

# Woodhouse Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131919
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	381426
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Petts

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>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Brenda Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Shirley Welsh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	Walker Drive Bishop Auckland DL14 6QW
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 14 lessons and observed 11 class teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body and inspectors spoke with staff and groups of pupils. They analysed 96 questionnaire responses from parents and carers and looked at questionnaires from staff and pupils. The inspectors also looked at: pupils' progress and achievement data; intervention and support programmes; documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils; school policies and plans for improving the quality of learning. They scrutinised pupils' current and past work and spoke with a local authority officer to discuss the conclusions of a recent review of the school's work.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of learning and the rate of progress made by all groups of pupils in Years 1 to 6, especially as it related to challenging more-able pupils and raising the confidence and self-esteem of girls.
- The quality of teaching and its effectiveness in accelerating rates of pupils' progress and tackling any underachievement to close gaps in pupils' progress and attainment, especially in reading.
- The extent to which senior leaders, including the governing body, are demonstrating the capacity to bring about and sustain further improvements to the quality of provision.

## Information about the school

Woodhouse is a smaller than average size primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage, with a very small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is almost four times the national average. A higher than average proportion of pupils than found nationally has special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is a well above average proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The school extends its services in that it provides a breakfast club. The school has gained the International School and UNICEF Rights Respecting awards.

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

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Woodhouse is a satisfactory and steadily improving school. The headteacher provides inspirational and determined leadership and her influence has been strong in tackling the legacy of underachievement during a period of change in staffing. She is totally committed to the ambition that each pupil enjoys happy experiences and fulfils their potential. The school has benefited from her desire that, 'We can do this together'. Staff share in this goal. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive in their support and appreciate the highly positive relationships they have with the school and the quality of care and support provided for their children.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with experiences and skills which are well below those expected for their age. They develop well in this key stage because of the overall good provision.

Following a pronounced dip in 2010, pupils' attainment has risen as a result of successful action taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Currently, at the end of Year 6, attainment is typically below average. Pupils' progress is satisfactory over time, with clear indications that it is steadily strengthening, but variations remain. This is especially the case when activities are not matched precisely enough to pupils' age, abilities or interests. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same satisfactory progress as their peers.

Teaching is satisfactory, with some good practice observed, but it is not strong enough to accelerate pupils' progress rapidly. In those lessons where progress is most rapid, approaches are more imaginative and thought-provoking, and questioning is consistently challenging, requiring pupils to justify their answers. However, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve sometimes vary, particularly those made of girls and the more able. Consequently, these groups of pupils' make variable progress. Frequent marking of pupils' work is helpful, but written feedback does not always provide well-defined steps for improvement.

The satisfactory curriculum has developing strengths, such as broadening pupils' first-hand experiences of the diverse world around them. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to apply and practise their literacy skills regularly in all subjects. Behaviour is good and among older pupils it is often exemplary. Pupils report that bullying is rare and that they feel safe. They effectively adopt healthy lifestyles. Their attendance is average but improving as the school exploits the extremely

constructive relationships with parents and carers and the good links with other external agencies. Pupils take pride in their effective contributions to the school's decision making and improvement. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares them with good habits and attitudes for the next stage in their learning.

The headteacher's keen sense of purpose underpins the school's drive for improvement. The perceptive governing body provides much support and expertise and the impact of their quality assurance monitoring can be seen in effective safeguarding practice. Robust checks on pupils' development are in place, but the analysis of the impact on pupils' outcomes of actions taken to secure improvements sometimes lacks sharpness. Community cohesion is promoted well. Middle leadership is improving and is gradually becoming more pro-active in checking the effect of action taken. As a result, there is a satisfactory and growing capacity to improve.

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?**

- Accelerate the rate of pupils' progress, raise attainment and boost achievement and enjoyment in Years 1 to 6, especially for girls and more-able pupils, by:
  - raising the confidence and self-esteem of girls
  - increasing the level of challenge and pace in pupils' learning by effectively tailoring activities to closely match the needs and interests of pupils, especially the more-able
  - ensuring that pupils apply their literacy skills across the curriculum in meaningful ways.
  
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good by:
  - raising the expectations of what all pupils can achieve
  - using and building upon the already much improved practice in the school to increase the proportion of teaching that is exciting and inspiring
  - sharpen whole-school approaches to self-evaluation to ensure that adopted classroom approaches are having the intended impact
  - making certain that teacher's written feedback to pupils on how to improve their work is consistently clear and well defined.

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

<b>3</b>
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Over time, attainment at the end of Year 6 has varied significantly. In the 2011 national tests, the school's results in English and mathematics were below average, but much improved on previous low attainment. Current school information and inspection evidence show that, as teaching becomes more effective, attainment is still rising, progress is quickening and achievement gaps are closing. When approaches are more inventive, progress is faster and achievement and enjoyment boosted. Most current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach broadly average attainment

at the end of the year, with girls' attainment closing the gap with that of boys. However, girls sometimes lack the confidence to answer questions or to commit themselves to answer questions in lessons. The quality of learning is best in those lessons where there are high expectations of pupils to listen attentively, to work independently, to explain their ideas and solutions, and to record their thoughts. For example, pupils were required to read carefully about the process of embalming before expressing and recording their views as to why the Egyptians chose to use pyramids as tombs.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in the school's happy and friendly atmosphere and pupils' considerate relationships with each other and adults. Pupils report that staff are always on hand to share a worry or concern. Pupils behave well. Positive staff role models are making a key contribution to the pupils' grasp of right and wrong. Pupils understand well the benefits of eating healthily and keeping fit. They are keen to make a difference in their local community, for example, raising money for a nearby hospice. They have a good understanding of managing money with many pupils saving regularly in the school-based credit union cooperative. Although attendance is average, it is improving incrementally as a result of the effective steps taken by the school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There is evidence of improvement with some good teaching observed. The firm action taken to nurture the skills and talents of staff is resulting in a more consistent pattern of teaching that engages pupils imaginatively and stimulates their thinking. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were asked to imagine and picture the feelings and emotions of adults and children when they entered a Victorian workhouse. Initiatives to encourage pupils to think for themselves, to explain their thinking and work independently, are evident in the best lessons. Assessment practice is developing, but step-by-step

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

guidance to enable pupils to improve is not consistently provided, and assessment is not always used to effectively plan challenging tasks for more-able pupils.

The satisfactory curriculum is being systematically enriched and enlivened. Expanding the use of themes to link subjects together in more meaningful ways is helping to promote pupils’ interest, adding to their enjoyment. Opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills are sometimes limited.

Care, guidance and support are clear strengths of the school. There are some impressive examples in helping pupils overcome difficulties and barriers to their learning. The effective steps taken to encourage more regular attendance for all groups of pupils include some highly effective personalised family support. This results not only in improved attendance, but also significant improvements in the confidence, attitudes and achievement of pupils, including those who are potentially vulnerable.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, is ambitious and determined to quicken the drive to improve the quality and richness of learning. The headteacher has not flinched from taking difficult decisions to ensure better quality teaching. Patient and painstaking approaches are being used effectively by senior leaders to eradicate any inconsistencies. The improved quality of teaching is exploiting pupils’ enthusiasm and keenness to learn more successfully. This is in turn increasing staff confidence and skills and their willingness to take risks, for example, by using more imaginative approaches to inspire and excite pupils’ learning. As a result, good progress is becoming a more consistent feature of the best lessons, with reducing variation in pupils' attainment. A dedicated and thoughtful governing body holds the school to account and provides effective support. It demonstrates a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The influence of middle leaders is being diligently nurtured to enhance essential leadership skills and to sharpen self-evaluation. Good partnerships with the local church, local schools and local authority specialists all help to enrich the quality of learning.

Rigorous checks on pupils’ development are pinpointing where progress falls short of what is expected, although the actions taken to address shortfalls and to complete essential on-going analysis are inconsistent. Staff work diligently to ensure that all pupils share the same positive experiences. Pupils’ quickening progress demonstrates the school’s commitment to tackle discrimination and ensure that all achieve equally well. The school’s ‘open approaches’ are engaging parents and carers highly successfully, including those who sometimes find working with the school difficult.

Community cohesion is promoted well with a developing range of experiences for pupils of the diversity that exists globally and in the world around them. This includes helping to provide resources for a partner school in Tanzania. The school adopts good procedures for safeguarding, which fully meet requirements and include well developed quality assurance, such as excellent risk assessments.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

All children settle quickly and happily in the warm and welcoming environment. Children start in the nursery with skills well below those expected for their age, very often with weaknesses in speech and language. They make good progress overall, with many working towards the goals expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. However, the pattern of progress can be uneven. Progress in the Reception class is consistently good, whether in adult-led or child-initiated activities. A range of stimulating and engaging activities constantly motivates children's thinking, such as when an adult dressed as the wicked witch and excited the children to collect mini-beasts to mix into her potion. A strength in teaching for these older children is the systematic practising of the links between sounds and letters, which promotes early reading and writing skills very effectively. For example, a group of children were observed engrossed in picking letters from a tray to match a sound to form simple words on their boards. In nursery, progress is less strong because there are occasions when the demands made by adults could be higher. This can sometimes result in children initiating their own learning with too little purpose or activity, which does not demand sufficient self-control.

Effective leadership and management are evident in the robust and accurate observation and assessment of the children's development. Welfare requirements are fully met. Increasingly, the rigour of checks on the impact of activities on children's confidence and development is improving. Leaders' ambition is evident in the regular changes to improve the outdoor learning environment. The excellent engagement of parents and carers promotes their active involvement in their children's 'learning journey'.



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

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

**Views of parents and carers**

Just less than one-half of all parents and carers returned the questionnaire with their views of the school. This is well above the average level of returns. These views were extremely positive about the quality of experiences and enjoyment that the school provides. Almost all parents and carers appreciate that their children are kept safe. The inspectors’ findings support these views. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors judged behaviour to be good, saw some exemplary behaviour by older pupils in classrooms and observed teachers dealing with minor incidents highly effectively.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodhouse 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 198 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	48	49	51	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	50	45	47	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	40	56	58	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	39	58	60	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	42	54	56	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	45	49	51	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	42	54	56	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)	36	38	58	60	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	45	51	53	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	45	46	48	6	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	39	53	55	5	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	41	43	51	53	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	51	46	48	0	0	1	1

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 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](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.**



7 November 2011

Dear Pupils,

**Inspection of Woodhouse Community Primary School, Bishop Auckland, DL14 6QW**

I want to thank you all for the friendly welcome that you gave the inspection team when we visited to see how well you were learning. We really enjoyed our time talking to you.

Woodhouse is a satisfactory and steadily improving school, which has a number of positive features. We were really impressed with the excellent relationships your school has with your parents and carers and the way your staff constantly encourage and support you to do as well as you can. This is helping to improve your attitudes to school, keenness to learn and your attendance. We were pleased by your thoughtful behaviour and the good care taken of you. You clearly feel safe and happy because of this. You understand well the benefits that an active and healthy lifestyle can bring. You clearly take much pride in helping your school to improve.

The headteacher and the governing body are taking positive action to improve your school. This can be seen in your quickening rates of progress and your improving skills. I have asked the senior leaders to help you all make even faster progress, and achieve more by the end of Year 6, especially the girls and those of you who find learning easier than most. We have asked the school to improve the quality of teaching and add more checks to make certain those of you who can tackle more demanding work make faster progress and achieve more. We would like staff to use the information they have on how well you are doing to arrange activities, which can excite and interest you even more. We have also asked that you be given more opportunities to practise your literacy skills in all your subjects and that you are provided with more detailed help to improve when teachers mark your work.

You can all play your part by continuing to work as hard as you can and by telling your teachers if work is too easy or too hard.

All the very best for the future,

Yours sincerely,

Clive Petts  
Lead Inspector

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