

Woodcock Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103372
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	355369
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Peter Kerr

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Neale
Headteacher	Bernard Moore
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seven teachers were seen teaching and twelve lessons were observed. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, records of pupils' progress, school policies and the 15 parental questionnaires that were returned.

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

- Current attendance rates and what is being done to improve attendance.
- The gap between pupils' achievements in reading and writing.
- The level of challenge for more-able pupils in lessons.
- The extent of pupils' understanding of the wider society in which they live.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average and serves an urban area on the edge of Birmingham. A very high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. A small proportion of pupils join the school other than at the usual times. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average but a wide range of ethnic groups are represented. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average and nearly all are fluent in English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is very high, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. Most of these pupils have learning needs and some have physical disabilities. The school holds the Healthy School status, the Eco Award (Silver), the International School Award (Foundation level) and the Activemark.

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. Pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning. They make good progress from a below average start in Year 1 to reach at least average standards by the end of Year 6. Progress in writing is particularly good and better than in reading. More-able pupils reach the appropriate higher levels of attainment but do not always make as much progress in lessons as they could.

Pupils behave well and are enthusiastic about school. They know how to keep safe and how best to stay fit and healthy. They help to make the school a thriving community but they have only a sketchy knowledge and appreciation of diversity within the local and wider society. Attendance is broadly average: it was low at the last inspection but has been steadily improving since then and is above average so far this term.

Teaching is good. Teachers constantly assess the pupils' progress and adjust their planning accordingly. Good support by teaching assistants is particularly beneficial to the many pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, enabling the great majority of them to make good progress. More-able pupils have extra challenge, but are not always made to work hard right from the beginning of lessons. Writing is taught well and the school is now taking appropriate measures to improve basic reading skills. Less has been done at this stage to embed reading as a tool for independent study and research. The curriculum is well-organised, with planned links between subjects. There is good participation in the wide range of after-school clubs and links with secondary schools provide extra experiences, such as cooking and outdoor adventure activities.

Good care, guidance and support ensure that the diverse needs of the pupils are met and that they are all fully included in all activities. This is a strength of the school. Transition from the school into secondary schools is good; transition from the feeder nursery is sound. The Reception class provides a warm, welcoming environment, but children are sometimes given too wide a range of choices and it is not always clear how the staff support specific aspects of the children's development as they play.

Leadership and management are good. Rigorous analysis of pupils' progress and monitoring of classroom practice are used well to improve teaching and learning. Accurate self-evaluation ensures that current strengths and weaknesses form the basis of a clear development plan. Together with the steady improvements over recent years and current good performance, this provides a strong basis for sustained improvement. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities adequately, with good contributions from long-serving members, but has had difficulty maintaining a full complement of governors. This has meant that some policies, particularly that for community cohesion, have not yet been rigorously implemented and reviewed. However, all vacancies are now filled and plans are in hand to ensure that these matters are addressed.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that attainment continues to rise for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds by:
 - increasing the extent to which more-able pupils are challenged right from the start of lessons
 - providing more opportunities and support for pupils to undertake independent reading and research
 - ensuring that the momentum built up in improving attendance is maintained.
- Improve progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from satisfactory to good by:
 - further refining the selection of play activities so that the children are suitably challenged to improve specific aspects of their development
 - ensuring that there is sufficient adult supervision of children as they play to monitor their choices and interact with them to support their learning.
- Improve the school's contribution to community cohesion by:
 - ensuring that the action plan is speedily implemented
 - evaluating the impact of the plan on the pupils' knowledge and appreciation of diversity within the local and wider world contexts.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment on entry to the Reception class is below expected levels and pupils make good progress to reach average standards by the end of Year 6. They concentrate on their tasks and show good perseverance to produce their best work, whether individually or in groups. For example, Year 5 pupils listened intently to the teacher explaining how they could refine and improve their poems then got straight down to their work, concentrating well, and Year 6 pupils sustained collaboration in groups to develop and refine a sequence of gymnastic movements. Younger pupils also learn well. The whole of Key Stage 1 and the Reception class, for example, quickly learned a challenging new song. They listened carefully to the teacher and the backing music and sang back each line with fervour. Pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities learn well, benefiting from cooperation with their peers in these situations as well as working hard when withdrawn for individual tuition. More-able pupils show interest in lessons and enjoy any extra challenges, but sometimes have to mark time before these are presented.

The pupils' good behaviour contributes to their rapid progress because little time is wasted on discipline. They feel well looked-after by their teachers and have a good knowledge of how to keep safe and stay healthy. They are proud of their school, respect each other and enjoy the wide range of activities provided. As one parent commented: 'The school instils respect and pride in its pupils. My children love coming to school.' The spiritual, moral and social aspects of their development are good. They show an appreciation of the wonders of nature, for example through growing plants, have a clear sense of right and wrong develop positive relationships with each other and are confident interacting with adults. The cultural aspect of their development is satisfactory. They have experienced work by a

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range of artists and musicians, but have only a limited knowledge of the range of cultural influences represented within their own locality, other areas of Britain and the world.

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	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	3
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	3
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?

Teaching is good. Planning is thorough and is mostly based on accurate records of what the pupils have already achieved. Suitable work is provided to challenge most groups, especially lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The needs of more-able pupils are not so consistently well met. For example, answers given in lesson introductions indicating that individual pupils might well already have a good grasp of the material being taught are sometimes overlooked. As a result, one or more pupils may have to wait until later in the lesson before getting their teeth into some demanding material. Writing is taught particularly well. Lessons clearly build on previous learning, with teachers and teaching assistants working closely together to ensure that all pupils develop confidence and skill in expressing themselves in prose and verse. Regular story-telling with actions is used well to help pupils who are not read to regularly at home to become confident at telling and writing stories themselves. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements, are supported well. Teaching assistants help them to complete their set tasks within lessons and they receive further effective support when withdrawn for individual or group work relating to their specific needs.

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The curriculum provides good links between subjects. For example, pupils developed literacy skills through historical writing and used their science knowledge when they discussed what materials the Mary Rose was built from and what would happen if it was allowed to dry out. Pupils also have plenty of opportunities for physical education art, music and drama, and to participate in a range of off-site visits. This adds much enjoyment to their learning and encourages them to attend school.

Good work is done to encourage families with a history of poor attendance to get their children into school as often as possible, and to support vulnerable pupils in school to manage their problems and continue learning. Close collaboration with the feeder secondary schools ensures a smooth transition to the next stage of the pupils' education. Those joining and leaving the school at other times are supported well to adjust to their changing circumstances.

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?

The school has made sustained improvements to pupils' outcomes and to the quality of provision since the last inspection. By ensuring that all teachers set realistic targets for their pupils and closely monitoring classroom practice, the headteacher and senior staff have ensured consistency in the quality of teaching. All teachers are appropriately involved with improvements, for example in leading reviews of individual subjects. A good team spirit and shared determination to succeed in implementing the ambitious school improvement plan contribute strongly to the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

Much is done to engage parents with the school and to help them support their children's learning at home. Equality of opportunity is a strong feature of the school. Pupils facing a wide range of barriers to learning, including physical disabilities, are fully integrated. The attendance improvement worker and the learning mentor offer additional points of contact and support for many families and responses are good when events are held. The governing body plays its part in supporting the school and manages finances well. It ensures that statutory requirements are met, but recognises that there is more to be done to hold the school to account through policy review and evaluation in areas such as safeguarding and community cohesion.

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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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception class provides a safe and welcoming environment for the children. The staff work well as a team to help the children become familiar with classroom routines and expectations. Due attention is paid to health and safety so that the children develop good hygiene habits and take increasing personal responsibility. A sound balance is achieved between teacher directed and child initiated activities, although on occasions the children have to sit and listen for longer periods than is necessary and begin to lose concentration. A wide range of resources is used indoors and out to stimulate children's play, which they enjoy. When good learning occurs it is because the activities have a clear focus. In these effective sessions, staff observe what the children say and do and interact with them to support their learning. On some occasions, learning through play is not as effective because all the adults are occupied directing groups of children leaving none available to monitor the other children's choices and check their learning as they play.

Sound records are kept of the children's progress in each area of learning, helpfully illustrated with photographs. These show that the children come into Reception with attainment below that expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy, although this varies from year to year. Some years it is considerably below average, others broadly average. The children make the expected gains in each area of learning, but this leaves many of them still some way short of the early learning goals at the end of Reception in aspects of communication, language and literacy. Good progress is made in areas, such as physical and creative development, because of the range and quality of opportunities the children have to develop their skills. The children particularly enjoy real-life practical activities, such as digging in the soil, growing and cooking vegetables, and baking cakes.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Very few parents returned the questionnaire so the views indicated below cannot be assumed to be representative. There were no strong negative views expressed. A few parents think that unacceptable behaviour is not properly dealt with. The inspection found that procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour are good and the children say that the teachers quickly deal with any bad behaviour, including bullying. A few parents say that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. During this inspection, evidence indicated that the school goes out of its way to find out what parents' views and concerns are and to accommodate them wherever possible.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodcock Hill 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 15 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 186 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	11	73	3	20	1	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	67	5	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	8	53	7	47	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	53	5	33	2	13	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	7	47	8	53	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	6	40	9	60	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	40	9	60	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)	6	40	9	60	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	47	7	47	1	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	5	36	7	50	2	14	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	33	6	40	3	20	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	40	8	53	1	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	7	47	7	47	1	7	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.



11 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodcock Hill Primary School, Birmingham, B31 1BS

Thank you for giving us such a warm welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and, in particular, hearing all that you had to say about the school and seeing your work. Woodcock Hill primary is a good school. You learn well in lessons and are very friendly, polite and helpful around the school. Your behaviour is good and you look out for one another. We were particularly impressed with what you knew about how to keep safe and stay healthy, including from the youngest children, and how well you work together in groups. You are particularly good at writing and you are getting better at reading. You enjoy all the interesting activities that the teachers provide, especially the visits and the sport and music. Your attendance at school is getting better, but it is still not good. Your teachers look after you well and plan good lessons, and your headteacher and deputy headteacher are good leaders.

We have asked your teachers to do a few things to make your school even better.

Make sure that all of you, even those in the top groups, are given work to do that you don't find too easy.

Encourage you to find out more things for yourselves through your own reading and research.

Ensure even more of you attend school nearly every day

Make the play activities in Reception even better

Help you to learn more about all the different kinds of people that live in your area, in the rest of Britain and around the world.

You can help by trying your hardest to get to school every day you possibly can, and by doing more reading in school and in your free time.

Yours sincerely

Peter Kerr

Lead inspector

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