

# The Woodsetton School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103879
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	355482
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alan Dobbins

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>	Special
<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>	92
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lynn Westwood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Philip Rhind-Tutt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Tipton Road Dudley DY3 1BY
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed in part or in whole 14 lessons and seven of the school's teachers. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils and the local authority link adviser to the school. They looked at policies and reviewed documents, the reports of the School Improvement Partner and the data the school has on pupils' progress. They scrutinised 35 parents' questionnaires and spoke with 12 parents.

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

- How clear an understanding has the school of pupils' progress?
- How well do teachers use assessment information to plan lessons that meet the learning needs of all pupils?
- How effectively do staff and specialists from outside agencies help all pupils gain equal access to all the school provides?
- How well do leaders, managers and the governing body know their school and how effective is their use of assessment information in driving forward improvement?

## Information about the school

Woodsetton is a small school originally designated for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, including speech and language disorders. Increasingly, pupils have entered the school with more severe and complex difficulties that include autism. Each pupil has a statement of special educational needs and there are almost twice as many boys as girls. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The school is linked with two local specialist schools for science and sports.

**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

Woodsetton is a good school. Staff and pupils relate very well with each other and enjoy each other's company. The school provides a safe and harmonious place where pupils thrive as learners and grow into young people who are prepared well for the next stage of their education and their future lives. Parents and carers are quick to praise the school, one typically saying, 'The school has been the best part of our son's life this year. Woodsetton has helped him settle with confidence, compassion and dedication and we cannot thank them enough.'

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a good start to their schooling. They settle quickly and make good progress against their starting points in each of the early learning areas. By the time they enter Year 1 they know the rules and expectations for learning and, by their actions, show they enjoy working hard to do their best. Over Years 1 to 6, pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science against the national progression guidelines. Emerging evidence shows that over the last two years there has been a slight improvement in overall progress in each of these subjects. Pupils do well in many of the other subjects and, especially, in physical education and sports.

The school is a welcoming and well-ordered place. Parents and carers say their children enjoy school because it is 'very friendly and very caring', as the 'head and staff go out of their way to be helpful.' Pupils like being at school and attend regularly. As they move through the school they gain a good understanding of the importance of being safe at all times and of what to do if they feel troubled or bothered. They behave well and their good attitudes to their work show they have fully accepted their role as learners. They work hard in lessons and enjoy their friends' successes as much as their own. Over the years, they gain a secure understanding of right and wrong and many show considerable maturity when they have difficult choices to make, including those to do with staying safe and keeping healthy.

The small size of the school means that senior leaders are integrally involved in the day-to-day management. Knowing their school, and each pupil as an individual, has helped them accurately judge the overall effectiveness of the school, even though the more formal procedures for self-evaluation, including those for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning, are not yet finely tuned. Senior leaders have acted on the directions given at the last inspection to improve procedures for tracking pupils' progress. Their system, which has been in place for two years or so, is, potentially, good and is liked by teachers. It is becoming well established, but at present does not provide a precise enough picture of pupils' progress or is sufficiently useful for setting targets for school improvement. Governors have a good feel for the work of the school. Their watch over financial matters is good, but they are less effective in holding the senior leaders to account for raising achievement and progress. Aspects of the school's work judged good at the last inspection

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have been maintained. There have also been developments since then, especially the forming and implementation of the system for gaining and using assessment information. Consequently, the capacity of senior leaders to sustain improvement is good.

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

- Senior leaders should:
  - make more effective use of the detailed assessment information available to target areas for school improvement
  - formalise procedures for the monitoring, evaluating and improving of teaching and learning.
- Improve the impact of the governing body by:
  - taking an active role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school
  - holding the schools' leaders to account for the rate of pupils' progress.

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

**2**

The school has consolidated the good performance seen at the last inspection. Pupils in all year groups make good progress in English, mathematics and science against the national benchmarks for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes girls and those with severe and complex learning difficulties, including those with autism. They do well in physical education and sports, in part because of the school's link with the specialist sports school. Similarly, the link with the specialist science school supports pupils' good progress in science.

In a caring and secure environment, pupils gain a very clear understanding of safe and unsafe situations. They prosper both as learners and young people as they gain independence skills, as best they can. The strong relationships they have with their teachers and teaching assistants help them become increasingly confident as learners and, because of this, most lessons are enjoyable events. In these lessons, pupils make a full contribution and have fun as they learn. This helps them practise their communication and social skills and to establish genuine friendships with each other. In some lessons, for example in one lesson in music, the high level of challenge and the specialist knowledge of the teacher resulted in pupils working very hard at learning to perform a song and enjoying doing so. All pupils made outstanding progress in learning some skills of singing, in pronouncing new words and in articulating their spoken words more clearly.

Pupils have a clear awareness of the importance of staying healthy. They identify the healthy foods they have at lunch times. To be physically active, a high percentage attend the lunchtime and after-school sports clubs and take part in the regular sports competitions with other similar schools. The school council meets regularly and members talk proudly of the charitable causes they have supported, including Red Nose Day and Children in Need and they have a long history of supporting international charities, most recently the Haitian Earthquake Appeal. They gain good awareness of the needs of the local community through their many visits to local places, such as the local shops, parks and the library in support of their learning. The residential visits, a visit to France was taking place over the time of the inspection, let pupils gain first-hand experiences of the

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wider world. The good gains made in self-confidence and self-esteem support pupils' good understanding of spiritual issues, such as the importance of trust and friendship.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	*
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
Taking into account:	
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

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers and their assistants are dealing with an increasing number of pupils who require of them a greater range of skills, knowledge and expertise. More often than not they meet this challenge. The spacious classrooms allow varying strategies to be used with different pupils, and the generous number of well-trained teaching assistants makes a significant contribution to the good progress pupils usually make in lessons. Outstanding teaching and learning are seen in a small number of lessons. In these lessons, the new system of using the bank of curriculum targets for each subject to plan learning opportunities that are relevant to the needs and capabilities of each pupil works well. This is because teachers understand the process, choose relevant activities and make available the right resources. In a few lessons, planning does not give enough attention to what pupils already know and can do, and the lessons tasks do not match exactly with pupils' precise learning needs, being sometimes too hard or too easy; this limits pupils' progress.

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The curriculum focuses on developing basic skills and enhancing communication abilities as a first step to promoting independence, to the extent that this is possible for pupils whose needs are complex. The strength of the curriculum is the wide range of additional learning experiences available to pupils through initiatives driven by the school and through the partnership arrangements that are well established with many other schools. Good use is made of the close links with Extended Services. Ventures such as the family learning workshops and the parent support adviser provide valuable and direct help in supporting families in bringing up their children and in helping continue the work of the school at home. Resources gained through Extended Services have been used to support a visit to Blackpool and a ride in a (tethered) hot air balloon. Being part of the 'Top Up Swimming' initiative has provided an extra opportunity for pupils to practise swimming. The school has a good record over many years for reintegrating pupils into mainstream schools. The visits pupils make to the specialist schools for science and sports benefit them as they are taught by teachers with specialist knowledge and they make use of their laboratories and gymnastic and games facilities.

Pupils are known as individuals. They gain good support and advice on matters to do with learning, as do their parents and carers in helping to nurture the development of their children. Well-targeted work by staff, sometimes led by the advice of specialists, especially speech therapists, improves pupils' access to all the school provides and makes a key contribution to them thriving as learners and as young people. Almost all parents and carers take part in the annual review of their children's progress and an increasing number are involved in supporting their children's learning at home, some through the regular bulletins on the website. Provision for pupils as outlined in their statements of special educational needs is met in full. Good arrangements ensure that transition for pupils through school and to their next school is smooth and easy.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: 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?**

Senior leaders steer a stable and experienced staff team who place high priority on the care and support of pupils and their families. There is no discrimination of any sort and staff strive to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all the school offers. The procedures for self-evaluation have worked effectively enough for senior leaders and the governing body to have maintained the good quality of the provision seen at the last inspection. The school's assessment system is providing more accurate information than was previously available on how well pupils are doing against their own targets for learning and in judging how good is the progress against other similar pupils nationally. However, this information is not being used well enough to improve pupils' progress and

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raise attainment beyond the levels seen at the last inspection. Making better use of this new information over the upcoming years is the key element in driving up standards and progress. Governors take care to ensure that pupils are safe at school and are well cared for. Nevertheless, they are only a satisfactory level of challenge to senior leaders to account for the progress of pupils and the quality of teaching.

Safeguarding procedures are thorough and the school ensures that it adopts good practice across all aspects of its work. Parents, carers and pupils see the school as a very safe and secure place. Due regard is paid to promoting community cohesion. The links with the locality are strong through the pupils' regular visits to local places to promote learning and to take part in events such as the annual Christmas concert at Dudley town hall. First-hand experience of national and international communities is primarily gained through the programme of day and residential visits. The impact of partnerships with other schools and agencies is making a good contribution to pupils' progress. The positive partnership the school has with parents is based on good communication. Parents and carers have many ways in which they learn about the school and their children's progress, through parents' evenings, the newsletter, information sheets from class teachers and recently through the website. One parent reflected the views of many in the comment: 'I am pleased with every aspect of the school, but particularly knowing how well my son is doing at school'.

*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: 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>3</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>2</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Leadership is good, as is the day-to-day management. The Early Years setting is a friendly place in which children settle quickly and well. In a secure and comfortable environment, they develop strong relationships with their adults and, as they gain confidence as learners, their emerging



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personalities begin to show. Children happily work on directed activities with others, but are equally happy when engaged in their own play. The additional support required to meet the particular difficulties of some children is very effective. Consequently, in each of the early learning areas, all children make good progress against their starting points. Evidence of this is seen in the good record keeping and in the 'Learning Journeys', which detail many of their experiences over their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Resources to support learning are good and are used well. There is solid evidence that the outdoor area is used well in providing additional learning experiences to those only available indoors. But, due to building work this area is currently, but temporarily, not available. Links with the families are very strong and benefit the progress of many of the children.

*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**

Most of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaire or who talked to an inspector are very pleased with all aspects of the school. They are especially pleased that their children enjoy the school and that they are very safe there. They agree that the school is led and managed effectively and that their children make good progress because of the good teaching. Many parents and carers expressed views which reflected those of one who wrote, 'Top marks for Woodsetton. Our son's progress just keeps on improving and that's priceless.'

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Woodsetton 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 92 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	86	5	14	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	83	6	17	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	63	13	37	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	69	10	29	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	77	8	23	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	60	14	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	57	15	43	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)	20	57	14	40	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	71	10	29	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	60	12	34	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	63	13	37	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	80	7	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	83	6	17	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](http://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"><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.**



13 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of The Woodsetton School, Dudley, DY3 1BY**

It was a pleasure for me and my colleague to meet and spend time with you when we visited your school. Thank you for making us welcome. We found your school to be a good school. These are some of the things we especially liked:

- the good progress you make in your learning and in developing as independent young people
- the good way you behave and work hard in your lessons
- that you feel very safe and are happy at school
- that you are learning what is right for you so that when you leave you are prepared well for your next school
- the good way the staff and others who visit the school help you in your learning and in growing up
- the way in which your leaders provide extra opportunities for your learning through linking with other schools and taking part in ventures such as that which allows some of you extra swimming.

There are a few things that should be done better. Your leaders and governors need to improve the way they check on how well you are doing in your learning. This will make it easier for them to recognise how well each one of you is doing against your own targets for learning. It will also help them to compare the progress of all of you with that of other pupils in similar schools. A better system for gaining accurate information about your progress will help the school to plan how it can improve your work and learning further. Then you will be able to reach even higher standards and make the school an even better place in which to learn. Of course, you can all help, too, by always working as hard in all your lessons as you did when my colleague and I visited your classrooms.

Yours sincerely

Alan Dobbins

Lead inspector

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