

# Woodlands Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118431
<b>Local Authority</b>	Medway
<b>Inspection number</b>	379618
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Helen Howard

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	385
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Eleanor Child
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nick Fiddaman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 June–1 July 2009
<b>School address</b>	Woodlands Road Medway ME7 2DU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01634 338778
<b>Email address</b>	office@woodlands.medway.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	18–19 October 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed 21 lessons taught by 16 teachers. They met with pupils, members of the governing body and various members of staff. They observed the school's work and looked at its documentation, including its self-evaluation, policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils and data about pupils' progress. Inspectors also considered the views of pupils, staff and the 88 parents and carers who returned a questionnaire.

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

- The extent to which progress is accelerating, especially for girls.
- Improvements the school is making to pupils' attainment in English.
- The consistency of the quality of teaching within and between year groups.
- The impact of leaders' and managers' monitoring of teaching.

## Information about the school

Woodlands Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils who have a minority ethnic heritage is lower than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is above that found nationally. Nearly one fifth of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the majority of these have speech, language and communication needs or behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. Nearly one quarter of the pupils join or leave the school partway through their education.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend part time in the Nursery and attend Reception full time in one of two classes. There is also a children's centre on site, which is inspected separately. The school runs a range of community activities and there are breakfast and after-school clubs every day. It also manages a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs, known as the 'Hub'. This provision caters for nine pupils aged from 7 to 11 years, who all have a statement of special educational needs and who are on the roll of a local special school. Their needs vary and include behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders and learning difficulties. The pupils are taught together in the hub for basic skills and they are included in mainstream lessons every afternoon for a variety of subjects including physical education, music and art.

The school has been awarded Healthy School Status.

**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

Woodlands Primary is a good, inclusive community school which is continuing to improve under the strong leadership of the headteacher and senior leaders and managers. They are supported well by the governing body and the whole staff. The school provides a very caring and positive ethos and pupils develop strong values and become increasingly mature. They enjoy coming to school and behave well in lessons and around the school. One pupil said, 'I love coming here – it's really fun.' Pupils are polite and respectful towards each other and towards adults. The school looks after pupils well and goes to great lengths to support them, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Pupils feel very safe because the school's safeguarding arrangements are outstanding and parents and carers agree. Good engagement with parents and carers ensures that they are kept well informed about their child's learning and have opportunities to influence decisions.

Strong evidence from the school's own data and in lessons shows that outcomes for pupils are good. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress relative to their starting points. While achievement is good overall, attainment in both English and mathematics is average and the quality of learning is weaker in Reception classes. For a small number of girls, progress is not accelerated quickly enough in mathematics. Data are used well at whole-school level to identify patterns of performance and teachers are addressing any weaknesses. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes outstanding and this is enabling pupils to accelerate their progress. In the majority of lessons there is a clear structure, good pace and pupils are given regular feedback about their work. However, pupils do not have a clear understanding of their progress overall, relative to their target levels. Teaching is not yet consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

There are many strengths in the school, including the outstanding extent to which pupils contribute to the school and local community and engage in healthy activities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The community aspects of the school impact strongly on pupils' development, including their emotional and social development. Aspects of the school's curriculum, including music, physical education and drama, are very strong and pupils, including those in the Hub, are effectively supported through individual programmes. Additional activities offered to pupils are enhanced by strong partnerships with other organisations

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The school is well led and managed and has effective systems in place to monitor the quality of its work. It knows its strengths and weaknesses and plans effectively to address them. Since the last inspection, there have been significant improvements, most notably in the rate of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Consequently, the capacity to secure further improvements is good.

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

- By July 2012, accelerate pupils' progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - improving the quality of teaching, especially in Reception classes so that it is consistently good
  - extending the range of activities provided so that there are more opportunities for creative play
  - ensuring that teachers' assessments of children's attainment and progress are consistently secure.
- Raise attainment by July 2012, by:
  - ensuring that all pupils know their target grades and what the next steps in their learning will be
  - providing opportunities for pupils, especially girls, to apply their number skills to solve more complex problems.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Children start school with skills and abilities that are well below age-related expectations, especially in speech and language skills. By the end of Year 6, they make good progress overall and reach average attainment. The majority acquire sound basic skills and apply these well across a range of subjects although their skills in information and communication technology are less well developed. Historically, progress in mathematics has been weaker than in English, but school data show that the effective strategies used to address this are resulting in accelerated progress, especially in Years 1 to 4. Attainment in both English and in mathematics is now broadly average although, in some years, it has been affected by the high proportion of pupils who join or leave the school late in Key Stage 2. The school has implemented a range of intervention programmes to address this so that gaps in knowledge are tackled quickly and consequently these pupils make good progress. Nevertheless, a small number of girls make less progress than expected in mathematics, because they are not able to use their number skills in order to solve more complex problems.

In the majority of lessons pupils make good progress and in a minority they make outstanding progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who have special

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educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive very effective support from teaching assistants in lessons. For example, in a mathematics lesson on measuring angles, a group of pupils were concerned that they may be unable to undertake the tasks but the skilful support from the teaching assistant resulted in them confidently completing the work.

Pupils are very proud of and respond well to the opportunities offered to them to make a positive contribution. Pupils’ views are highly respected by staff and, consequently, the school council, with representatives from each year group, is an important influence on decision-making, including about resources, safety and staffing. The school’s contribution to the wider community is a strength and is integral to the personal development of pupils.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle and this is especially reflected in the very high participation in sporting activities. All of the pupils, parents and carers who returned a questionnaire agreed that the school helps pupils to be healthy and as a result, the school has achieved the Healthy School award. Pupils work harmoniously in different pupil groups and celebrate the diversity of the local community and the school. Pupils from the Hub, for example, are included in all aspects of school life. Pupils particularly enjoy their involvement in artistic and sporting events and performances are of a very high standard. Consequently, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

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## How effective is the provision?

Teachers’ good subject knowledge and positive relationships motivate pupils and help them to make good progress. In the majority of lessons, time is used very effectively and resources, including new technologies, engage pupils. Teachers use current data to inform lesson planning and give regular feedback to pupils about how well they are doing. In a few lessons, pupils are encouraged to self-assess their work by colour coding to show how well they understand the tasks and this helps them to address gaps in knowledge. Regular marking in books gives pupils specific comments about how to improve their work and teachers give good oral feedback during lessons. There is less information for pupils about their progress linked to target levels and what the next steps in their learning will be.

The curriculum provides opportunities for links to be made between subjects and is enhanced by a very broad range of activities before and after school. The international dimension is less well developed. All pupils have the opportunity to take music lessons and they especially enjoy keyboard tuition. Curriculum provision in the Hub is good and includes small-group teaching in addition to individual programmes. The range of activities and practical resources are effective in enabling pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. An effective range of provision supports pupils who may be underperforming, including small-group support lessons in mathematics and literacy. One-to-one tuition is offered at weekends. Pupils who attend these groups make good progress. A breakfast club, known as ‘Wasps’ is run by the school every day and offers a meal in addition to games and activities before school. This is attended by over one quarter of the pupils and has a positive impact on attendance and punctuality. Almost all pupils attend after-school and weekend clubs and this enables them to enjoy a wide variety of activities.

The school knows its pupils very well and support for individual pupils is good. The school has robustly addressed attendance and as a result, it is now average. For a very small minority of pupils, low attendance persists and this is being addressed by the school. Consequently, the proportion is reducing rapidly. The help and guidance provided to pupils in Year 6 to prepare them for secondary school are excellent and pupils speak very highly of the support they receive.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides very strong leadership in developing a vision for the school that is shared by all staff. Members of the governing body are involved in shaping the strategic direction of the school and regularly evaluate the impact of actions taken to address weaknesses and secure further improvements. Senior and middle level leaders routinely evaluate the quality of teaching and provide programmes of coaching and support so that teaching is now good overall. While more needs to be done to raise attainment further, especially in mathematics, there have been considerable improvements in the progress that pupils make and in the quality of teaching.

The school promotes equal opportunities well and there are no significant differences in outcomes for groups of pupils. Pupils’ talents are celebrated. They say that discrimination is tackled quickly and well. Pupils in the Hub socialise well at break times. Funding arrangements made by the school ensure that pupils are offered equal access to all activities, including the breakfast club, music tuition and after-school clubs.

Parents and carers engage well with the school and the vast majority are very positive about all aspects, including how well the school is led and managed. Parents and carers have access to a wide range of the community resources, including the day-care provision, health information, parenting classes and sports and social activities. They are encouraged to support their child’s learning through workshops, a parent forum and information booklets. Partnerships with community groups and other agencies are strong and these contribute to pupils’ improved outcomes, especially in sports, drama and music.

The outstanding safeguarding arrangements use leading edge technologies, including closed circuit television, timed electronic fobs for entry to the site and internal security systems. Daily checks ensure that potential risks to safety are recognised and addressed. Pupils have a strong awareness of their socio-economic, religious and ethnic context in the local community and the school, and although their understanding of those living in the wider world is slightly weaker, the school’s work to promote community cohesion is good. Pupils regularly engage with a range of community groups as part of their curriculum and after-school activities. The school’s work with the local community impacts strongly on the well-being and personal development of pupils, who get on very well with each other.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

**The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and**

**2**



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<b>driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	1
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	2

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are much lower than are usually expected for their age. Outcomes are satisfactory overall and children make good progress in the Nursery, where there is a focus on developing speaking and listening skills and encouraging children to work and play well together.

Consequently, children’s behaviour is good. Teachers and other adults model language well and are responsive to children’s needs, adapting plans where necessary. In one lesson, for example, the teacher was reading a story and when she noticed that some children were restless, introduced singing and games to maintain interest. Established induction systems help children to settle quickly and safely and positive links with parents and carers make a good contribution to children’s personal and emotional development.

In Reception, teaching is satisfactory. Relationships are generally good but children sometimes spend too long on the carpet and teaching is not consistently well matched to their needs. The assessment of children’s attainment and progress is not always secure. The range and quality of activities are variable and different areas in the class do not always offer exciting opportunities to attract and motivate children. The outdoor area for Reception is temporary and offers limited opportunities for play. The school is addressing this and is developing a larger area.

Children are safe because safeguarding arrangements are very secure. Leaders and managers are aware of strengths and weaknesses as a result of regular monitoring but this is not yet impacting on consistently good outcomes for children.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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

Nearly one quarter of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, a response rate that is below the average. Almost all are positive about their child’s experiences in school. All say that their child feels safe and the vast majority say that their child enjoys school and that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. As one parent wrote, ‘This is a fantastic school and the headteacher is so supportive and approachable.’

A very small minority of parents and carers feel that the school does not meet their child’s particular needs. Inspectors found that the school meets the needs of most pupils well.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodlands 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 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 385 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	68	27	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	74	23	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	39	44	42	48	4	5	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	48	40	45	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	50	57	35	40	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	48	55	32	36	4	5	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	45	39	44	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	40	45	41	47	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	43	49	39	44	5	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	50	57	36	41	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	40	47	53	2	2	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	52	59	36	41	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	56	64	29	33	3	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	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 are 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](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.**



20 October 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Woodlands Primary School, Medway ME7 2DU**

You may remember that three inspectors came to your school recently. We very much enjoyed our visit and I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Woodlands is a good school. We could see that you are making good progress in your lessons, that you behave well and enjoy your learning. You work well together and especially like sports, music and drama. We thought that you reach a high standard in these subjects and we enjoyed looking at some of your performances. We could see that you enjoy all of the clubs before and after school.

You are improving in English and mathematics, although a small number of you do not always do as well as you should in mathematics because you do not use your number skills well to solve more difficult problems. In most lessons, you know how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve and when this happens, you make even better progress.

Most of you told us that you feel safe in school and that you trust the adults. We think that the school cares for you very well. We have asked the school to do two things that will help to make it even better. We would like the school to:

- help you to do even better by ensuring you know how well you should be doing in relation to your targets and providing you with more opportunities to use your number skills to solve more difficult problems
- make lessons better in Reception with more interesting activities and make sure teachers clearly know how well you are doing.

You can help by continuing to work hard in your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Helen Howard  
Lead inspector

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