

# Woolley Wood School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107180
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	377544
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Brian Padgett HMI

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	75
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ann Kilby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dean Linkhorn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Chaucer Road Sheffield S5 9QN
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2321278
<b>Fax number</b>	0114 2570269
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@woolleywood.sheffield.sch.uk

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## Introduction

Inspection team

Brian Padgett  
Freda Jackson

Her Majesty's Inspector  
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed all aspects of the school day. This included the arrival of pupils in the morning, lesson observations (10 in all) covering all classes, staff team meetings, observations of lunchtime and therapy sessions. Discussions were held with parents and carers, pupils, staff, members of the governing body and professionals from the health services working in the school. A wide range of documentation was examined including policies covering safeguarding and child protection, the school's development plans, assessments of pupils' progress and their records of achievement. Inspectors took account of the responses to the staff questionnaire and the 14 responses received to the parents' questionnaire.

## Information about the school

Woolley Wood is a special school for pupils of primary school age with complex learning difficulties. Most pupils come from Sheffield's northern wards. The main categories of pupils' learning needs are profound and multiple learning difficulty, severe learning difficulty and autistic spectrum condition. However, most pupils have additional learning needs of a physical and/or medical nature. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs except for some of the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, who undergo assessment of their learning needs having been referred by health and local education authorities.

Pupils come from very diverse minority ethnic backgrounds, much more so than the community at large. A much higher than average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals.

Over Easter 2012, the school moved to new, purpose-built accommodation, co-located with Mansel Primary School. Woolley Wood shares its reception and several other areas with Mansel. The new school provides on-site facilities for visiting health professionals and therapists.

The school has several awards including Artsmark (Gold) and the Activemark. It also has 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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. Pupils with a wide range of complex learning needs from diverse social and cultural backgrounds feel safe and happy here. The school is not yet outstanding but it has several outstanding features. It has the capacity to be outstanding with further improvements to teaching and learning.
- Pupils make good progress in their learning from their respective starting points. Behaviour of most pupils is excellent and pupils who have difficulty managing their behaviour make outstanding progress in doing so. The pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- The school benefits from good, clear-sighted leadership, effective at all levels. Staff performance is managed well and teachers and support staff demonstrate a total commitment to pupils’ care; safety and well-being and team-work amongst staff is exceptionally strong.
- The quality of teaching is good. Integration and equal opportunities are promoted well. Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils extremely well and fully understand their learning, social and emotional needs. However, pupils’ achievements are not recorded and used sufficiently effectively to ensure even better progress.
- The transfer of the school to its new site is proceeding smoothly and is being managed well. Understandably, it is too early yet to evaluate the impact of co-location with the mainstream school. However, Woolley Wood is making excellent use of its new therapy facilities, with a particularly good relationship with the physiotherapy service and enhanced provision for pupils.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - improving the recording of pupils' achievements and learning objectives to ensure that pupils' progress is more readily scrutinised for planning and monitoring purposes
  - improving, over time, pupils' access to a more natural outdoor environment for pupils to explore
  - where appropriate, ensuring that pupils' targets in their individual education plans include those for improving the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

The attainment of pupils ranges from the lowest levels of understanding to, approximately, the levels expected of pupils about to enter Key Stage 1. They have a wide range of learning needs and come from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. However, all pupils make the same good progress, most making the expected or better than expected progress across a range of subjects, particularly in developing communication skills, including reading and writing, where appropriate. They make outstanding progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, gaining greatly in independence and in their social skills. Nearly all parents and carers responding to the parent questionnaire and those who talked to inspectors spoke of the good progress their children made and their enjoyment of school. Individual pupil's profiles of attainment can be very uneven. This can be seen particularly with pupils with autistic spectrum conditions, where, although many read and write well, they do not always elect to do so because of the nature of their learning difficulties. Pupils with additional physical difficulties gain exceptionally from the opportunities provided by the hydrotherapy pool and rebound therapy programmes. For example, some wheelchair bound pupils learn to swim independently and all such pupils thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to extend their muscles and bodies outside the normal limits they experience.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage also make good progress and settle well into school. This enables those on assessment to have their needs accurately diagnosed by a range of professionals and allocated to the most appropriate school setting, whether at Woolley Woods or elsewhere.

### Quality of teaching

The school has developed an approach to teaching and learning where pupils choose activities across all areas of learning, in class and outside. Teachers provide and plan for more focused work, much of a sensory and creative nature, with groups and individuals in response to their interests and assessed learning needs. Staff demonstrate a shared and comprehensive knowledge of the pupils and excellent teamwork. The pupils learn to make choices for themselves and become more independent. Each day, before school, teaching teams get together in each class to

discuss the pupils and their needs. This makes teaching very responsive to the pupils' changing needs. However, although staff know pupils well, have high expectations of pupils and assess progress accurately, their recording of pupils' achievement is not sufficiently frequent to inform planning or monitoring for maximum progress. Also, the links between the pupils' objectives in their individual education plans and the core skills of reading, writing and mathematics are not sufficiently robust. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils recorded in the previous inspection report in 2009 have been maintained. Teachers and support staff, who fully reflect the cultural diversity of the pupils, have consistently positive and caring attitudes towards pupils. Their management of what is sometimes extremely challenging behaviour is highly effective. School staff are highly trained and they work very well with the many health professionals involved with the pupils, for example, in feeding pupils with gastric tubes. Their work with physiotherapists is outstanding, with clear benefits for pupils with limited mobility. The Early Years Foundation Stage staff work very closely with health professionals in the Primary Care and Acute Trusts and others in providing a non-clinical setting where accurate assessments of need can be made.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The behaviour and attitudes to learning of the majority of pupils are excellent, a view endorsed by nearly all parents and carers. Pupils of widely different needs are tolerant and respectful of each other as they work and play together. Despite, or because of, the broad diversity of cultures and backgrounds represented within the school, there have been no racial incidents or recorded instances of bullying. Pupils who have challenging behaviour as part of the nature of their learning difficulties make excellent progress in managing their behaviour. The skill of staff, the consistency of procedures and the support of the senior leadership team ensures such progress has been maintained even with the scale of change as the school moves from one site to another. Procedures to ensure the safety of pupils are robust and are becoming increasingly so as teething problems with the new site and new procedures are tested and refined.

Attendance is low in comparison with most mainstream schools. However, senior staff rigorously monitor attendance and the school can account in detail for each and every absence. Most absences, some of a long-term nature, occur when pupils are admitted into hospital. The presence of health facilities on-site helps towards reducing the time spent on visits to clinics and avoids disruption to pupils' education.

### **Leadership and management**

Leaders provide a clear direction and a coherent, shared philosophy for the development of the school. The work of the school, including the performance of staff, is rigorously monitored. These aspects are seen, for example, in the development of the school's consistent approach to teaching and learning. The transfer of the school to its new site is being managed very well, with no loss of quality and more opportunities for further improvement, such as the development of the outdoor areas to provide a more natural environment for pupils. As a consequence, the school's capacity to improve further is good. Equal opportunities for pupils are promoted effectively and demonstrated by the good progress of all

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groups and the absence of discrimination. Leadership responsibilities are delegated well and staff at all levels are effective and willingly take on responsibility. Leaders ensure that the governing body is well informed. Members of the governing body bring a wealth of experience and skills to their work. They have a programme of monitoring visits to school and minutes of meetings show both support and challenge for senior staff.

The leadership is committed to partnerships, some of which are relatively new, such as the relationship with Mansel Primary. Partnerships already in existence are strong, such as that between the school and parents and carers. The partnership between health professionals and the school, which is of particular importance, is good. For example, the health authorities ensure a nurse is on-site at all times. Other partnerships vary in extent and quality. The joint working with physiotherapy is exemplary and benefits pupils enormously. However, some parents are less than happy with the provision for other services, notably for speech and language therapy.

Arrangements to safeguard pupils and protect them from harm go above and beyond those seen in most schools. As is entirely proper with pupils of great vulnerability, leaders put pupils' safety and safeguarding as the highest priority.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [3a](#)).

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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



3 May 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Woolley Wood School, Sheffield, S5 0TG**

You may remember two inspectors visited your new school recently to see how well you were learning. I am writing to you to tell you what we decided. First, I want to say a big thank you for your friendliness during the inspection and a special thank you to the school council, who gave up their time to talk to me.

We think Woolley Wood is a good school and you are happy, safe and doing well. We were impressed by how well you behaved, how you got on together and how independent you are becoming. Your behaviour at dinner-time was very good and we could see just how much you enjoyed your food.

We judged that the school was in safe hands with Mr Linkhorn, Mrs Watson and the senior teachers. We were moved to see how very much your teachers and support staff cared for you and looked after you. They know you very well and they teach you well. We have left them with a few pointers so that their teaching can be even better and reach our top grade of outstanding.

Many of you enjoyed learning outdoors. We could see your teachers were introducing plants and apple trees to make the outdoors more natural. We hope, in time, the school will be able to develop the new grounds and replicate some of the grass and trees you left behind at your old school. For those of you in wheelchairs especially, the special pool and the trampoline gave you the chance to stretch your muscles and you seemed to really enjoy the chance to do this.

Of course, you are not on your own any longer because Woolley Woods is joined to Mansel Primary School. What a good opportunity to make new friends and to learn more about the world and to put all the skills you have learned to good use to help others and make their lives better. I hope you find the future exciting and full of interest.

Yours sincerely

Brian Padgett  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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