

# Woodlands Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104053
<b>Local Authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	367359
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Thompson

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	225
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jackie Lynch
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sandra Logan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Woodlands Lane Solihull B90 2PX
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 744 2840
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<b>Email address</b>	office@woodlands-inf.solihull.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed seven teachers in the 15 lessons they visited. These included some observations with a specific focus on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and members of staff, a group of governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and pupils. They also held informal discussions with a small number of parents and carers. Inspectors looked at a range of information, including data showing the progress made by pupils, and samples of pupils' work. They analysed questionnaires returned by 54 parents and carers, and 26 members of staff.

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

- How effective are the school's actions to improve attainment, particularly for the more able pupils in mathematics?
- How effective has the school been in improving the accuracy of teachers' judgements about pupils' levels of attainment, and to what extent do teachers' on-going assessments improve pupils' learning?
- How rigorous are managers at all levels in their monitoring and evaluation of their areas of responsibility? What is the impact of middle managers on promoting pupils' progress?

## Information about the school

This infant school is smaller than the average sized primary school. A large majority of pupils are White British, but the proportion of pupils from other ethnic groups is rapidly increasing. Currently, 30% of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the majority of whom are of either Indian or Pakistani origin. There are, however, few pupils learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is also rising, but is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. Most of these pupils have communication and language difficulties, including some with additional behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery, which children attend on a part-time basis in either the morning or afternoon, and two Reception classes. Since Easter 2009, there have been significant changes in staffing, including a new headteacher and deputy headteacher.

The school has a number of awards and accreditations, including Healthy School status and an Activemark accreditation for its promotion of physical education and sport. The school has foundation level status as an International School and is working towards the intermediate level accreditation.

In term-time, the school provides child care, both before and after the school day, for children aged from 3 to 7 and, during school hours, for 3 and 4 year-olds who attend the Nursery part time.

**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****3**

## Main findings

Woodlands Infant School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has a number of strengths, mostly relating to the good quality of the care, guidance and support provided for pupils and their personal development and well-being.

The headteacher provides good leadership. On taking up her position, she conducted a thorough audit in order to identify areas requiring improvement. The most important of these was the urgent need to improve the accuracy of teachers' assessments in determining the National Curriculum levels being attained by pupils. The school has made good progress on this, and the assessments made since September 2009 have been validated by the local authority. Those carried out at the end of the 2009/10 school year showed that attainment in Year 2 was broadly in line with the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. Assessments for 2011, carried out shortly before the inspection show that standards are rising, but remain within the broadly average range.

Attainment on entry to the Nursery varies from year to year, but is typically in line with what is expected of three year-olds. This means that pupils make satisfactory progress over time because attainment remains average by the time they reach the end of Year 2. Children currently in the Reception classes have made good progress since they joined, and their attainment is above average. This is because teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now consistently good due to a combination of factors, including changes in staffing and improved leadership.

In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is satisfactory but inconsistent. There are good features in all lessons. Teachers relate well to their pupils, explain new concepts clearly and manage their pupils well. However, the learning that results from teaching is, too often, only satisfactory. This is because teachers do not use assessment information well enough to provide work with a consistently high degree of challenge or ensure that pupils have clear, specific and measurable targets to achieve, tailored to the different levels of ability in the class. Teachers do not always make use of the information and communication technology (ICT) available to them to help add interest to their lessons. Opportunities to develop pupils' skills as independent learners through investigation and problem solving are missed.

The school invests a great deal of time and resources in ensuring that pupils make good progress in developing their personal and social skills, thus providing a climate within which learning can take place. Behaviour is good, and, in very closely supervised situations, it is often impeccable. Pupils say they are well cared for and feel secure in the knowledge that adults will always help them if needed. They have a good awareness of how to keep safe and healthy. A current priority for the school is the further development of the curriculum in order to ensure that pupils develop basic skills effectively. The regular and structured approach to teaching reading and writing and the new curriculum in place

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in mathematics are beginning to have a positive impact on attainment. However, pupils in the Key Stage 1 classes have too few opportunities to use ICT as a tool for learning, and the ICT suite is an underused resource.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Much of the improvement currently taking place largely stems from the strategic view developed by the headteacher with the effective support of her senior leaders. Middle leaders, with responsibility for subjects other than English and mathematics, do not have sufficiently well developed skills in monitoring and evaluating the impact of teaching on the attainment and progress of pupils. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and hold the senior leaders closely to account for their actions. The improvements made in the past two years are the result of an accurate evaluation of overall effectiveness together with a clear plan of action and regular monitoring of progress by senior staff and governors. Despite some remaining weaknesses, the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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?**

- Increase the rates of progress made by the pupils in Key Stage 1 by ensuring that teaching is consistently good or better and, in particular, ensure that teachers:
  - always provide achievable challenges for pupils of all levels of ability, particularly the more-able
  - make regular use of ICT to help improve both teaching and learning
  - enable pupils to develop greater independence as learners.
- Develop the skills of middle leaders so that they clearly focus their monitoring on the quality of pupils' learning.

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

<b>3</b>
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In many lessons observed in Key Stage 1, teaching is too closely focused on the transmission of knowledge rather than the development of pupils' skills. As a result pupils make satisfactory rather than good gains in learning. A scrutiny of pupils' work in books confirmed an overreliance on photocopied worksheets and lack of different tasks for pupils of different abilities, and supported the school's view that progress over time is satisfactory. However, pupils make good and sometimes outstanding gains in their learning where teaching captures their imaginations. For example, in an outstanding Year 2 history lesson, the teacher made effective use of a portrait depicting an act of piracy by Blackbeard. Pupils' analysis of the portrait elicited many thoughtful answers. On the subject of emotions, one pupil said, 'I think that they are feeling frustrated because they've been fighting for a long time.' Further impetus was provided by an email from the imaginary 'Mr C', who was stranded on a desert island, which prompted pupils to use computers for research in order to provide him with information about Blackbeard.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress over time. The needs of these pupils are well documented, and their individual education plans contain clear targets. Observations of a sample of these pupils working on activities

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designed to improve their literacy skills showed that this tailored provision helps them achieve their targets. Skilled teaching assistants play a key role and ensure the good inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is no discernible difference between the rates of progress made by pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those with English as an additional language, and their classmates.

Pupils respond positively to the well established and consistently applied procedures for promoting good behaviour. Their strong commitment to keeping healthy is evident in the good attendance at extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school, such as dance and games clubs. This commitment is recognised through the Activemark and Health School awards. There are many ways in which pupils develop skills as young citizens and contribute well to the day to day life of the school. For example, they undertake responsible jobs as class monitors and councillors. Pupils make a positive contribution to the wider community through, for instance, fundraising for a school in Kenya or helping organise a coffee morning for local residents. Pupils clearly know right from wrong. They respect one another and display good social skills when working and playing together. Pupils' awareness of their own and other cultural traditions is better than is normally found in Key Stage 1, as illustrated by the school's work towards accreditation as an intermediate level International School.

*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:	
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>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>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<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

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## How effective is the provision?

Teaching that is good or better is characterised by the skilled ways in which teachers use a variety of techniques to inject enjoyment, interest, pace and urgency in pupils' learning and use assessment well to provide individual challenges. However, in too many instances learning is only satisfactory. This occurs when lessons lack pace because teachers talk for too long. Sometimes when pupils have the same task to complete teachers do not set out precisely what they expect of pupils of different levels of ability, including for those who are more-able. For example, a Year 1 lesson about recycling, although well explained, lacked differentiated levels of difficulty to match the needs of different ability groups in the tasks provided.

The curriculum provides for the adequate development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The introduction of an online system for recording teachers' judgements about pupils' attainment is improving the quality of tracking of pupils' progress across all subjects. Furthermore, it is useful in helping teachers ensure that all subjects are covered in sufficient depth. Enrichment activities provide extra interest and enjoyment. For instance, one parent commented on the excitement generated in the Year 1 topic about Nepal and Mount Everest. 'My son really enjoyed the project where he came to school dressed to climb a mountain and went out on the field to stay in a tent!' The strength of the curriculum lies in the promotion of pupils' personal and social skills, for example through the focus placed on developing their understanding of the values that underpin social interactions.

The good provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils permeates all aspects of school life. The needs of individuals are well known and pupils feel valued as members of the school 'family'. There are very clear, well-established arrangements for induction of pupils into school and smooth transition to the next phase of their education. Children are looked after well in the school's child care provision. Systems for ensuring good communication with parents are straightforward. All adults are suitably qualified and their skills are updated as required.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

This is a welcoming and inclusive school in which discrimination has no place and which gives pupils a clear sense of belonging. However, equality of opportunity is only satisfactory because of unevenness in provision between classes in Key Stage 1. The impact of leadership on pupils' achievement is only satisfactory because the actions taken

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have yet to be translated into good progress. The extent to which leadership embeds ambition and drives improvement stems largely from the clear vision of the headteacher. It is satisfactory overall, rather than good, because middle managers are yet to develop sufficient skills in leadership and management. The governing body is effective because of the range of professional skills that it brings to the school. The school promotes community cohesion well. It has a good understanding of the needs of the community it serves and is effective in broadening pupils' horizons, for example through its work in developing an international dimension to its provision.

Teamwork among staff is a strong feature, and staff questionnaires show that the headteacher enjoys the full support of all her staff. Almost all of the parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaires feel that the school is good at looking after their children. The school is rigorous in ensuring that the premises are secure and that day to day procedures to ensure the safety of pupils are followed closely. A strong focus is placed on health and safety. The turnover of staff in recent years has meant that middle leaders, in particular, have yet to make a positive impact on achievement in their areas of responsibility. A wide range of partnerships with local schools is resulting in improvements in the curriculum and greater accuracy of teachers' assessments. Partnerships also provide additional challenges in mathematics for the most able pupils. However, in lessons these pupils are sometimes not challenged enough.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy school and each other's company. A particularly noteworthy feature of this key stage is the weekly 'Forest School' outdoor learning for children. 'A fantastic experience that is extremely beneficial' typifies the positive comments from parents about this provision. Children make particularly good



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progress in developing personal and social skills and their ability to communicate effectively. They quickly adapt to routines, share resources amicably, respect others and behave well. Adults have a good understanding of how young children learn and provide clear guidance to help accelerate their progress. All areas of learning are covered well and there is a good balance between opportunities for children to learn through play and direct teaching, both indoors and out.

Leadership and management are good. Teamwork among staff is a strong feature in this area of the school. All adults place a strong emphasis on ensuring the welfare and safety of the children and keep a careful check on children's progress so that provision can be suitably adjusted in response to what is learned. However, provision from Nursery to Reception is yet to be seamlessly integrated. The assessments of children's progress are sometimes too descriptive. In these instances, they lack detailed evaluation of precisely how well the children have achieved their tasks and make too few suggestions about the next steps in learning for each individual.

*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**

Around 24% of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. A very large majority recorded positive views in all of the areas surveyed. The aspect of the school's performance of greatest concern relates to the leadership and management of the school. A close analysis of comments appended to these negative responses shows that most of these relate to concerns about communication between school and home. While most parents and carers are happy with communications, governors are considering ways of making further improvements.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodlands Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 225 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	72	13	24	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	31	57	22	41	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	35	31	57	4	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	54	22	41	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	56	21	39	3	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	54	21	39	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	50	24	44	3	6	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)	25	46	22	41	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	50	24	44	2	4	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	39	25	46	4	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	33	30	56	3	6	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	22	41	25	46	6	11	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	59	18	33	4	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.**



15 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Woodlands Infant School, Solihull B90 2PX**

I would like to thank all of you for being so welcoming and helpful when my team of inspectors visited your school. We found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education. This means that there are a lot of things that the school is doing right and some things that need to be better. All the adults who help to run your school want it to improve. For this to happen, they need to help you to make better progress in your work.

Here are some of the things that are best about your school.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress.

I was impressed by your good manners and behaviour.

You told us that you feel safe. This is because all of the adults take good care of you.

You know a lot about how to be healthy.

The governors who help run your school are doing a good job.

To help you to make better progress in your work, I want your school to do two things.

I would like your teachers to make sure that the work that they plan for you always gives you a real challenge and helps you to develop skills in working things out for yourself. I am sure that you are ready for this! I also want your teachers to use computers more in lessons. I am sure that you will enjoy this!

Some of your teachers who are in charge of subjects need to find out more about how well you are learning so that they can plan what to do to help you learn even better.

I would like you to play your part in helping the school to become even better. The best way for you to do this is by continuing to try really hard in lessons.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Thompson

Lead inspector

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