

Woodcroft Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135529
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	364050
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Gehane Gordelier HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trevor Walker
Headteacher	Amanda Sadler
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2011
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They observed the seven teachers who work at the school, 13 lessons, one assembly and pupils at playtimes. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and some parents and carers. Discussions were held with the School Improvement Partner and the Chair of the Interim Executive Board. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked in detail at a range of school policies and documentation. These included: teachers' planning, curriculum documents, a sample of pupils' workbooks, the school's data and information about pupils' progress, minutes from meetings held by the former governing body and the new Interim Executive Board, action and improvement plans, behaviour logs, and documents relating to health and safety and safeguarding. Inspectors also scrutinised the responses to the inspection questionnaires returned by 46 parents and carers, 48 pupils and 10 members of staff.

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

- Whether pupils are progressing quickly enough in English and mathematics to raise their low levels of attainment sufficiently, particularly boys and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Whether teaching is strong enough to help pupils make the gains required given their prior underachievement, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- How effectively leaders and managers at all levels contribute to driving and embedding improvement, leading to higher levels of attainment for all groups of pupils.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school and was formed in April 2009 following the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is double the national average; a higher proportion than average has a statement of special educational needs. These are mainly for behavioural, emotional and social or moderate learning difficulties. The school has enhanced Healthy School status.

In March 2011, the governing body was replaced by an Interim Executive Board and an experienced headteacher and deputy headteacher were seconded to work with the school. There has been significant staff turbulence in recent months. A number of staff are also due to leave at the end of the summer term 2011, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. There is a privately run nursery on the school's site, which was not included in this inspection.

In May 2010, the school was given a notice to improve. It received a monitoring inspection in January 2011 and was judged to have made inadequate progress.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school has not made sufficient progress since being given a notice to improve, and outcomes for pupils remain inadequate. With the exception of the Early Years Foundation Stage, levels of attainment are significantly lower than average overall in reading, writing and mathematics. Too few pupils in both key stages attain higher levels. Pupils do not make enough gains in their learning. This is because the curriculum does not meet their needs sufficiently well; too much teaching is weak or not good enough to accelerate progress; and lessons are not planned in a way that takes sufficient account of pupils' prior learning and needs. Despite most pupils being well behaved most of the time, the poor behaviour of a few has disrupted learning and progress during the course of the year and contributed to many pupils feeling unsafe.

The school is taking a more robust stance towards pupils' absence, but levels of attendance remain low. Although staff care about pupils, the overall quality of care, guidance and support is inadequate. This is because inadequate support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities leads to significant underachievement, especially at Key Stage 2 where, along with boys, they are one of the lowest achieving groups. Furthermore, not all staff take sufficient responsibility for supporting pupils with behavioural issues.

The Early Years Foundation Stage remains one of the school's strengths and helps instil in children a love of school and of learning. All staff at the school work hard to engage with parents and carers. As a result, parents and carers feel welcome, valued by staff and believe their views and concerns are listened to. There have been some improvements to the work of the school, mainly instigated by the executive headteacher and the Interim Executive Board. Consequently, pupils are more enthusiastic about their learning. The quality of the school's self-evaluation is improving, but judgements about the effectiveness of the school's work are still overly generous at times. This is because evaluations are not always rooted in secure evidence, such as whether or not the school meets all its legal obligations. Leaders and managers are not all making sufficient use of data to review the progress made by pupils of differing abilities. Furthermore, the quality of action planning is variable and sometimes weak. The roles of many middle, and some senior, leaders remain largely underdeveloped; consequently, they are not contributing sufficiently to helping the school to improve.

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The school does not demonstrate the capacity to sustain improvement. This is because, despite remedying a few weaknesses, there has been an overall lack of improvement in the provision and outcomes for pupils, due to significant shortcomings in the leadership, management and governance of the school. The Interim Executive Board and executive headteacher, who are supporting the school well, are beginning to have a positive effect in various areas. However, they have not been in position long enough to make sufficient impact on the overall effectiveness of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics so that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, levels are at least in line with national averages by:
 - providing a curriculum that is tailored to the needs and interests of pupils and includes more opportunities, across the curriculum, for pupils to write
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and setting more challenging targets
 - making better use of data and assessment information to help drive and embed improvements.
- Increase the proportion of teaching and learning that is good or better by ensuring that:
 - when planning lessons, teachers take full account of pupils' prior learning and different abilities
 - lesson plans include a clearly identified progression of skills, especially for the more-able
 - teaching and support staff are well informed about how best to meet the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - teachers assess pupils' progress during the course of lessons and amend their teaching accordingly to maintain a good pace of learning
 - lessons include a good range of visual clues and a stronger emphasis on new and unfamiliar vocabulary
 - all lessons are taught in a meaningful and purposeful context.
- Raising levels of attendance so they are at least in line with the national average by:
 - working more closely with parents and carers to help them understand the impact that unnecessary absence has on the education and well-being of their children.
- Improve the behaviour of pupils and the extent to which they feel safe in school by:
 - ensuring staff respond quickly and effectively to pupils' concerns and anxieties in lessons and around the school site
 - following up issues and the extent to which they have been successfully resolved
 - reviewing the behaviour log at regular intervals to identify any patterns of behaviour that require more rigorous intervention and support

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- ensuring that all pupils know what to do when they feel unable to resolve disputes for themselves, and increasing their confidence in staff to help when needed
- raising the confidence of parents and carers about the extent to which the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour.
- Develop leadership and management across the school by ensuring that:
 - action and improvement plans reflect the school's priorities and include measurable success criteria and a clear focus on outcomes for learners
 - levels of attainment and the progress made by different groups of pupils are tracked and reported on by leaders and managers in their areas of responsibility
 - leaders, managers and staff are held to account for the progress made by pupils
 - ensuring that all statutory requirements are met including evaluating the impact of the school's policy for equality of opportunity and communicating findings to staff, parents, carers and the Interim Executive Board
 - ensuring that evaluations are rooted in secure evidence and provide precise information about the impact of the school's work on different groups of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Most pupils enjoy coming to school: their engagement with learning has improved this year. From Reception Year to Year 6 girls achieve better than boys in reading, writing and mathematics. At Key Stage 1, those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make better progress than those who are not in receipt of free school meals. However, at Key Stage 2, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals perform slightly less well than their peers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make better progress than their peers at Key Stage 1, but the reverse is true at Key Stage 2, particularly for those with behavioural difficulties. Although levels of attainment are rising at Key Stage 1, they remain too low, particularly in reading and writing. However, the attainment gap in mathematics between pupils at the school and other pupils nationally is reducing. The effective work of the mathematics leader has helped to improve pupils' calculation skills, but this still remains a relative weakness throughout the school. Pupils make good progress in music at Key Stage 1, and those in Key Stage 2 are rightly proud of their achievements and performances as a choir.

In lessons, learning is better when the topic is relevant to pupils' interests. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoy learning about the sea and this helps them to approach writing and mathematical activities related to the topic with enthusiasm and interest. More generally, however, the context of lessons lacks meaning for pupils, and the pace of learning is too slow to enable pupils to make up lost ground. Pupils enjoy music and art. The artwork of pupils in Year 5, including that about famous artists, is linked well to their learning of Spanish. However, pupils' appreciation of multicultural Britain and other cultures is underdeveloped.

Pupils understand right from wrong, but they do not all apply this to their own actions and behaviour towards others. This results in play that is at times overly boisterous and with some pupils not showing others appropriate levels of respect and consideration. A more consistent approach by staff in lessons has led to improved levels of behaviour in classes.

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However, pupils are not confident that all the adults in the school will help them to resolve arguments when needed, or provide support when others are being unkind, especially outside the classroom. Pupils know what to do to lead healthy lifestyles. Approximately a quarter take part in after-school sporting activities. Pupils know how to stay safe when out of school and learn about railway safety and the dangers of drugs and alcohol. They are keen to take on responsibilities, for instance as librarians, school councillors and house captains. The school council contributes to decisions that affect pupils. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to become involved in the local community. Pupils' low levels of basic skills mean they are not adequately prepared for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	4
Pupils' behaviour	4
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

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' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and there is insufficient detailed lesson planning to support those who find learning difficult. Where successful practice was observed, such as in a good Year 3 mathematics lesson, the teacher used a range of teaching strategies to help pupils learn how to divide two-digit numbers by one-digit numbers. In this lesson, the teacher displayed good subject knowledge and made effective use of questioning to check pupils' understanding and provide additional challenge. Where teaching is less successful or weak, lessons do not take sufficient account of pupils' prior learning and their differing abilities. Planning does not identify clear progression of skills, particularly for the more-able. In these lessons, teachers do not

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assess pupils' learning and progress regularly enough. There are insufficient resources to act as visual cues, for example to help pupils learn and use new and unfamiliar vocabulary. There are planned opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, but this usually requires adult support. However, the quality of support from additional adults is very variable, and at times weak. In some parts of the school such as in Reception Year and Year 6, it is good. Additional adults are not always sufficiently well informed about how best to support the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and this slows the progress made by these pupils. The quality of marking is inconsistent but better for English and mathematics than for other subjects. Where marking is best, it is linked to learning objectives and provides pupils with guidance about how to improve.

Senior leaders have already identified the shortcomings of curriculum provision, including for information and communication technology and for personal, social and health education. Some changes have been introduced, but improvements are embryonic. As a result, the curriculum is not meeting the needs of all pupils or making a sufficient contribution to their learning and development. This is especially the case for boys and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum. There are few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual appreciation or the skills, personal qualities or understanding that would enable them to engage constructively with people from other cultures and backgrounds.

There are well-planned induction and transition procedures for pupils joining the school in Reception Year and for those leaving for secondary school. Nevertheless, the shortcomings within the school's processes and practice in providing care, guidance and support mean that pupils are not thriving in their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers are not taking effective steps to embed their ambition for the school and are not driving improvement effectively enough. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage and that of mathematics are exceptions. In general, however, staff are not held sufficiently to account for pupils' progress, and action and improvement planning makes too limited use of data to identify priorities and set challenging targets. Plans lack measurable success criteria and a clear focus on outcomes for learners.

Monitoring and evaluation activities are not sufficiently focused on learning, progress and levels of attainment. Senior leaders have developed a helpful way of gathering and analysing data about pupils' progress. However, not all leaders and managers are making

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sufficient use of this information to set challenging targets or measure progress. This, together with the turbulence in staffing, has limited the impact of senior leaders on improving teaching securely. Leaders and managers do not monitor closely enough the high incidence of poor behaviour. Furthermore, the extent to which issues have been successfully resolved is not always followed up sufficiently well.

Since the previous inspection, governance has had too little impact on the direction of the school and has not challenged the school sufficiently to address weaknesses. The new Interim Executive Board has made a positive start, but has not had sufficient time to bring about the full range of necessary improvements. The Interim Executive Board has inherited the shortcomings of the former governing body in that not all statutory requirements are met. This includes evaluating the impact of the school's equality of opportunity policy and feeding back findings to parents and carers, and producing an accessibility plan. However, the school is fully compliant with all safeguarding regulations and duties.

The home liaison officer has made a strong contribution to helping the school develop and improve work with parents and carers. This includes building links with some who have, in the past, been reluctant to engage with the school. However, more work remains to be done to persuade parents and carers to ensure their children's good attendance. Pupils benefit from the school's work with outside agencies by learning how to keep healthy. They also benefit from the numerous partnerships with other schools and a local university as well as a range of practitioners and visitors who come to the school. Nevertheless, partnerships are still not making a sufficient contribution to pupils' learning and well-being.

There has been little evaluation of the effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity. There is insufficient evidence that outcomes for different groups are improving, and too many continue to underachieve. The community cohesion plan has not been reviewed for nearly two years, and the extent to which it includes an audit of the community it serves is unclear. While the plan identifies activities within the school's locality, there are no links which promote a national or global dimension. This is reflected in the limited planned provision for pupils in this area.

The school does not provide value for money because outcomes for pupils are inadequate.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in this part of the school are particularly well cared for; teaching and support staff are vigilant and always focused on the needs and welfare of the children. Health and safety are given the highest priority as staff always ensure areas are kept safe, clean and well organised. Children work and play happily together and enjoy choosing from a wide range of exciting and inviting activities both in class and the outdoor area. Children enjoyed learning about camping, taking turns to be in the colourful tent. They played at preparing meals and offering each other pretend sandwiches, giving thought to what would constitute healthy ingredients. They are also aware of the importance of physical activity, and one child said to another, 'We must skip to keep us healthy and fit.'

The good relationships modelled by staff enable children to develop positive dispositions and attitudes to learning. Children make satisfactory progress from their starting points, but girls perform significantly better in most areas than boys. Children attain particularly well in their physical development, their knowledge of letters and the sounds they represent, and in their knowledge of numbers as labels for counting. However, they do less well in the development of their writing and calculation skills. Although children are assessed regularly, there are no comparisons made of the progress of children of differing ability. There is currently no action plan for this part of the school. As a result, the work in the Early Years Foundation Stage does not dovetail sufficiently well with the school's priorities, such as ensuring there are sufficient opportunities for children, especially boys, to develop their writing skills.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

There was a broadly average rate of return of questionnaires from parents and carers. The responses highlighted that most parents and carers believe their children enjoy school and that the school keeps their children safe. They also feel well informed about their children's progress and believe their children are well prepared for the future. However, the majority of parents and carers who responded do not think that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour and a significant minority do not believe the school is well led. Inspection evidence supports the view that unacceptable behaviour is not always dealt with as well as it should be. Consequently, the need to improve behaviour and how this is dealt with has been identified as a key area for improvement. The inspection team also found significant shortcomings in the leadership and management of the school and this is described more fully in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodcroft 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 152 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	41	19	41	6	13	2	4
The school keeps my child safe	17	37	24	52	2	4	3	7
My school informs me about my child's progress	17	37	25	54	3	7	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	35	23	50	6	13	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	35	22	48	6	13	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	20	29	63	7	15	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	26	29	63	5	11	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)	14	30	28	61	3	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	30	27	59	4	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	20	12	26	17	37	7	15
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	20	28	61	5	11	4	9
The school is led and managed effectively	6	13	20	43	10	22	10	22
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	35	19	41	7	15	4	9

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	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.



11 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodcroft Primary School, Waterlooville PO8 9QD

I am writing to thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school and to share some of our findings with you. We listened carefully to what you and your parents and carers told us. We also looked at much of the school's work and spent time in lessons and walking around the school. As you know, your school was asked to make some improvements after it was last inspected. I am sorry to say that although some things have improved, the school is still not doing well enough and has been put into special measures. Until the school becomes good enough again, other inspectors will visit the school regularly to check that things are improving. The school is not expected to get better all on its own and will receive extra help.

These are some of the more successful aspects of your school.

- The youngest children in the school are particularly well cared for and are making the expected progress for their age.
- The school works with your parents and carers so they can all work together to help you.
- The school helps you to learn how to be healthy.
- You take on responsibilities and help around the school.

To help your school to get better, staff need to work together to do the following things:

- Raise standards of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that more is good or better.
- Ensure that you come to school regularly.
- Improve behaviour, the way this is managed, and make sure you feel safe.
- Improve the way the school is led and managed so that things get better as quickly as possible.

You can help by letting staff know if something is upsetting you, and if you think the work in your lessons is either too easy or too difficult. I wish you all every success and look forward to hearing good things about your school.

Yours sincerely

Gehane Gordelier

Her Majesty's Inspector

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