

# Woolsery Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 113176              |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Devon               |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 357280              |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 10–11 February 2011 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Laurie Lewin        |

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

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|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                          |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                        |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11                             |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                            |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 134                              |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body               |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Val Snape                        |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Matt Cole                        |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 15 November 2007                 |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Woolsery<br>Bideford<br>EX39 5QS |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01237431307                      |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01237 431652                     |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | admin@woolsery.devon.sch.uk      |

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|--------------------------|---------------------|
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed and five teachers were seen. The inspectors met with pupils, staff, parents, and carers and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation including teachers' planning, assessment information, safeguarding policies and samples of pupils' work. The inspectors analysed 82 questionnaires from parents and carers, 14 from staff and 79 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What does the school's assessment information show about the current progress of pupils?
- How well is mathematics taught across the school?
- How well do higher-attaining pupils perform?
- What impact do the subject coordinators have on improving provision and raising standards achieved by the pupils?

## Information about the school

This is a small school compared to others of the same type. It serves the local village and surrounding area. The number of pupils on roll has increased since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than that found in other schools nationally and varies significantly in different year groups. The needs of the pupils concerned are varied with some of them having physical disabilities and some with speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Nearly all of the pupils are White British, with a very small number coming from other ethnic heritages. Pupils in the school are currently taught in five classes. There is a classroom on the school site for teaching pre-school aged children, but this provision is not managed by the governing body and was not part of this inspection. The school is accredited with several awards including the Healthy School Award and the Active Mark Award.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It has a number of good features and has made rapid and significant improvements to the quality of teaching and the curriculum in recent times. Pupils' attainment is broadly average and their progress, although improving rapidly, remains satisfactory. Parents and carers are very pleased with the work of the school. In particular they feel the school ensures their children are well looked after. As a result, pupils feel extremely safe in school. They enjoy their learning and appreciate the way in which staff make their learning interesting and fun. They particularly enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities and the environmental work they do in association with the 'Forest School'. In working towards their national accreditations pupils have gained an outstanding knowledge about how to keep themselves fit and healthy. They apply this knowledge well in their everyday life, for example, eating healthily at lunch and break time and participating in many sports clubs.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they are taught well. Last year the school correctly identified that some groups of pupils throughout the rest of the school were not achieving as well as they should do. As a result of intensive training the quality of teaching has improved significantly and pupils' progress is now back on track and accelerating. However, it remains broadly satisfactory from their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are similarly making better progress since September as a result of much strengthened provision to support them. The curriculum has been improved so that pupils have a wide range of interesting topics in all subject areas. This too is helping to accelerate pupils' progress because work is now well matched to pupils' needs and interests. However, although pupils do much practical mathematics work in lessons, there are not always enough opportunities for them to use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.

Teachers and teaching assistants have good relationships with pupils and give them strong encouragement in lessons, which helps them to become confident learners. Teachers usually make good use of assessment information so that tasks are matched precisely to pupils' needs. However, occasionally, higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the whole-class work at the start of lessons. In the main, teachers are good at questioning pupils and engaging them in discussion to develop their ideas. However, occasionally in English work, pupils are not given enough chances to talk about and expand their ideas prior to writing them down and this slows their progress.

Staff know the pupils very well, cater sensitively for their needs and support pupils' personal development well. As a result, pupils behave well and develop good social and moral awareness. Through the good work of their school council, charity fund-raising, local projects and links with other schools, pupils are good at contributing to the immediate and wider communities.

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The headteacher provides strong leadership. He has created an atmosphere in which the staff and governors work well together and have been galvanised into action over the last year, with an increased focus on driving up standards and improving pupils' progress. There is a good understanding of the school's priorities for development, based on rigorous systems for checking effectiveness. Staff and governors play a good part in this process so that the drive for improvement is shared by all. The school remains satisfactory as it was at the last inspection. However, after a dip in the school's performance after the last inspection, weaknesses have been successfully and rapidly addressed over the last year showing a good capacity to improve further.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- In order to accelerate pupils' progress, make teaching consistently good with increasing proportions of outstanding practice by December 2011 through:
  - ensuring that work set consistently challenges higher-attaining pupils from the beginning of all lessons onwards
  - ensuring pupils always have sufficient chances to articulate their ideas before writing them down
  - ensuring that pupils have enough opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

When children start school they show skills that are below and sometimes well below the expected levels for their age. They achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that by the start of Year 1 they attain average levels. While pupils' long-term progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is satisfactory, they have progressed well since September as a result of improved teaching and curriculum provision. In lessons, pupils are rapidly developing basic skills and understanding which they generally apply well in practical activities. For example, in mathematics lessons younger pupils built up their number understanding through using a good range of counting apparatus while older pupils worked out basic formulae to show how their matchstick cube patterns would grow. This is not the case in all lessons, however, and pupils' progress slows when they do not have the same opportunities to apply their skills.

Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and are keen to do well. In English lessons, younger pupils acquired a secure knowledge of sounds and letters to aid their work in reading and writing. These skills were built on well in classes for older pupils where, for example, pupils gained a good understanding about how to present their story ideas in the style of newspaper writing. However, in a few lessons pupils did not spend enough time talking about their ideas prior to writing them down. As a result, they did not always write with full confidence and a wide enough range of vocabulary. Pupils mostly show exemplary concentration and motivation when the work interests them and is demanding. Very occasionally, they get restless when the work is not interesting enough.

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In the main, pupils gain sound basic skills to help them progress in the future. They often make good use of computers to present their work. Pupils also show a keen sense of responsibility. They carry out jobs such as playtime helpers and school councillors very conscientiously. The older pupils often do much to help the younger ones. For example, at break time some Year 6 pupils taught younger ones to play games and helped a child who was upset to retrieve his lost snack. Pupils spoken to said, 'This is a happy, healthy and friendly school' and 'We have good fun and the teachers have got a good sense of humour'. Pupils' attendance is average and they usually arrive at school punctually. They also gain a good insight into the way that people from other ethnic backgrounds live their lives through, for example, their links with other schools and their charity support for and contact with a pupil in Tanzania.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 3        |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress  | 3        |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress                      | 3        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>1</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 3        |
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>  | <b>2</b> |

<sup>1</sup> 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?**

Teachers have good subject knowledge so that questions are pitched well to develop pupils' understanding. Through training this year, teachers have improved the way in which they plan and deliver mathematics lessons, with good emphasis placed on practical and problem-solving tasks. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. Teachers usually ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged. For example, in a mathematics lesson for Years 5 and 6, higher-attaining pupils worked well together on higher level extension tasks. Meanwhile

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the teacher and teaching assistant worked with other middle- and lower-attaining groups on some algebraic problem- solving tasks which were pitched precisely to challenge these pupils. However, occasionally, higher-attaining pupils spend too long on introductory tasks alongside their classmates and do not move on to the more challenging work soon enough. Teaching assistants work well alongside teachers in providing support, especially for groups of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Marking of work is usually good and pupils are mainly given a good understanding of how to improve their work.

The curriculum is enriched well by trips and visitors to the school and an emphasis on the provision of indoor and outdoor practical activities. For example, to support work in history on the Tudors, pupils built a real 'wattle and daub' wall as part of their 'Forest School' outdoor work. Very occasionally, chances for pupils to write at greater length in different areas of the curriculum are not fully utilised.

Staff provide much good quality pastoral support for pupils. They are particularly skilled in helping pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties overcome their problems and stay on track with their learning. The school makes extensive use of all external expertise to support pupils as required. There are well-organised arrangements such as lunchtime counselling sessions which ensure any pupils experiencing social or emotional difficulties are fully supported.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and governors have done a good job over the last year to improve teaching and pupils' achievement. Good quality tracking procedures have been established so that staff and governors have a clear insight into how well pupils are performing. They set challenging targets which pupils are on course to meet this year. The actions taken and their clear impact in the classroom reflect a good rate of improvement across the current academic year. As a result, all pupils have equal chances to succeed and staff keep a close eye on where improvements can be made to accelerate their progress even more. Robust monitoring procedures ensure that the headteacher and governors have a clear overview of pupils' progress and well-being. However, although subject coordinators monitor and evaluate the quality of lessons, they are not yet sufficiently involved in analysing the performance data of pupils throughout the school.

Governors work well and have played a key part in supporting all recent strategic moves. They fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities and work well as critical friends to challenge and support the work of staff. They have established good quality safeguarding

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procedures. In particular, good quality work embedded in the curriculum ensures pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe and that all possibilities of discrimination are eliminated. Good systems are in place to involve parents and carers in supporting their children's learning. The school provides them with full information about their children's progress, not only through regular meetings but also via the school website. The school has strong links with other local schools and a range of partner organisations and uses these well to boost pupils' learning. The school promotes community cohesion well and constantly evaluates the impact it has in this respect. The school's mission statement, 'Learning at the heart of the community', is reflected in the many class projects and activities organised to link with the immediate, local, national and global communities.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 2        |
| <b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>  | <b>3</b> |

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They settle in well because of the good induction procedures and the close links established with the pre-school class. Indoor and outdoor resources are well organised and set up to maximise learning opportunities and the good quality planning ensures children have a rich range of activities. Good teaching ensures that all children acquire secure basic skills in all areas of learning. Children are provided with a good range of practical work that is planned well to link the different areas of learning. For example, some good project work around the theme of 'shopping' involved children in running a class shop and making the items on sale, visiting the local village shop, making a large map of their journey to the shop and designing small booklets of the products on sale, complete with descriptive sentences. Through this approach, the teacher succeeded in getting the children to talk confidently and write about their ideas, develop their mathematical and creative skills and make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. This approach also means pupils learn to socialise and support each other well in the various activities.



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The teacher and teaching assistants work well together to support and guide all individuals. As a result, all of the children feel safe and become confident and happy learners who are keen to come to school. While the children progress well in all areas of learning, progress in reading is not as strong as in other areas of learning. Not enough opportunities are currently provided for children to become familiar with using and handling books as part of their overall work in reading.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed and runs smoothly and efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Accurate self-evaluation and good systems to regularly check and record children's progress mean that staff have a clear view on what is working well and where they can make further improvements.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>2</b> |
| 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

There was a high return of questionnaires. Most parents and carers are pleased with the school's work. Positive comments included, 'I feel Woolsey is a fantastic school and my children feel very safe there' and 'I have nothing but positive things to say about the school. It is very good at what it does and my children agree they are very happy there'. These were typical of the comments of others. A small number of parents and carers felt the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that behaviour is well handled by staff and this was confirmed by pupils. Observations in lessons and at break times confirmed this. A very small number of parents and carers felt that the school did not communicate well enough with them. The inspection team found that the school has established good systems to inform parents and carers about their children's progress and school activities. Some parents and carers commented on the recent improvements they had seen at the school and this was confirmed by the inspection findings.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woolsery 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 82 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 134 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |    | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | %  | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 47             | 57 | 32    | 39 | 3        | 4  | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 58             | 71 | 23    | 28 | 0        | 0  | 0                 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress  | 38             | 46 | 34    | 41 | 9        | 11 | 0                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 37             | 45 | 36    | 44 | 6        | 7  | 2                 | 2 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 43             | 52 | 31    | 38 | 6        | 7  | 1                 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 36             | 44 | 28    | 34 | 10       | 12 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 45             | 55 | 34    | 41 | 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) | 30             | 37 | 42    | 51 | 9        | 11 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 34             | 41 | 31    | 38 | 6        | 7  | 2                 | 2 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 26             | 32 | 42    | 51 | 10       | 12 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 35             | 43 | 37    | 45 | 1        | 1  | 2                 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 48             | 59 | 30    | 37 | 1        | 1  | 1                 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 50             | 61 | 23    | 28 | 6        | 7  | 2                 | 2 |

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      | 59  | 35   | 3            | 3          |
| Primary schools      | 9   | 44   | 39           | 7          |
| Secondary schools    | 13  | 36   | 41           | 11         |
| Sixth forms          | 15  | 39   | 43           | 3          |
| Special schools      | 35  | 43   | 17           | 5          |
| Pupil referral units | 21  | 42   | 29           | 9          |
| All schools          | 13  | 43   | 37           | 8          |

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul> |
| 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.**



14 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Woolsery Primary School, Woolsery EX39 5QS**

Thank you for making us feel welcome in your school. You were very polite and friendly and we enjoyed talking to you. We have judged that yours is a satisfactory school. There have been lots of improvements made recently. Through discussions we had with you and the survey that some of you completed we can see that there are many things that you like about your school and you enjoy being there.

Here are some of the good things that we found in your school:

- The good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage gets you off to a strong start at school.
- You are fit and healthy and know a lot about how to stay this way.
- Good teaching helps you to improve your work and reach the expected levels. Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and fun.
- Your behaviour is generally good and you get on well with each other.
- You all have a very good understanding about how to work and play safely. The adults in the school are good at taking care of you.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have done a good job of helping the school improve and have good plans to keep this improvement moving.

This is what we have asked the school to do now:

- Ensure that those of you who find some areas of work easy are given challenging work to do throughout your lessons.
- Improve your writing by giving you more chances to talk about your ideas before you write about them.
- Improve your work in mathematics by giving you more chances to practise and extend your mathematical skills in other subjects.

You can play an important part in helping the school to improve by continuing to work hard in all lessons.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lewin

Lead inspector

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