did before. Behaviour was found to be good and pupils respond well in lessons.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodside 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 97 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 428 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	59	61	37	38	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	51	46	47	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	41	42	53	55	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	43	52	54	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	40	57	59	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	36	56	58	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	40	56	58	1	1	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)	32	33	56	58	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	35	54	56	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	26	53	55	12	12	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	27	57	59	5	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	30	55	57	3	3	4	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	51	45	46	2	2	0	1

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



21 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodside Primary School, Grays, RM16 2GJ

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school - thank you for making us feel so welcome. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found while we were with you. Yours is a good school where you feel exceptionally safe and benefit from good care and support. You told us it is also a place where you want to be, make friends, and thoroughly enjoy taking part in the many exciting activities and interesting clubs. You show a very keen interest in other people and their backgrounds. The overwhelming majority of your parents expressed considerable satisfaction with the school.

Here are some other important things about your school.

You make good progress in lessons, because you are taught well.

You attend regularly and respond enthusiastically to activities that encourage you to think creatively.

You make an outstanding contribution to the smooth running of the school and contribute very successfully to local events.

You have an exceptionally good understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle and healthy eating.

To make things even better for you, your school has been asked to:

- help you to make faster progress, especially those of you who learn quickly, by giving you more challenging activities at the very start of lessons
- help those of you in Reception to learn more quickly by always getting you involved in a wider range of stimulating activities.

We wish each one of you every success in your future education and hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now. You can all help the school by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Paul Canham

Lead inspector

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