

Woodhall Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124560
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	359706
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Copeland
Headteacher	Jane Sharp
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 26 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils, and spoke informally to parents and carers on the playground. They observed the school's work and looked at a selection of documentation, including planning, evidence of monitoring records including the school's lesson observations, and analyses of pupils' work and other assessment information. The inspection team scrutinised inspection questionnaires returned by 89 parents and carers, as well as those from staff and pupils.

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

- What is the impact of steps to raise attainment in writing?
- To what extent do pupils' interests and aspirations help shape the curriculum?
- How has the effectiveness of the governing body improved since the last inspection?

Information about the school

Woodhall is similar in size to most primary schools. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school has a nursery as part of its Early Years Foundation Stage provision, offering morning and afternoon sessions. A breakfast club is run daily by the governing body. The school has gained National Healthy School Status, the Activemark and bronze Eco-schools 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?**2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

Woodhall Community Primary is a good school. Attainment is rising year on year because of consistently good teaching and a clear focus on accelerating pupils' progress. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are passionate about teaching and learning, and their energy and enthusiasm invigorates the whole school community. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school's work. One summed up the views of many by saying, 'My son is thriving here and learning lots'.

Pupils make good progress from often low starting points to reach expected levels of attainment by the end of Year 4 in reading and mathematics. They also make good progress in writing, but because starting points are lower, their attainment falls a little behind the other subjects. The school has introduced some exciting initiatives to engage pupils in their writing, encouraging them to use their imagination fully. This has motivated them and improved the quality of their work. While pupils have targets to help them improve further, they are not sufficiently involved in setting their targets or checking to what extent they are meeting them. Marking of writing varies, and does not always set out for pupils the next steps in their learning or follow this up to ensure that pupils have made the required improvements.

The curriculum is enriched well with clubs, visits and visitors, and contributes to pupils' enjoyment of school. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 visited the Imperial War Museum at Duxford as part of their topic on 'Britain at War'. There are good links between subjects, and pupils are given a broad range of opportunities to extend their learning. However, the curriculum does not always take sufficiently into account pupils' own ideas about what they would like to find out, or encourage them to evaluate the effectiveness of topics they have completed. Good care, guidance and support ensure all pupils have the provision they need to achieve well. The school's pastoral care is outstanding, as staff take full account of pupils' individual needs, giving the school its distinctive nurturing ethos, that is valued by parents and carers.

The excellent relationships between staff and pupils make learning a positive experience, and encourage pupils to take a full part in lessons. Good questioning by teachers and teaching assistants helps pupils to think through their ideas, and this is bolstered by the introduction of philosophy lessons throughout the school. Pupils are equipped to consider different points of view, and to express themselves articulately, including disagreeing with one another in a civilised manner. The benefit of this is seen in their good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning. Pupils help develop their social skills as 'Innovators' in a lunchtime club, and promote inclusion and healthy lifestyles in the playground as 'Woodhall Friends' and 'Activate Leaders'.

Rigorous monitoring by the senior team and middle leaders give the school a good understanding of its strengths and areas to develop. These link to well-written strategic

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plans, so that there is a shared vision of how the school can improve. The governing body has made good progress since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory, by introducing procedures to make the governing body more accountable, and by extending the breadth and scope of its work. The school has seen pupils' achievement rise, and the quality of provision improve rapidly since its last inspection, and has a good capacity to build on these gains.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing to match that of reading and mathematics by:
 - involving pupils more in agreeing their improvement targets so that they understand them fully and know when they have met them
 - ensuring that marking shows pupils how to improve their writing and that this is followed up by teachers and the pupils themselves.
- Improve the effectiveness of the curriculum by:
 - adapting planning to take account of pupils' interests and aspirations to make learning more relevant and personal to them
 - evaluating the impact of the curriculum provision by seeking pupils' views and reflections on their experiences.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy coming to school, as evidenced by their good attendance, and are keen to participate in lessons. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils rose to the challenge of programming a robotic toy to negotiate a track without falling into any 'black holes'. They accomplished this with some aplomb, and were delighted with the success of the operation. Year 3 and 4 pupils imagined what it must be like to be caught up in a bombing raid and produced some vivid accounts of their experiences. They used their knowledge of the story of Anne Frank to consider what they would take with them, if they had moments to choose, before going into hiding. Poignantly, some chose to take a photograph of a favourite pet, realising that the pet itself would have to be left behind.

Pupils make good progress, because teachers keep a careful check on how they are doing, and intervene promptly if they show signs of falling behind. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because they receive good support, individually or in groups, from skilled teaching assistants who are briefed well by teachers. Pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills at a pace that suits them, with a suitable level of challenge that ensures they persevere and make good progress. There are no differences between groups of pupils; the school's careful analysis shows that everybody achieves well, including those known to be eligible for free school meals.

Pupils say they feel safe at school, and would readily turn to an adult if they had a problem. Pupils take plenty of exercise, including a daily 'Wake 'n' Shake' session, which is often run by the pupils themselves for the whole school community. The exceptionally good, fresh and healthy lunches are very popular with all who try them, so that take-up of school meals is high. Pupils are involved in their local community, singing at a civic ceremony before the Mayor, and participating in the 'Children's University'. The school council take an active role in school life, drawing up a survey to find out how playtimes

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could be more enjoyable. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good sense of values for living such as 'trust', and get on well together. Their cultural development is enhanced by links with a school in Romania and learning about the many contrasts in a continent such as Africa, the subject of a school production. Pupils' expected level of basic skills prepares them satisfactorily for the next stage in their education, although they have limited experience of developing their entrepreneurial and enterprise skills.

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	2
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	2
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?

Teachers plan work that is matched well to pupils' abilities, and ensure that all groups of pupils receive sufficient challenge to make good progress. They make good use of technology to engage and interest pupils, and actively involve them in lessons. This contributes to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Teaching assistants are deployed best when supporting groups or individuals; occasionally, they lack a clear role when the teacher is introducing the lesson. Pupils are given good oral feedback about how they are doing in lessons, and some of the marking shows them how to improve. However, this is inconsistent. The school tells pupils the National Curriculum level they are reaching in broad terms, and involves them well in setting personal and social targets. Pupils have less input into their curriculum targets, and are not always aware of what they are or whether they have reached them.

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There are good links across the curriculum to enable pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills across a range of subjects. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils were calculating how many wartime rations their family would be entitled to, and marched to Gracie Fields while chanting tables. Art is a particular strength, with attractive displays of pupils' work across the school. Pupils won a national competition for a mural about hedgerow life. They perform to a high standard, as their most recent rehearsals for a wartime musical reveal. While topics interest pupils, there are limited opportunities for them to shape the direction of learning or to influence aspects of what they study. Similarly, they rarely review their learning at the end of a topic to show what worked well and what could be improved. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that many make sufficient progress to no longer require intensive support. At times, their individual targets are not specific enough or easy to measure. The school meets the needs of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable particularly well. The breakfast club is well-supported and gives pupils a nourishing and enjoyable start to the day.

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 headteacher's collaborative leadership style gives staff confidence to try out new ideas and to make suggestions for improvement, resulting in a forward-thinking and reflective learning community. Initiatives, such as developing more creativity in writing and teaching philosophy, have had a beneficial impact on outcomes for pupils both in terms of their academic progress and in their personal development and well-being. All teaching staff are involved in observing one another's work, and there are regular assessments of teaching by senior leaders. High expectations have led to improvements in provision, with clear guidance given for development. The governing body's effectiveness is good, having improved well in recent years. Governors have 'personal logs' to record their contribution, which build up a useful record of their work. They are fully involved in the life of the school and canvass parents' and carers' views regularly. They monitor carefully how subjects are taught, but are not sufficiently involved in measuring the impact of priorities on the school development plan.

The school engages well with parents and carers, who appreciate the school's openness and friendliness. One parent commented, 'The links made with parents and carers on an informal basis are lovely and help secure school/home relationships'. The school promotes equality of opportunity well, ensuring all pupils achieve well. It is working hard to close any gaps in attainment, such as in writing. Safeguarding arrangements are good, with all staff trained to a high standard in the procedures, and meticulous records kept. The

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promotion of community cohesion is good. The school has a good understanding of its local area and has been successful in reaching out to all groups. Links with a small rural school give pupils direct experience of a contrasting locality. The visit from the headteacher and other staff of the Romanian partner school gave insight into a different culture. Pupils have fewer opportunities to experience first-hand the ways of life and traditions of those in the United Kingdom from backgrounds different to their own.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly into the Nursery and Reception classes because of the rich learning environment that captures their attention and the dedication of a staff team that understands how young children learn. Children enjoy a wide range of experiences often linked to the topic, such as watching caterpillars turn into butterflies and setting up an explorers' den where they can examine minibeasts. There is a strong emphasis on developing early literacy and numeracy skills, so that children make good progress from their low starting points. Good teaching harnesses their natural curiosity. Classroom routines are particularly well-established in the nursery, enabling children to make rapid progress in their social and emotional development, as they learn to share with one another and listen when somebody else is speaking. Good use is made of the outside areas, which are well-resourced. Nursery children especially enjoy hanging upside down from the monkey bars. One boy said, 'Look what I can do! I couldn't do it before'. However, there is not enough labelling of the resources and activities outside to support children's reading skills.

Assessment is good, so that staff have a clear understanding of how children are making progress and what next steps they need in learning. High quality 'learning journeys' celebrate children's achievements and give valuable information to parents about how

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their children are doing. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led well, with good consistency of practice across the Nursery and Reception classes, and positive links with parents and carers about all aspects of their children's education.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires returned by parents and carers was typical of most schools. These were overwhelmingly positive, with all agreeing that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. Parents and carers also say that the teaching is good and that the school is led and managed effectively, all aspects supported by inspection findings. A few parents and carers felt the school did not take sufficient account of their views, but inspectors found that the leaders and managers, including the governing body, regularly canvass the views of parents and carers and make themselves available to them. There were other individual strengths or concerns raised by parents and carers that were brought to the school's attention anonymously.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodhall Community 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 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 245 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	76	21	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	73	23	26	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	57	64	31	35	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	58	36	40	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	59	66	30	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	57	36	40	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	60	34	38	2	2	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)	50	56	37	42	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	52	58	35	39	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	54	37	42	3	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	49	39	44	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	60	67	29	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	68	76	19	21	2	2	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).

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"> ■ 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.



27 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodhall Community Primary School, Sudbury, CO10 1ST

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and sharing your views with us in person and through filling in the questionnaires. We agree with you that Woodhall is a good school. You told us that you feel safe at school, that the teaching is good and that lessons are enjoyable. You also said adults care for you well. Our findings support your views. Here are some other strengths of the school.

You make good progress in your work because staff have high expectations of what you can do.

You take plenty of exercise, and have a good understanding of how to keep healthy.

You make a good contribution to the school through the jobs you take on.

There are plenty of visits, visitors and clubs for you to enjoy.

The school is led and managed well.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start.

We have asked your teachers to help you to do as well in writing as you are already doing in reading and mathematics, by being sure you understand how to improve your writing, and checking you are making full use of their advice. We would like you to put forward ideas about what you learn in topics, so that they come to life for you. We would also like you to tell your teachers what went well and what could have been better once you come to the end of a topic.

Thank you again for your help with our inspection. You all can help by working hard and making sure you follow the guidance your teachers give you to improve your writing. Our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt

Lead Inspector

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