

# Woodlands

Packington Lane, Coleshill, Birmingham, B46 3JE

## Inspection dates

26–27 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The vast majority of pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, achieve well. Progress in communication, and literacy, including matching letters and sounds, is good.
- Children in the Nursery make excellent progress achieving very well in each area of learning.
- The achievements of pupils in the sixth form have improved. They achieve well and have effective opportunities to develop vocational skills.
- Mostly good teaching means that pupils make at least good progress in their activities. Learning usually moves at a good pace and communication aids are used well to give pupils a voice.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are safe and secure at school.
- Pupils benefit from exciting learning experiences and there are many additional visits that engage them well.
- The vast majority of parents are rightly pleased with their child's education.
- Pupils are well cared for. Good quality therapies contribute well to their health, well-being and learning.
- Through regular monitoring and efficient planning, the governing body makes sure that money is spent well for the benefit of all groups of pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for additional funding.
- The headteacher has a clear vision and is strongly supported by the senior leaders. There is an effective focus on improving the performance of staff through regular high quality training.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Teachers do not always plan tasks and resources that fully meet the needs and abilities of all pupils in the class.
- There are too few opportunities, particularly at lunchtimes, for pupils in wheelchairs to choose to go outside with other pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons, most of them jointly with senior leaders. In addition the inspector made a few short visits to different sessions to observe pupils' activities.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the school council and the Chair of the Governing Body. An inspector also had a telephone conversation with a local authority representative.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' progress, planning and monitoring information, safeguarding procedures and pupils' books and files of work.
- Inspectors took account of the 12 responses to the online survey (Parent View) and spoke to three parents by telephone. Questionnaires were received from 53 staff members.

## Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Lawley

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Woodlands is a school for pupils with moderate, severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. About half of pupils have additional special educational needs including autism spectrum disorders or physical impairments.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked-after children and pupils with a parent in the armed forces) is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average and most speak English at home.
- The school has grown since the last inspection. It has a wide catchment area and the vast majority of pupils travel to school by bus or taxi.
- No alternative offsite provision is used by the school. A small proportion of pupils have opportunities to integrate into mainstream schools for short sessions each week supported by Woodlands staff.
- A few teachers in the sixth form are from the local college. They attend to teach specific vocational skills.
- The school has integrated provision to provide for pupils' educational, health and physical care needs. This includes on-site physiotherapy, speech therapy and hydrotherapy.

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

- Improve the proportion of outstanding teaching across the school by:
  - ensuring that teachers plan tasks to meet the individual needs of each pupil
  - make better use of resources that match pupils' abilities.
- Work closely with pupils who are wheelchair users, and their parents, to devise more exciting and relevant opportunities during the lunch break, including outdoor activities.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

**is good**

- All groups of pupils, including those with additional special needs as well as those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well during their time at Woodlands. As a result they make good progress, achieving particularly well in communication and literacy because of the high focus placed on this area.
- The high emphasis on improving pupils' personal development, self esteem and confidence is evident in the way pupils are encouraged to make decisions and choices about their activities. They regularly respond to questions, offer opinions and get involved in charity fund-raising activities.
- The children in the Nursery benefit from very high quality provision which helps them to make rapid and sustained progress from the moment they start school. This was evident as they eagerly developed early literacy and numeracy skills as they counted 'how many children' and looked for their own names. They made choices, played with high quality toys and resources, shared books with adults and followed instructions extremely well.
- Younger pupils make good progress in recognising initial sounds in words. They join in eagerly with linking letters and sounds, giving them a good understanding of early reading and writing. They show that they can recognise their own initial letters, and often those of other pupils.
- Older students used their voices or their communication aids very well to talk to an inspector about their school. They said that they really enjoy school and think that they are doing well. They explained proudly how they attain Entry Level qualifications in Year 11. The oldest students in the sixth form benefit from very good facilities and opportunities to develop their vocational skills. They are well prepared for their futures as they learn to use local facilities, shop within a budget and cook their own meals.
- Just occasionally learning dips in a very few classes because there are too few planned tasks or resources to meet the range of needs and abilities. At such times pupils often sit for too long listening to the teacher and do not do enough work in the time allowed.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve well because of their full inclusion and additional staffing which helps them to succeed. As a result, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make the same good progress as other pupils within the school.
- The majority of parents are rightly pleased with their children's progress. 'My son is receiving a fantastic experience at Woodlands, and he has consequently made good progress,' commented a parent.

### The quality of teaching

**is good**

- Good teaching is evident across the school. In the best lessons, teachers provide relevant tasks and exciting and appropriate resources that engage pupils, help to move them to their next steps and keep their interest. This was particularly evident in Years 7 to 9 where excellent teaching and high quality activities and resources resulted in outstanding achievement in literacy. Different planning for pupils of differing abilities in these classes was excellent enabling all groups of pupils to modify their play script.

- Tasks are almost always well planned and organised. The vast majority of teachers have high expectations and challenge pupils to do more work and to improve. Just occasionally too little work and too few resources are planned to meet each pupils' individual needs and abilities. At these times pupils sit and watch for too long, and do not have opportunities to take part actively in decision making. As a result the pace of their learning dips.
- Pupils' achievements are accurately recorded, often by observing their learning and noting outcomes, and sometimes through photographs. Records of achievement, including for the youngest children in the Nursery, are of a good quality showing a comprehensive record of past work.
- Questioning is a key focus of good lessons, helping to improve pupils' language, communication and thinking skills. At these times, skilled teachers frequently extend pupils' understanding by challenging them to find answers for themselves. For example, in Years 7, 8 and 9 the pace of pupils learning increased because of quick-fire questions that resulted in them working at a fast rate to search their text for ideas about how to describe different characters.
- Teachers make effective use of exciting projects to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through stories, songs and rhymes. Younger children, for example, enjoyed listening to 'Handa's Surprise,' drawing and painting pictures of the different animals and fruit in the story. Regular celebrations of different cultures are a key feature in many classes, such as Chinese New Year or Divali feasts. Pupils enjoy music and benefit from experiences such as African drumming or singing in the choir.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' enthusiasm for school is evident in the way they arrive eagerly each day, checking the video of past visits and activities on the screen and taking a moment to see what will be next. They are keen to join in with all the activities and engage with their friends.
- Pupils say they feel safe because everyone at the school is kind and there is always someone to help them. They say this makes them feel secure at school and their parents agree. Their enjoyment of school life is evident in their rising attendance which is above that found in most similar schools.
- Pupils get on well with each other. No evidence of any bullying was seen during the inspection and none is evident in the school's records. The school council told inspectors that there is absolutely no bullying and that any misbehaviour is quickly dealt with by staff.
- Older pupils help younger ones and a few pupils have 'wheelchair licences' which means they can help those pupils who use wheelchairs to join in with activities, although opportunities for children in wheelchairs to play outside are sometimes limited.
- All pupils showed high levels of independence in the dining hall, enjoying healthy lunches while chatting with their friends.
- Pupils have a clear awareness of right and wrong. They say people at school are kind. They understand the importance of helping others and this is evident in the way they regularly raise money for different charities.
- There is a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour and there are examples of pupils,

who have difficulties with their emotional and social skills, improving their behaviour because of specific targets and clearly structured approaches.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- The school has successfully maintained good teaching and achievement despite several changes to the senior leadership team over the past three years. Leaders have extended and enriched the well-presented learning environment so it meets pupils' needs well. They have made effective use of the 'Teachers' Standards,' showing total commitment to improving teaching and enabling staff to develop their skills and seek promotion.
- Leaders have made sure all staff receive high levels of training, much of which is also shared by governors, and they have introduced a wide range of additional experiences for pupils. For example they have opened up opportunities for inclusion into mainstream schools where possible. Links with other schools and colleges have increased and some college teachers now teach in the sixth form, extending opportunities for vocational training.
- Leaders at all levels are fully involved in improving teaching and promoting excellence. A very strong emphasis on supporting pupils' individual needs means that pupils do well whatever their difficulties. For example the pupils with challenging behaviour have regular opportunities to take 'time out' of lessons and alternative opportunities are provided for them. Those with visual or hearing difficulties benefit from the high quality sensory rooms, exploring lights and sounds.
- Performance is effectively checked by the headteacher, senior leaders and governors. As a result, leaders have an accurate view of how well the school is doing. Observations of teaching by school leaders, supported by the local authority, are accurate and are helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- The local authority has a clear view of the school and gives effective support, especially in training staff, helping to improve teaching and managing and interpreting information about pupils' achievements.
- The school promotes positive relations with parents, other schools and local support services.
- Leaders make sure that all pupils have equal opportunities as demonstrated by full inclusion. They have successfully developed the outdoor area to accommodate the wide range of pupils' needs although a few parents rightly feel their children, who are wheelchair users, could join in more often with outdoor play. No evidence of discrimination was seen during the inspection and none was evident in records.
- Safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements.

### **■ The governance of the school:**

- The governing body gives clear direction to the school, promoting values in which pupils thrive. Governors are regular visitors and are very supportive of leaders. They evaluate the school's strengths and areas for improvement, receiving regular updates and reports. They fully understand the importance of managing the performance of staff and allocate sufficient funding to good quality training to see that teaching continues to improve. They manage the school's finances very well and make sure additional money allocated for the support of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium benefits those pupils. Governors understand the importance of improving the quality of teaching and good teachers are rewarded through the school's performance management structure. Any underperformance is tackled through

additional training, team support and regular monitoring.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131521
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402474

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2-19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	134
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	25
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Wilf Woodhouse
<b>Headteacher</b>	Iain Paterson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01675 463590
<b>Fax number</b>	01675 463584
<b>Email address</b>	Admin7047@welearn365.com

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