

Woodside Primary School

Jones Road, Goffs Oak, Waltham Cross, EN7 5JS

Inspection dates 9–10 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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 is not yet consistently good across the school with the result that pupils' achievement is not yet consistently good.
- In some classes, teachers' expectations of what pupils' can do are not sufficiently high to bring about improvement in the lesson.
- Teachers do not always provide activities which challenge pupils to extend and deepen their learning, particularly in mathematics.
- Teachers' marking does not always inform pupils how well they are doing and how they can improve their work to move on to the next steps in their learning.
- The tracking of pupils' progress is not yet sufficiently robust to identify where pupils are not making enough progress.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor learning provision is dirty and in need of repair.
- The school's self-evaluation and improvement plan do not prioritise areas requiring improvement.
- Governors are not sufficiently clear about their responsibility to challenge leaders about the school's performance. Consequently, they have not been aware that pupils are not making good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and recently appointed senior leaders have made a positive start to improving English and mathematics.
- Children in the Nursery make a good start to their learning journey.
- Pupils are well behaved and have a positive attitude to their learning. They enjoy school and appreciate taking responsibilities.
- Relationships between adults and pupils and among pupils are very positive.
- Arrangements for checking the performance of teachers have been strengthened, and staff have ambitious targets to work towards.
- Workshops for parents help them to gain a better understanding of what their children are learning and how they are being taught.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited every class, including the Nursery, at least twice, observing 16 lessons. Some joint observations were carried out with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held discussions with one of the Chairs of the Governing Body, the School's Improvement Partner, the headteacher and senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work and the quality of teachers' marking. They listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of a range of documentary evidence, including the school's own tracking record of the progress of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, documents relating to safeguarding, the school improvement plan and the self-evaluation.
- Inspectors took account of parents' views in the playground, in a personal interview, email information and the 69 responses to the online Parent View website.

Inspection team

Gillian Bosschaert, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Margaret Louisy

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school with a nursery.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are very few who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well below the national average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and pupils with a parent in the armed forces.
- Two thirds of the children who attend the Nursery transfer to the Reception class.
- The headteacher and senior leaders are relatively new to their roles.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress for pupils at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good in all classes and pupils make good progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers have higher expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving and that these expectations are reflected in the level of challenge provided in lessons
 - adults use questioning which will help pupils to develop logical thinking
 - work is matched more closely to pupils' abilities, especially in mathematics in the Reception class and Key Stage 1
 - more pupils are enabled to reach the higher levels in the end-of-year tests by offering more independent activities to stretch their thinking, especially in mathematics
 - marking is appropriate and rigorous, and pupils are given more time in lessons to respond to teachers' comments and make improvements to their work
 - the good practice which already exists in the school is shared so that teachers can learn from each other.
- Improve the quality of the outside provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that it helps to develop children's early reading and writing, their creativity and their mathematical skills.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by ensuring that:
 - the school's self-evaluation provides a more accurate picture of the school's effectiveness
 - the school improvement plan is strategic and prioritises actions accurately
 - leaders and managers with whole-school responsibility use progress information to quickly identify and intervene where pupils are underachieving.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Children start at the school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are in line with those which are typical for their age. Pupils' progress varies; it is good in some year groups and requires improvement in others. At the end of Year 6, in 2012, standards were broadly average in English and mathematics. Standards have been higher in previous years.
- In some classes, pupils' progress is inconsistent because work is too easy and because teachers do not find out what pupils already know and use this information to plan lessons.
- Progress in writing is improving as a result of training for teachers in phonics (the sounds that letters make) which has been extended to teachers in Years 3 and 4. However, there are still too few opportunities for children in the Reception class to develop their speaking, listening and early writing skills and for older pupils to develop their writing in subjects other than English throughout the school.
- Pupil premium funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is used by the school to provide additional support for these pupils. They make good progress in English and mathematics. There is little difference in the standards they reach compared with other pupils in the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they benefit from well-focused support. They reach standards which are higher than similar pupils nationally.
- Reading is improving due to changes in the way that reading is promoted in the school. An online software program is successfully encouraging boys to access more books. Links with a local specific learning difficulties base has assisted the school to help parents understand how to listen to their children read at home. It also provided a list of suitable books to engage the interest of boys, which has helped to bring about improvement in reading.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is too variable in the Reception class and Key Stage 1, with the result that pupils do not make enough progress. This is especially the case in mathematics, where pupils are working below their ability.
- Work is not always matched to the different abilities of pupils, particularly the middle-ability learners. In some classes, teachers' expectations are not high enough, with the result that pupils do not make enough progress during the lesson because the work does not take account of what they already know. Questioning is not open-ended enough to help pupils be creative in their answers.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work for the current year shows that marking is inconsistent and does not always provide enough information for pupils to improve their work. Standards are not high enough and poor presentation and grammar are often accepted. There are not enough opportunities for dialogue between pupils and teachers in the marking, or opportunities for corrections to be made.

- The teaching is good in the Nursery and Key Stage 2. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their work with each other. They share ideas using 'talk partners', which helps them to clarify their thoughts. As a result, they make good progress. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are high, and work is set at the appropriate level.
- In the best classes teachers question pupils well. For example, good questioning, in a science lesson on shadows, challenged pupils to describe, improve and qualify their explanations of opaque, transparent and translucent. Rather than accept the first answers given, the teacher questioned until pupils were clear in their understanding of the words. This helped pupils to expand their thinking and understanding and learn from one another.
- Teaching assistants generally make a positive contribution to the lesson or to the groups with which they are working. However, this is not always the case. At times, they sit for too long listening to the teacher without being actively involved in supporting pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They listen carefully and are eager to learn. However, sometimes, opportunities are lost to capture this enthusiasm because adults are not flexible enough or do not allow pupils to research for themselves.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in and around the school is good. Relationships are strong and pupils show respect for one another and to adults. They say they feel secure and safe in school. The information gained from the parent questionnaire confirms that parents, too, feel this to be true. In lessons, pupils are attentive to adults, contribute well to discussions and willingly share ideas and equipment.
- Pupils understand the many types of danger and were very articulate about cyber-bullying and other aspects of bullying. Older pupils had attended an emergency services exhibition day entitled 'Crucial Crew' and eagerly reported what they had learnt about the many forms of bullying and what to do if it occurred.
- A 'buddy system', where pupils in Year 6 look after the youngest children and help them play when they feel frightened in the playground, encourages older pupils to be sensitive to the needs of others. 'Talk boxes' in the upper school encourage pupils to talk raise any worries or problems in confidence.
- Pupils are very proud of the 'Woodside Way' and 'Acorn Action' where pupils from Year 6 discuss with every class issues relating to school life. From these discussions, activities for the playground have been organised by pupils in Year 6, such as 'Huff and Puff' games like hula hoops and skipping. For pupils who want quieter activities, they have organised an area for board games and reading books.
- Strong links have been established with another school with a different type of cultural and socio-economic intake. In assemblies and through subjects like religious education, opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on different spiritual, faith and moral issues. The school has links with one of the local churches and pupils have visited the Sikh temple.
- Attendance is average but the school uses every opportunity to encourage good attendance and punctuality by calling homes on the first day of absence.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school has not made rapid enough progress in dealing with some of the issues in the last inspection report. Teachers are still not giving suitable feedback to pupils so that they understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.
- Seniors leaders and governors have not been rigorous enough in ensuring that pupils make steady progress from the Nursery through to Year 6. Tracking procedures are not yet sufficiently robust to identify any variation in rates of progress between the different year groups. However, leaders now have access to more detailed data about pupils' progress and the headteacher has started to hold regular meetings to check pupils' progress with individual teachers.
- Self-evaluation is over-generous. The school improvement plan does not prioritise what the school needs to do to improve quickly. However, senior leaders and managers with whole-school subject responsibility are aware of some of the weaknesses and have put in place strategies to bring about improvement, especially in writing. However, in mathematics and reading, these are too new to have had much impact.
- Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage require improvement. The outside learning areas, both for the Nursery and the Reception class, are dirty and in need of repair. They require improvement so that children can benefit from the experience of different weather conditions, and develop their physical and learning skills by playing with bright, stimulating toys and apparatus in safe surroundings.
- The new headteacher has organised arrangements for checking the performance of teachers and targets have been set to bring about progress for named pupils who are not making sufficient progress. Arrangements are in place for teachers to check the levels at which pieces of work have been assessed to ensure that assessments are accurate and consistent across classes.
- A new thematic curriculum is being developed and this recent initiative is engaging pupils' imagination
- Parents and carers feel welcome in the school, and those who filled in the online questionnaire are positive and committed to the school, feeling that their views and ideas are welcomed.
- The local authority has provided only light-touch support, which has been insufficient to identify the aspects of the school's performance which require improvement. Support from a school improvement consultant has helped leaders to identify shortcomings in the way the school keeps track of pupils' progress.
- All safeguarding requirements have been met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are not sufficiently clear about their responsibility to challenge leaders about the school's performance. They know how the standards achieved by pupils compare with other schools nationally, but they do not have a clear understanding of the progress pupils make and whether or not this is sufficient. They ensure that processes for managing teachers' performance and relating salary increases to teachers' effectiveness are in place. They challenge the headteacher over teachers' performance but do not relate assessments of the quality of the teaching to the progress pupils are making. Financial management is well controlled. Governors know how pupil premium funding is used and how well eligible pupils are performing. Governors are very supportive of the school and the staff, and attend all

training relating to their statutory responsibilities, including with regard to equality of opportunity and safeguarding.

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	117321
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	403315

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jean Mann, Gail Berry
Headteacher	Keith Richmond
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2008
Telephone number	01707 888333
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