

Woodlands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131539
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	382338
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2011
Reporting inspector	John Rutherford HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	329
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Hutchinson
Headteacher	Robert Beel
Date of previous school inspection	21 April 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons taught by 13 teachers. They held meetings with school leaders, groups of pupils, three members of the governing body, three members of the parents' council and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' progress and a range of management documents, including policies and records for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the school's effectiveness in tackling the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection.

- Are school leaders effectively identifying and tackling weaknesses in pupils' achievement in English and mathematics in order to raise standards of attainment?
- Are teachers planning work that matches the specific needs of pupils?
- Are school leaders eradicating weaknesses in teaching across the school?
- Is the monitoring of the school's performance by the leadership team rigorous and accurate; does it involve the governing body and does it lead to improvements in pupils' outcomes?

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. A third of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is above average. Around a third of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is also above average. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Following the inspection in April 2010, the school was placed in special measures because it was not providing an acceptable standard of education and was not demonstrating the capacity to bring about the necessary improvements.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Woodlands now provides a satisfactory and rapidly improving quality of education. There are many good features in the work of the school, including leadership and governance, the curriculum, the care, guidance and support for pupils and their personal development and well-being. The quality of provision and children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding. Pupils enjoy learning and their attendance is above average. While the school was subject to special measures, parents and carers have maintained their confidence in it and have developed a good partnership with the staff and governing body.

The rapid pace of improvement is the result of strong leadership from the headteacher and deputy headteacher who are sharply focused on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They are very well supported by a mostly new team of senior and middle leaders who have quickly developed their leadership skills over the past 18 months. The leadership team as a whole works very effectively to keep the work of the school under constant review; members accurately identify strengths and weaknesses and this enables them to make changes where they are most needed in order to improve pupils' outcomes. The significant improvements they have already made in for example, greatly reducing inadequate teaching, making the curriculum much more interesting and raising attainment in writing, demonstrate good capacity to raise attainment further.

Local authority and national data for July 2011 and school records show that pupils start school with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age; they make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Then, after some peaks and troughs in Key Stages 1 and 2, they leave school with broadly average attainment. The peaks and troughs occur because the quality of teaching is variable, ranging from satisfactory to outstanding. Overall, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are satisfactory. However, the greater incidence of good and outstanding lessons since July is helping more pupils to make progress at a better than expected rate. This has not reached the stage where progress overall can be judged to be good. Where teaching is still not as good as the best in the school, some groups of pupils are not making as much progress as they might. The work does not sufficiently meet their needs. This is especially the case for the more able and those with minor learning difficulties. Where pupils achieve best, teachers have a detailed

understanding of the work that all groups need to accelerate their progress and they provide very stimulating lessons.

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?

To improve pupils' achievement, the leadership team and staff should take the following actions.

- Improve the consistency of good and outstanding teaching throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that teachers provide work suitably adapted so that all groups of pupils can make good progress in lessons, especially those who are more able and those who have minor learning difficulties
 - leadership team members focusing their monitoring of lessons on the progress made by each group of pupils, identifying precisely how work and support can be better planned to ensure that no group falls behind.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

A considerable improvement in pupils' achievement in English has contributed significantly to the overall rise in standards. In particular, the staff have worked very hard since the previous inspection to improve pupils' writing and this is now a strength of the school. In the past, pupils have made the strongest progress overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the upper years of Key Stage 2. However, with better teaching and a more interesting curriculum in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is beginning to be more consistently good throughout the school. This is not yet the case for all groups of pupils and some are making slower progress, particularly the more able and those with minor learning difficulties. Pupils with more significant special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because the school works in a very effective partnership with external support services to meet their needs. Pupils without special educational needs and/or disabilities whose progress is beginning to stall are quickly identified and helped to get back on track with a well-planned set of support programmes.

The very large majority of pupils are keen learners and behave well in school. Their ability to get on with work on their own, and to use teamwork to solve problems, makes a significant contribution to their progress and to the preparation for their future education and work. This preparation is further enhanced by their improving achievement and the opportunity they are given to try different trades in Year 6 as part of their transition to secondary school. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and they are developing good habits of exercise and healthy eating. Pupils contribute to the life of the school in many ways, the most notable example being the learning council; a team of older pupils advise staff and governors on how teaching can better meet their learning needs. As a result of their input, there is a much stronger emphasis on independent learning and pupils' self-assessment. Pupils are making

good progress in understanding the world beyond their immediate experience and how different groups of people can live together harmoniously.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The proportion of good and outstanding teaching is increasing and inadequate teaching is now rare. Where teaching is most effective, lessons provide a wide range of methods to enable all pupils to grasp new ideas, for example, physical activity, discussion, using computers and pupils teaching each other. Teachers continually assess pupils' understanding and reshape the lesson when necessary. These methods are quickly becoming embedded in most classes and, where teaching is less effective, it is because the work is not always matched to the learning needs of all pupils. In some classes, teachers' marking is very effective because it provides useful guidance and time is given for pupils to respond to it. This is not consistent across the school.

The school is making rapid progress in improving the curriculum and it now provides pupils with good opportunities to link learning across different subjects within highly motivating topics. These topics are used well to extend literacy and numeracy skills and they make a strong contribution to pupils' improving progress. Teachers ensure that learning is reinforced through practical activities, research and first-hand experiences, both within and beyond the school. Topics are well planned to provide different levels of challenge according to the needs of the pupils and there are good arrangements for assessing pupils' progress in learning new skills. A good range of extra-curricular activities enables many pupils to enjoy physical activity in different sports or to develop their personal interests in such areas as film and performing arts.

Care, guidance and support for pupils are given very high priority and some aspects of the work are exemplary, particularly the support for pupils at risk of exclusion or persistent absenteeism. Teachers make significant changes to the curriculum for

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

these pupils to keep them engaged in learning while they are receiving support for their difficulties. The support for pupils with special educational needs is exceptional in the way it helps them to develop independence and confidence in such everyday activities as shopping and cooking. The school works hard to help pupils and their families to make the right choices in relation to attendance and behaviour, which has led to these being good aspects of pupils' personal development. The support is good for pupils and their families when pupils start school and when they leave. Arrangements for helping pupils to make a smooth transition from one age group to another within the school are at an earlier stage of development.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

During the recent period of substantial change, in which weaknesses in teaching have been robustly tackled, the leadership team has maintained the high morale of the staff. All share a strong commitment to improving their practice in order to raise standards as quickly as possible. School leaders have an accurate and detailed view of the strengths and weaknesses in provision from their systematic approach to monitoring teaching and pupils' progress. They also show good skills in formulating action plans that focus the whole school sharply on the most important priorities for raising standards. The concerted effort of all staff to improve pupils' writing skills has contributed significantly to improving results in the Key Stage 2 national curriculum tests.

The leadership team has introduced a very useful system for constantly checking pupils' progress and uses this effectively to identify which pupils need a programme of support and which aspects of teaching need to be improved. School leaders help their colleagues to improve their teaching by looking at their work and giving constructive feedback. This aspect of monitoring is not focused sharply enough on helping some teachers to understand precisely how to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the same good progress during lessons.

The governing body makes a strong contribution to the school's improvement by being fully involved in evaluating the quality of provision and pupils' progress. Its detailed understanding of the school's work helps it to make a very useful contribution to future planning. The governing body works particularly hard to ensure that parents' and carers' views are taken into account in the development of the school. As a result, a parents' council has been formed which is successfully helping to encourage more parents and carers to take advantage of the school's efforts to involve them in supporting their children's learning.

Alliance with other schools has provided the leadership team with useful information to inform improvement planning. At the same time, Woodlands is increasingly

helping other schools to improve their practice. A wide range of community organisations supports the school in enriching the curriculum for pupils. The school has started to seek partnerships beyond the immediate locality as part of its community cohesion strategy, but this work is at an early stage of development.

Teachers are committed to ensuring that all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve well. Their work is particularly successful with pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. However, other groups are not achieving as much as they can in some classes. The school’s procedures for safeguarding pupils are systematic and fully meet requirements. In some respects, the school’s practice is exceptional, for example, the way it is anticipating risks associated with forthcoming building work well in advance and is already taking action to minimise them.

These are the grades for the 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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make outstanding progress, especially in gaining reading, writing and speaking skills and in aspects of their personal development. They very quickly become confident and independent learners. The children get off to this flying start because they follow a very well-planned curriculum which sets out a clear path for the learning of new skills but which is also flexible enough to be adapted when something new fires their imagination. During the inspection, for example, the weather became very windy and the staff modified their plans to set the children a number of challenges related to making kites. The children loved being out in the wind, thinking hard how to solve the problem of making a kite fly while keeping it on the string. In all such activities, the staff adopt a consistent approach to improving children’s speaking skills through promoting extended conversations and asking challenging questions.

The children have a rich indoor and outdoor environment from which they can choose their learning activities. There is also an appropriate balance of adult-led activities which are well planned and stimulating and which help the children to make rapid progress in such areas as learning the links between letters and sounds, numbers and writing. Children’s achievements in all activities are assessed and recorded using a thorough but very manageable system. This system usefully

includes parents’ and carers’ observations, which help staff to form a more rounded view of each child’s learning and development. This assessment information is used very effectively to plan future work for the class and for particular children who need more support or challenge.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader gives considerable drive and very clear guidance to secure the highest quality education and care for the children. There is a strong sense of teamwork among the staff and all make a significant contribution to the children’s outcomes. The leader and staff closely monitor the impact of their work on children’s outcomes and have no hesitation in dropping methods that are not fully effective. The leader has also made a significant contribution to the school’s journey out of special measures by taking responsibility for Key Stage 1. She is working closely with the staff to introduce a new curriculum which has already considerably increased pupils’ enjoyment and achievement as well as ensuring a smoother transition for the children moving up from Early Years Foundation Stage. Several schools have visited Woodlands to learn from this effective practice.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parent and carer questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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.



7 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodlands Primary School, Lincolnshire, DN33 1RJ

Thank you for being so helpful when I came with my colleague, Mr Thompson, to inspect your school. I found my discussions with you to be most helpful because you were very polite and you had so much to say about all the interesting things going on in your school. You helped me to make my judgement that your school is now providing you with a satisfactory quality of education.

You told me that there has been a massive improvement in your school since inspectors last visited in April 2010, and that you are learning far more now. I agree and I have decided that your school no longer needs 'special measures'. The headteacher and staff have worked very hard to make your school a better place but they could not have achieved all their improvements without your hard work, so a very big 'well done' goes to you all. The learning council has contributed enormously by making sure that staff understand your views about how you learn best in lessons and this has helped them to teach in a way that improves your progress. You have all helped by keeping up your good attendance, by behaving well and by being really keen to learn.

The headteacher, staff and governors want to go on improving your school for you so I have agreed with them what they can do next.

- All lessons will be as good as the best in the school.
- Lessons will be planned in a way that helps all of you to make good progress.

I am sure that you will all continue to work with your teachers to help your school go from strength to strength. Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford
Her Majesty's Inspector

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