

Woodlands Infant School

Woodlands Lane, Shirley, Solihull, B90 2PX

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Achievement in both the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 are outstanding. They make outstanding progress from their starting points to reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils develop a high level of independence and show great enjoyment in their learning.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers throughout the school have extremely high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. They provide tasks that are very well matched to their individual abilities so that all groups of pupils are appropriately supported and challenged.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils respond very quickly to adults' instructions. They work very well together and support each other. They have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and say that adults support them very well.
- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and her team, together with their relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching, has resulted in the dramatic rise in pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- The school is a beacon of good practice in all areas of its work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, five of which were seen together with the headteacher. They also made a number of further short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and with staff, including subject leaders. Conversations also took place with parents and carers.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at policies, self-evaluation and development planning, monitoring records, information about pupils' progress, safeguarding documents, and samples of pupils' work.
- The views of 37 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account, along with 28 responses to the staff questionnaires. The school's own recent survey of parent views was also taken into account together with phone calls from two parents.

Inspection team

Mary Davis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Onyon

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than average-sized infant school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average, while the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is average, the largest groups being of Indian and Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed forces serving overseas, is lower than in most schools.
- Not all the children who attend the school's nursery transfer to Reception, the majority of children transferring to Reception from other providers. Some children have had no previous nursery education.
- The school provides extended care facilities during the school day as well as supervised activities before and after school. These are managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A very few pupils currently attend alternative off-site provision at the Craig Croft Education Centre.
- A new leader of the governing body has been recently appointed and approximately a third of its members are new to their role.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move more teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that the pace of learning is sustained throughout all lessons and that teachers quickly provide pupils with a new challenge once they show understanding.
- Build the capacity and cohesion of the governing body to ensure that they are able to provide effective challenge and support for the school's leaders in driving further improvements.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children enter the Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding that are typically below the levels expected for their age, particularly in numeracy. They make good progress during this year, developing good personal and social skills, playing and cooperating well together. Children joining the Reception class also enter with below average skills but make exceptional progress and, in 2012, children began in Year 1 above nationally expected levels in all areas of learning.
- Pupils continue to make rapid progress during Key Stage 1, building on the skills that have been well established in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In 2012, the results of the national screening test for reading for pupils in Year 1 were well above average, with over 90% attaining the expected level. By the end of Key Stage 1, for the last two years, pupils' attainment has been significantly above average in reading and writing and mathematics. All pupils make at least expected progress during this key stage and the large majority make much better than expected progress.
- Pupils in all years show pleasure and enjoyment in reading. Reading skills are very well promoted and quickly established in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the end of Key Stage 1 even the weakest readers are able to read with fluency and expression.
- From an early age pupils develop independence, able to make decisions about their learning and take responsibility for their progress and behaviour. They relish the challenges set for them and show great enjoyment in their tasks, rising to teachers' extremely high expectations. For example, in a Reception lesson observed, children discussed confidently the variety of 'extinction theories' related to dinosaurs, and made decisions based on their own opinions. They use advanced technical vocabulary as a matter of course, repeating and practising unfamiliar words.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make exceptional progress as the result of the swift identification of their needs and the very-well-focused support they receive, which is rigorously checked to ensure it is having an impact on their learning and well-being.
- The small number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieved better than this group nationally in last years' national tests. The well-targeted pupil premium funding has enabled this group to benefit from extra support, including expert one-to-one tuition, and this is resulting in the gap closing between their performance and that of their peers.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in their communication skills as a result of teachers' strong focus on the use of key words, developing vocabulary and promoting literacy skills. This ensures that these pupils develop their language skills quickly and are fully included. Pupils from all minority ethnic heritages make similar progress to others.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Lesson observations during the inspection confirmed leaders' judgements that all teaching is at least good and a significant proportion is consistently outstanding.
- Throughout the school, teachers' strong focus on developing independent learning skills and their high expectations of what their pupils can achieve, results in rapid progress and pupils' evident enjoyment of their achievements. For example, in an outstanding Year 1 mathematics lesson observed, pupils showed great excitement as they realised that they could solve division

problems using increasingly difficult numbers. Here the teacher built skilfully on their learning, first using piles of paper cups to enable pupils to visualise the numbers and then challenging them to divide increasingly complex numbers independently, choosing the resources they needed to help them.

- Teachers use information about pupils' progress very well to enable them to plan tasks and resources that match pupils' individual needs, so that all are appropriately challenged and supported. Teaching assistants provide excellent support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, knowing their pupils well and providing encouragement to build confidence, while promoting their independence.
- Most teachers ensure rapid progress throughout each lesson. However in a very small minority of lessons observed, the pace of learning occasionally slowed because a task had gone for too long without a new challenge being set.
- Teachers' written marking of pupils' work is exemplary and is appropriate to their understanding. They regularly provide opportunities for pupils to read the advice provided and set themselves targets or success criteria for their next piece of work. For example in an outstanding literacy lesson, pupils were asked to reflect on the advice they had been given when writing a diary about a day in the snow. They then identified how they could improve their own writing as they wrote a diary from the point of view of Prince Charming after the ball where he met Cinderella, developing their creativity and imagination.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' exemplary behaviour in lessons makes a strong contribution to their learning. They respond quickly to teachers' signals to listen. They work and cooperate well when following the well-established practice of discussing their learning with their partner.
- Behaviour around the school is calm and orderly and inspectors were particularly impressed with the way pupils sat quietly in assembly listening to classical music while they waited for it to begin.
- Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare and that adults support and care for them very well. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying appropriate to their age. They say that they follow the 'kindness charter' and that pupils from different backgrounds get on well together.
- Adults ensure children's safety at all times. For example in the childcare provided during the school-day, children were well supervised watching from a safe distance while they were shown how to cook safely and learned why they had to be careful. The school's extensive survey of the views of parents and carers shows that all parents think that their children are kept safe and staff and pupils agree.
- Pupils also have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe, older pupils undertaking risk assessments before a science task. The 'golden rules' which include values such as consideration and kindness are a strong focus throughout all activities and pupils have a clear understanding of what these values mean.
- Pupils who have behavioural difficulties are managed very well and external agencies are used to provide support, including the use of alternative off-site provision. The school regularly checks on the attendance and progress made by pupils who attend this provision. As a result, the

school can provide strong evidence that the behaviour of these pupils has improved over time.

- The Child and Family Worker provides support for pupils and their families whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and has been effective in ensuring pupils' well-being and promoting regular attendance, which is above average.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsible roles, through the school council, the eco-committee and selling the eggs laid by the school's hens. Pupils plan and deliver celebration assemblies, and children in Reception frequently take charge of signalling to others to be quiet and listen to instructions.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The inspirational headteacher has been single-minded in her vision to raise pupils' achievement and the quality of the schools' provision for all pupils. She is very well supported by her senior team and by subject leaders. All staff share her vision for the school.
- Processes for checking on the quality of teaching are carried out rigorously and involve leaders at all levels. This has resulted in inadequate teaching being eradicated and all teachers improving their practice through well-focused training and the sharing of good practice across the school. Particularly effective has been the pairing of teachers in each year group enabling joint planning and teachers new to the profession being extremely well supported, including through being able to observe outstanding teaching.
- The setting of targets for teachers and teaching assistants is managed well with targets monitored and training needs identified. These processes are linked appropriately to salary progression.
- Pupil progress is tracked with the same rigour enabling under-achievement to be quickly identified and well-focused support to be provided and its effectiveness checked on. For example, when recent checks showed that Year 2 pupils were not making accelerated progress in mathematics, leaders, together with Year 2 teachers, decided to group these pupils by ability in order to challenge the most-able more effectively. Their progress was checked again and now pupils of all abilities are making better than expected progress.
- The range of subjects pupils study is innovative and exciting and fully promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Philosophy is an integral part of pupils' daily learning, promoting social and moral values and their ability to think and to make their own decisions confidently. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are very well promoted across all subjects and pupils particularly enjoy the challenge of 'Deep Sea spelling' each week. Dance, art and music are an important element of each topic and the partnership with a school in Nepal has been of benefit to pupils from both schools.
- Parents and carers speak warmly of the ways in which they are involved in their child's learning, including through the weekly diaries, which not only inform them of what their child has been learning, but also provides ideas to work on together at home. The school encourages Dads and Grandads to be involved in school through inviting them to support their children in the recent 'train' topic. This included accompanying the Reception class on a picnic, travelling by train.
- The childcare provision is well-managed and provides a caring and safe environment where children are stimulated with interesting activities and encouraged to think for themselves.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for the school. It provides opportunities for

professional development of staff and for members of the governing body. A close partnership also exists between the infant and junior schools ensuring a smooth transition, but also enables good practice to be shared across both schools. The partnership with Nepal has resulted in leaders adopting Nepalese methods of teaching handwriting, and has raised standards.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors support the headteacher well in her focus on raising achievement through improving the quality of teaching and regularly take part in lesson observations and discussions with subject leaders. Governors undertake appropriate training and are keen to improve their effectiveness further. They know the school well, having a clear understanding of performance data enabling them to compare the school with those nationally. Governors check that pupil premium funding is used to ensure that support, such as one-to-one tuition, leads to improved outcomes for these pupils. They ensure that safeguarding meets current requirements and that all staff are suitably trained to carry out their duties including those related to child-protection. They understand their responsibilities regarding the setting of targets for teachers and linking this to salary progression. Governors recognise the need to build their capacity and cohesion as a governing body further in order to ensure that they are fully able to hold the school to account and support the headteacher effectively in her drive for improvement.

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	104053
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	404921

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Hodgson
Headteacher	Sandra Logan
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2011
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