

# Woodhall Primary School

Woodhall Lane, South Oxhey, Watford, WD19 6QX

**Inspection dates** 18–19 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils do not make the same progress in all year groups. Attainment in mathematics is lower than that in English.
- Progress in reading and writing is better than in mathematics, especially in Key Stage 2, but is not yet consistently good in all year groups.
- Some more-able pupils do not routinely reach high enough standards by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers do not always expect pupils to complete enough work in lessons. They do not move them on quickly to tasks that are closely matched to their abilities.
- Teachers do not routinely give clear guidance on how pupils can improve their work in all subjects. They do not provide time for pupils to make the necessary changes that have been highlighted.

### The school has the following strengths

- The behaviour of pupils is good and attendance has significantly improved. In lessons pupils are actively involved in their learning and demonstrate good collaborative skills.
- Pupils feel safe in school and are well looked after by the adults that work with them.
- Leaders make an effective contribution to raising standards. They are making certain that all pupils are making quicker progress than has been the case recently.
- Teaching is improving strongly because the better teachers are frequently sharing their expertise well.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, three of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. The team also spent time in the Early Years Foundation Stage observing the quality of teaching and support that is given to children.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, the Early Years leader and the special educational needs leader to discuss the progress that pupils make throughout the school.
- Meetings were also held with other staff, an adviser from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- There were also discussions with pupils. Inspectors listened to them read and talked with pupils during lessons and break times.
- Inspectors considered parents' and carers' views of the school through discussions before school and the 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Staff views were considered through the responses to an inspection questionnaire returned by 23 staff.
- The team examined a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, and planning and monitoring documentation. They looked at attendance figures, pupils' work, the school's improvement plan, safeguarding documents and behaviour records.

## Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

June Cannie

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Woodhall Primary is an average-sized primary school. It draws its pupils from the surrounding area. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds but the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average. A small number of pupils of Gypsy/Roma heritage also attend.
- The proportion of pupils supported through funding from the pupil premium grant is well above the national average, being nearly half the pupils.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is much higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average. Nearly a quarter of pupils have cognitive (learning) difficulties.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - making sure that teachers check pupils' understanding regularly and adjust tasks so that they consistently challenge pupils at the right level
  - ensuring teachers use discussion more effectively to consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge
  - making sure that teachers' feedback gives pupils clear guidance on how to extend their knowledge and improve their work.
- Raise achievement in mathematics throughout the school by:
  - improving teachers' subject knowledge
  - teaching key mathematical vocabulary
  - ensuring a consistent approach to marking to provide clear and consistent guidance on how to build up calculation skills
  - ensuring that work is not too easy for more-able pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils make inconsistent progress in different year groups, especially in mathematics. Pupils are often asked to read in class and write in a range of different styles in other subjects, but they are rarely given the opportunity to use their mathematical skills in subjects such as science or design and technology.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below those typical for their age. Some have difficulties with speech and language and their social skills are sometimes not well developed.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is below the national average but is increasing. Pupils do not make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics because discussion is not used effectively to check their understanding. Tasks are often not planned well enough to suit their needs.
- Some pupils of higher ability make slower progress. This is because, at times, the work given to them is not at the right level and they spend time repeating what they can already do.
- The school's data and pupils' work in books shows that their progress is getting quicker. Most pupils are now making at least the progress they should and some are making good progress, especially in English.
- Progress in reading is improving rapidly and this is helping pupils' writing skills. Regular guided sessions prepare pupils well for reading on their own. Most show an understanding of the main points in a text, but their understanding of the meaning behind the text is not always secure.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same progress as others of the same age in the school. The additional support they receive from teaching assistants is effective and they sometimes they make good progress. The targets set for this group of pupils are not consistent. Sometimes they are challenging and expectations in lessons are high but this is not always the case.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium make slightly better gains in mathematics and literacy than their classmates. This is because effective checks, using the recently introduced assessment system, are made to see how well they are doing and what additional support is needed to move learning on. This is an improvement on the results from 2012 when pupils in Year 6 reached similar standards in mathematics to other pupils, but were over a year behind them in English.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching varies across the school and, over time, has not ensured pupils make good progress. As a result, pupils' attainment has not been high enough. This is especially so in mathematics because teachers do not have enough knowledge of the different mathematical strategies. This limits the consistent and correct use of mathematical vocabulary by pupils.
- In lessons teachers try to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of what they have to do. However, this is not linked to targets for pupils and so they do not know how to improve their work. Especially in mathematics, comments in pupils' books do not routinely refer to their learning targets and they do not always know precisely what they need to do to make their work

better.

- Teachers do not use their awareness of pupils' abilities consistently to plan activities to match the specific needs of the pupils. This leads to work that does not fully challenge more-able pupils and means a small minority of pupils become too passive in lessons.
- Although the teaching of literacy requires improvement, it is sometimes supported by the effective use of resources. Texts are sometimes well chosen and challenge pupils to reflect on ways of improving sentence structures. However, this is inconsistent throughout the school.
- Good questioning was observed in many classes during the inspection. In an excellent literacy lesson pupils in Year 6 made exceptionally quick progress in understanding the features of effective diary writing because the teacher continually challenged the responses of pupils. As a result the pace of learning was crisp and the teacher's questioning prompted pupils to thoroughly explain their thinking using evidence from a variety of texts.
- The teaching of phonics is usually effective, especially for younger pupils, because letter sounds are consistently well taught. Good demonstrations of how to pronounce letter sounds by the teacher and support staff mean that pupils are attentive and learn quickly.
- Where teaching is good, the work is pitched at the right level across the full range of ability represented in the class. The lessons proceed at a quick pace and the pupils respond well to the challenges that they are set. Pupils work with sustained concentration and take an active role in their own learning.

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

- Typically, pupils' behaviour around the school is good. They behave responsibly in the playground and mix well with other pupils. They share equipment readily and take turns when playing different games.
  - In lessons pupils cooperate and work together well. They demonstrate good skills in group work in which they can discuss and develop ideas together, and pupils are happy to share these ideas in open class. Relationships with adults and other children are good.
  - There is an inclusive atmosphere in the school and pupils with emotional needs receive sustained high-quality support to help them manage their behaviour.
  - Pupils know about different types of bullying, including physical abuse, name-calling and cyber-bullying. There are very few reported incidents of racist behaviour, bullying or serious inappropriate behaviour.
  - Pupils say that they feel safe at school in the secure knowledge that their worries will be listened to. This is helped by staff managing pupils' behaviour consistently and well. Parents agree that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.
  - The school is rigorous in tackling poor attendance and persistent absences. Attendance is broadly average and continues to improve strongly because of the innovative efforts made by the school. These including term-by-term and year-by-year tracking of the attendance of individual pupils' attendance and reporting it to parents and carers.
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**The leadership and management are good**

- The leadership of the school continually adapts the school's support and provision for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, those that enter the school with significant social, emotional and learning difficulties and pupils who join the school during the academic year. Leaders have also responded promptly to the changing profile of pupils that have joined the school in the last three years.
  - The school's performance is improving rapidly as leaders have quickly tackled the lower attainment and slower progress seen in recent test results. This response has been subject to close scrutiny by governors. Pupils' work shows a quickening pace in achievement but there are still inconsistencies in teaching. The checks on teaching carried out by the headteacher are accurate and provide a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses. Middle leaders have developed their roles well and they have made a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching of individual teachers.
  - Training has been provided for teachers and has been carefully chosen to reflect the needs of the pupils. This, coupled with a robust approach to tackling poor teaching, has eliminated the inadequate teaching that, in the past, held pupils back. Teachers are putting into practice all that they have learnt from their training and this is having a positive impact on the performance of teachers and teaching assistants.
  - The headteacher has created an inclusive environment for pupils and their families. Parents speak highly of the attention to pupils' academic and personal needs. The school directs parents and carers to support from outside agencies very well. This and well-organised sessions within the 'nurture group' ensure the school provides very good care for pupils who face challenging circumstances. As a result these pupils achieve better than their peers in some classes and the pace at which they learn is rapidly improving.
  - Links with parents and carers are very well managed. Parents and carers appreciate that staff are readily available and that their views are listened to. Parents spoke highly of the support the school had given them, particularly when families had faced exceptionally stressful times.
  - Leaders check the quality of teaching robustly and follow up concerns well. This process is quickly improving the quality of teaching. Staff morale is good and there is a common commitment to ensuring pupils do as well as they are capable of. Initiatives such as the new approach ('Big Maths') to problem solving in mathematics, well managed by the subject leader, have had an immediate effect, speeding up progress and raising attainment.
  - The curriculum includes all National Curriculum subjects. Staff work together well to plan topics or themes that combine subjects. In all classes, there is an appropriate focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Well-presented displays throughout the school reflect a broad curriculum.
  - Self-evaluation is accurate. Plans to improve the school correctly identify what needs to be done. Clear targets in the management of staff performance hold all staff accountable for the progress pupils make.
  - The school has refined its system for staff to track pupils' progress during the last year in response to test results in 2011 that showed slow progress. This is used effectively by subject
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leaders and the special educational needs coordinator to identify pupils who need additional support to close gaps in their learning compared with that of other pupils.

- The local authority offers effective support to the school's leaders through the direct contact of the school improvement adviser. Clear advice has been offered and used well to tackle weaknesses in teaching and in middle leadership.
- Leaders make certain that the school meets the latest statutory requirements effectively, including those for keeping pupils safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body regularly attend training sessions and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Governors accurately compare the school's outcomes with national and local data and ask searching questions of senior leaders. As a result the governing body is holding the school to account for the lower attainment and slower progress previously seen in national tests. Governors visit the school frequently so that they know more about aspects of its day-to-day teaching and performance. This helps them to have a good understanding of the impact of the school improvement plan and how pay increases link to successful classroom performance. They have a precise knowledge of how pupil premium funding is spent on extra hours from teaching assistants and one-to-one teaching. The governing body evaluates the impact of new initiatives against improvements in pupils' confidence and achievement.

## 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>	117194
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412931

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	220
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roy Millard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lesley Spence
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 April 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8428 3447
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8421 4765
<b>Email address</b>	admin@woodhall.herts.sch.uk

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