

Woodfield

Stoneleigh Road, Coventry, CV4 7AB

Inspection dates

25–26 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching does not consistently challenge all pupils during lessons and the resources available, including teaching assistants, are not always used to best effect.
- Recent improvements introduced by senior leaders in managing teaching and the ways in which literacy and numeracy skills are taught in other subjects have not yet had time to improve achievement.
- A few pupils' continued poor behaviour is not consistently managed by staff. Attendance is low, though improving due to a reduction in the number of temporary exclusions and close working with other agencies.
- The governing body has not challenged school leaders with sufficient urgency as to why achievement, the quality of teaching and behaviour and attendance are not improving faster.
- The school departments operate too separately. This limits the sharing of good practice and expertise on both sites and means that at transition times pupils take longer to settle.
- Not everyone who teaches literacy and numeracy has been trained sufficiently to do this effectively, in particular phonics.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders are clear about what needs to be done and have already identified a number of key actions to bring about improvement more quickly.
- The proportion of good and outstanding teaching is improving as teachers use the information they have about pupils' prior learning to better effect.
- Good and outstanding teaching was seen on both sites of the school and the new approach to the management of teaching and learning is helping leaders to improve them further.
- Behaviour in lessons is often good because of the good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils say they feel safe in school and their parents agree.
- The introduction of the new curriculum in Key Stage 3 and of work-related learning and functional skills programmes in Key Stage 4 is enthusing students and their attendance at these sessions is high.
- The school works very well with other agencies to protect the wellbeing and promote the achievement of its most vulnerable pupils and those who have additional special educational needs.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons of which eight were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons, looked at pupils' work and heard them read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors, local authority advisers and the school's staff, including senior leaders and outreach staff. Inspectors had telephone discussions with a small number of parents.
- Inspectors took account of 13 responses to the online questionnaires (Parent View) as well as questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including: the school's planning for improvement; records relating to behaviour and attendance; the school's safeguarding documentation; and the data that the school keeps as to pupils' current progress and achievement from their starting points.

Inspection team

Susan Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Russell Hinton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This community special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties is based on two sites approximately six miles apart in Coventry. Primary-aged pupils and secondary students with the highest level of need attend the Stoneleigh Road site, while the main secondary department and a small outreach team are based at Hawthorn Lane.
- Almost all students have a statement of special educational need and the majority have one or more additional needs such as dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorders, learning difficulties or medical needs in addition to their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. 'The Spinney', based on the Stoneleigh site, caters for up to 25 students aged 14 to 16 who have the most severe behavioural, emotional or social difficulties, providing very small group or one-to-one teaching.
- Pupils enter the school at any point in their education; many have had disrupted schooling before arriving at Woodfield, often having been excluded from their previous schools or been persistent absentees.
- The secondary department caters solely for boys although there are a small number of girls in the primary department. The very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very high proportion is eligible for pupil premium; the proportion in the care of the local authority is also high.
- A few pupils transfer back into mainstream school or, occasionally, are dual registered with other schools and are supported by the school's outreach service, which also provides support and advice to mainstream schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that, when planning their lessons, all teachers take account of pupils' current levels and targets, not only in their subjects but also in literacy and numeracy
 - improving teachers' questioning and the opportunities pupils have to think and learn more independently in lessons
 - ensuring that all available teaching assistant time is used to best effect in all parts of lessons, including when the class is taught together, so that pupils' learning is enhanced
 - providing further training for teachers and teaching assistants in literacy and numeracy, particularly in developing pupils' skills in spelling and in blending sounds into words (phonics).
- Ensure that the leadership at all levels, including the governing body, accelerates the pace and consistency of improvements by:
 - rigorously checking on how well the initiatives it introduces are improving pupils' progress and standards
 - continuing to use the new approach to the management of teachers' performance so that teaching improves further across the school
 - implementing plans to develop the leadership structure, the role of middle managers and the application of their expertise to monitor and improve standards across the whole school
 - ensuring that the data held on pupils' progress and achievements is compared to nationally expected progress and used to set challenging targets to close the gap between them and others of their age.

■ Improve pupils' achievement and progress from starting points on entry by:

- working closely with parents to involve them more in their children's learning and to improve attendance
- rigorously monitoring pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and maximising the opportunities that they have to apply and develop these across the curriculum and through the use of technology.

■ Improve pupils' behaviour and safety by:

- working further with relevant agencies, parents and pupils to improve attendance so that it is at least in line with that expected for primary and secondary schools
 - ensuring that staff, parents and pupils are clear about what is not acceptable behaviour in lessons or in the playground for everyone, including how different behaviours will be dealt with, so that temporary exclusions are reduced further and any inconsistencies in the ways behaviour is dealt with are quickly identified and eradicated.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards are rising by the end of Year 11 but achievement is not yet good because, throughout the school, not enough pupils make more than the expected progress from their starting points on entry. However, the proportion is increasing and almost a third now make more than the expected progress in subjects such as mathematics and English.
- Progress is similar for all groups of pupils but is adversely affected by attendance, particularly in 'The Spinney' where not all pupils attend school full-time and in the secondary school where individual pupils' poor behaviour results in several temporary exclusions for them.
- Pupils achieve a range of qualifications and all achieve at least one GCSE or equivalent at grades A* to G. An increasing proportion achieves a number of qualifications, including individuals who gain grade C from very low starting points on entry.
- Where individual pupils are dual registered or move back into mainstream school, their transition, improved behaviour and achievement are supported well both in school and in their other placement. This is because of good partnership working and joint planning, including effective support from the school's outreach service.
- Pupils who are the most vulnerable and those who have additional special educational needs achieve as well as others in the school; individual pupils sometimes make good or even better progress because the school works well to form a 'team around the child' with other agencies and works hard to follow the advice they are given.
- Many pupils have very low levels on entry compared to others of their age, linked to the disruptions in their schooling and their specific needs. They are often disaffected on arrival with certain subjects such as reading, writing and mathematics. One said, 'They've made me see I can do it, so now I try, even if it's hard I try.'
- Improved use of data and improved teaching and attendance mean that the proportion who are making good progress is improving, but is not yet in line with those with similar starting points nationally. In Year 6 and Year 9, higher proportions than before are making expected progress and a few pupils are exceeding this in English and mathematics, particularly in reading.
- The introduction of basic skills classes in the secondary school and more opportunities for independent learning in many classes supports pupils in applying their skills and seeing their relevance.
- A more structured approach to reading and working out the meaning of the words means that the youngest pupils gain confidence in reading. They say that they enjoy it and most make a good attempt to sound out or work out the meaning of new words, although one or two are too quick to ask for help.
- Older pupils read more fluently and with expression from their touch-screen notepads than from their reading books, but a few are too dependent on others for working out the meaning of new words because they have too few ways to do this themselves.
- Pupils are clear about the progress they are making and what they have to do to improve.

They say that the way teachers mark their work helps them to know this, although they do not always find their homework helpful or interesting.

- A strong work-related programme means that pupils who may have previously rejected school and learning become interested in either taking qualifications in Woodfield or subsequently in college.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently good across the school. This is because not all teachers plan lessons which take account of different levels and needs, particularly in the whole-class parts of lessons.
- Pupils are not sufficiently challenged in the whole-class part of lessons. Teachers have often thought out carefully how to involve lower achievers but do not adjust the challenge for the higher-achieving or middle-achieving pupils.
- Teachers' skilful questioning is a strength in the best lessons, such as in an excellent English lesson in the primary school. The questioning and follow-up work was carefully adjusted to each pupil's targets and promoted their understanding of others' feelings and emotions. Carefully thought out independent work evaluating someone else's informal letter enabled them to understand what needed to be included in such a piece of work and they celebrated the achievements of others.
- When pupils' learning in lessons is less than good, it is often because the task does not initially engage pupils' interest sufficiently. Teachers do not check sufficiently through questioning and other ways on pupils' understanding and adjust the pace of the lesson accordingly.
- Too often the available support, such as teaching assistant time, is focused on managing behaviour rather than supporting learning, even when behaviour is not an issue. Invariably, teachers' planning does not make it clear enough what each different group will learn, so support staff are unsure of their role.
- Teachers make good use of the school's marking policy to give valued feedback to pupils on their written work; this includes what is good and what they need to do improve. Its consistent use is testament to the leadership's determination to make aspects of teaching more consistent.
- The large majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire are positive about the teaching but they and pupils are concerned about the inconsistency of homework. Inspectors agree that homework is inconsistently used to support pupils' progress and further parental involvement and understanding of their child.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Although pupils' behaviour is not yet good, it is improving, with 30% fewer temporary exclusions over the last academic year and similar reductions in incidents.
- The large majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, but a few need more constant supervision so that they do not disrupt the learning of others. This happens

particularly when the teaching does not engage their interest or does not take sufficient account of their differing needs.

- In response to the questionnaires, a significant minority of staff expressed concerns around behaviour and the consistency of its management. Pupils also indicated that some teachers were 'fairer' or 'you know what you are meant to do' with them. The leadership has worked hard to promote high expectations of behaviour and improve staff confidence in dealing with this.
- The rewards system is used appropriately by most staff although opportunities are lost in some lessons for pupils to reflect on their own behaviour and how deserving they are of points and rewards.
- A range of enrichment and work-related activities, including charity work, residential opportunities and work experience, support well pupils' social skills, ability to work in a team and awareness of others' needs.
- The large majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire indicated that behaviour was good and well managed, and that bullying was not an issue at the school. However, individual parents were concerned as to how much training newer staff received to deal with pupils' varying needs.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber- and homophobic bullying. They feel safe at the school and most feel that their teachers listen to them. A strong personal, social and health education programme helps to promote pupils' ability to deal with different social situations and take account of the needs of others.
- The school is working hard to improve attendance through the introduction of new courses and vocational opportunities that excite pupils and through closer work with parents. These new programmes are well attended by pupils and attendance, although still low, is moving towards that expected.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher has a clear and ambitious vision for the school, which is supported by governors and his leadership team.
- Recent and proposed changes to the structure of the leadership team, and for the revision of middle managers' roles, reflect the determination to move the school towards more consistently good practice. At the heart of this is functioning more clearly as a whole school rather than two separate schools by drawing on the strengths of all departments and staff interchangeably.
- Improvement planning generally identifies the right priorities but lacks sharp enough timelines and sufficiently clear links to pupil progress and outcomes. School self-evaluation is accurate although it does not always lead to speedy enough action. This is because the leadership and governing body sometimes debate what to do for rather too long.
- Good progress has been made in revising the arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning and performance management. Staff targets and responsibilities are now much clearer

and a spirit of self-reflection and accountability are being promoted.

- The revisions to the curriculum mean that it is now much more focused on key skills and helping pupils to link their learning. This is beginning to pay off for primary-age pupils and at Key Stage 3. In Key Stage 4, the partnership working with other providers and colleges and the wider range of courses is re-engaging some students and preparing them more successfully for the next steps of their education.
 - Safeguarding procedures are robust; the school works very well with other agencies and is quick to note any concerns and to support pupils whose welfare is at risk.
 - Data is now carefully analysed and its implications considered although some timescales for checking on actions or implementing them are too long. There are good examples of teachers thinking carefully about how to engage pupils from different groups and backgrounds, but this is not yet consistent in all planning and lessons.
 - The school is keen to work well with parents and has many conventional ways of doing this. Parents are positive about its work. However, the school does not regularly consult parents for their viewpoints, for example to help shape policies, and pupils themselves have limited ways of influencing these.
 - The school receives good support from the local authority and this is helping the leadership to bring about improvements in achievement and teaching.
 - The school provides a good range of enrichment opportunities, including sports leadership courses for primary pupils, residential visits, overseas visits and clubs. These and good use of local visits and the community support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - is knowledgeable about the school's work and provides challenge about aspects of the school's management, such as the purchase of resources
 - has a sound understanding of strengths and weaknesses but is not sufficiently challenging about the timelines for improvement and the ways in which performance management is bringing this about
 - is currently exploring with the headteacher how the pupil premium is being used and how this might be used even more effectively.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	131574
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	402480

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Lockett
Headteacher	Mick Chilvers
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2010
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