

Woodlands Infant and Nursery School

Whitethorn Grove, Birchwood, Lincoln, LN6 0PF

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils get a good start to school life in the Nursery and make outstanding progress in the Reception classes.
- Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and some make outstanding progress, especially in Year 2.
- Teaching is good because work is usually exciting and well matched to pupils' abilities.
- Pupils behave well both in and out of the classroom. They play together well, share equipment and know how to keep themselves safe.
- The school has very good links with parents and the local community. Pupils and their families are supported well.
- The headteacher is very clear about each step the school needs to take to improve year on year. She is the driving force behind the good teaching and rising standards seen throughout the school.
- The governors are very supportive of the school and ask challenging questions to hold the headteacher and senior staff accountable for continued improvement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is particularly good and underpins all the school does.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally teachers do not ask searching enough questions to help pupils develop their thinking skills and learning, so pupils make less progress than they do in other lessons.
- Marking in literacy books in Key Stage 1 gives pupils good guidance about how they can improve, but this is not consistently evident in other subjects or in the Reception and Nursery classes.
- Subject leaders have not yet had the opportunity to fully develop their skills in checking pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in their subject.
- While governors visit the school regularly to check on progress, the outcomes of these visits are not always clearly reported back to the rest of the Governing Body.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons, nine of which were seen together with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, two groups of pupils, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. Informal discussions were held with parents and carers.
- The inspectors took account of 24 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own parental questionnaires, 23 completed staff questionnaires and individual communications from parents.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at: information from the school's checks on its performance; its analysis and tracking of pupils' progress; school improvement plans; leaders' records of classroom observations; safeguarding arrangements; records of governing body meetings.
- They also looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and checked information on pupils' attendance.

Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrew Lagden

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school and takes pupils from age 3 to 7 years old.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for certain groups, is above average. In this school it currently applies only to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action and at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs, are all above average.
- The current leadership team has only recently been formed. The deputy headteacher joined the school at Easter. This is also the first year in post for the numeracy subject leader and the literacy leader has only just taken on the role.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - all teachers' questioning moves them on in their learning by helping them think deeply about what they are doing
 - teachers' guidance to pupils on the next steps in their learning is appropriate for their age and more consistently helps them understand how they can improve.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - subject leaders develop the skills they need to rigorously analyse data and check the quality of teaching so that they can play a full part in improving teaching and learning
 - the outcomes from governors' visits to school are formally reported to the rest of the Governing Body.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children typically join the school with many skills well below the level expected for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery, developing their personal and social skills particularly well. Excellent opportunities in the Reception classes means that pupils make outstanding progress in all areas of development, narrowing gaps between their skills and what is expected for their age.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 1, and outstanding progress in these subjects in Year 2. This means that the standards of pupils currently in Year 2 are comfortably in line with those expected for their age, and some pupils are working at above average standards.
- The results of the national screening check on how well pupils know the sounds that letters make (phonics) in Year 1 last year were a little above average with some pupils performing very well. Good progress in reading subsequently means that pupils are able to build on these skills well to read unfamiliar words. For example, during the inspection Year 2 pupils read such challenging words as 'stretched', 'generations' and 'incredible'.
- Pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The funding is used to enable them to be taught and supported in small groups or individually, as necessary. Their progress is checked regularly to make sure they are not falling behind, and any in danger of doing so are quickly helped to catch up. Last year these pupils were two terms behind in reading and three in writing and mathematics. Current pupils in this group have narrowed the gap with their classmates by at least a term in each assessed element.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported. Their needs are quickly identified by teachers who get to know both the pupils and their families well. Sensitive support from well-briefed adults means that they develop confidence and independence, which makes learning easier for them and helps them make good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in most lessons is good and some is outstanding. During the inspection, outstanding teaching was seen in Year 1 and in the Reception classes. In these lessons, work was accurately matched to pupils' abilities with slight adjustments made to groupings throughout the lesson as pupils progressed. As a result pupils were fully engrossed in what they were doing and made excellent progress.
- In most lessons there is a good balance between adults leading an activity and pupils working independently. Pupils are given the opportunity to practise their literacy skills in different subjects. For example in a science lesson, Year 1 pupils were asked how to return melted chocolate, butter and water to a solid state. While more-able pupils worked with an adult who skilfully guided their use of complex sentences in their writing, others worked independently in small groups, sharing and recording their ideas.
- Good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs means that they work happily alongside other pupils and make good progress. Work and activities that are well-matched to their specific needs are changed and modified as to reflect changes in their

understanding and needs.

- The excellent outdoor learning area for the Reception classes is used well. Different areas give children the opportunity to develop a good range of skills. Adults join in the role play activities asking searching questions and developing language and thinking skills. Occasionally, in some other classes, teachers ask questions to check understanding but do not use this information to challenge pupils to think more deeply about their answers. This means that pupils do not make such rapid progress as they do in the best lessons.
- Teachers' marking in literacy books is good. It gives pupils clear guidance as to how they can improve their work. However, this is not consistently the case across other subjects or in all classes, and guidance is sometimes too general when it is given orally. How well pupils respond to the guidance they are given is not always rigorously checked.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in and around school. They respond well to teachers and other adults who model appropriate behaviours. For example, a Reception teacher played a memory game with children to showing them how to follow the rules. They continued playing on their own, abiding by the rules and enjoying the competition while readily accepting both winning and losing.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and know that it can be hurting people physically or hurting their feelings. They say that any incidents of unkindness are always dealt with by the teachers and other adults. Consequently they feel safe and happy in school.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in different situations. They use equipment such as the climbing frames safely and told the inspectors about the road safety sessions provided for Key Stage 1 pupils. They enjoyed bringing in their bikes and scooters to practise riding safely around cones.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and are enthusiastic about their learning. Those who find behaving well difficult are sensitively guided by adults, and respond positively to the good role models that staff and other pupils provide. This means that lessons are rarely disrupted.
- The school has worked closely with parent to improve attendance. A rigorous system of checking attendance and punctuality, along with practical support for families, means that attendance is now above average and most pupils are on time for school. Good attendance is celebrated and parents and pupils alike look forward to receiving the half-termly attendance certificates.

The leadership and management are good

- The dynamic headteacher shows passion and ambition for the school. She has an excellent understanding of how the school can improve. This means that standards are rising and pupils are making very good progress, often from a very low starting point.
- The subject leaders understand the strengths and improvement needs for their subjects and have already made some changes which have contributed to pupils' good progress. However, they have not yet had the opportunity to develop skills in analysing data and checking the quality of teaching so that they can take a more active role in whole school improvement.
- The subjects pupils are taught are exciting and well-planned. Different topics are introduced through themed days such as the 'Boat Racing Day' and 'Big Roar, Little Feet'. Pupils are then involved in discussions about what they want to find out and teachers plan according to what

will interest them as well as addressing the need to develop their literacy, numeracy and communication skills.

- An appraisal system is in place. Judgements of teachers' performance are based directly on how much progress their pupils make and how well they fulfil their different roles in the school. The individual targets set for teachers are used to measure whether promotion up the pay scale is justified by the results achieved. A strong coaching and support programme in the school helps teachers develop and refine their teaching skills.
- The school rigorously promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination. All pupils are fully involved in activities, regardless of ability or need. Close attention to ensuring that lessons are planned to meet individual pupils' needs means that all groups of pupils are making good or outstanding progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is particularly good. Strong links with pupils' families and the local community help develop social skills and promote high aspirations. Pupils take part in the community carnival and themes such as 'Birchwood to Broadway' help develop an understanding of music and drama. Good links with local church groups support spiritual development while informal partnerships with inner city and rural schools give pupils an understanding of different cultures and communities.
- The local authority has provided good support. It has worked with the school to help analyse data, develop leadership skills and provide training for governors.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are very supportive and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and how it can improve. They encourage staff to develop their skills and qualifications while ensuring that, as a Governing Body, they receive appropriate training to keep up to date and hold the senior leaders accountable for improving the school. Governors manage the finances of the school well and are acutely aware of the need to ensure that the Pupil Premium funding is appropriately used. They receive regular reports from the headteacher on the difference the additional support is making to those pupils. Governors have high aspirations for the school and its pupils, and the Chair of the Governing Body attends the annual 'graduation' of pupils from Year 2 to the junior school. Governors make sure that national requirements for safeguarding and child protection are fully met and have ensured the new appraisal system is in place. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching through headteacher reports, analysis of progress data and through visiting the school. The outcomes of their visits however, are not reported on in detail at governing body meetings and do not give other governors enough insight into how well the school is doing.

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	120436
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	412702

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

Type of school	Infant and Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Daphne Whiteoak
Headteacher	Catherine Stratton
Date of previous school inspection	20 October 2009
Telephone number	01522 683557
Fax number	01522 687835
Email address	enquiries@woodlands.lincs.sch.uk

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