

Woodcote Primary School

Dunsfold Rise, Coulsdon, CR5 2ED

Inspection dates

4–5 July 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 school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' overall achievement is not yet good, because not enough pupils have made the progress expected of them, and too few have made good progress.
- The quality of teaching is too variable. Some teaching is good or outstanding; some is no better than adequate. Over time, this has led to pupils making less than steady progress.
- Teachers do not always provide the right level of challenge for each pupil.
- Teachers do not always give pupils the materials that would best help them in their learning.
- Marking is inconsistent. In English, books are marked with helpful guidance on how they can improve. However, marking in other subjects is not always so helpful.
- Teachers do not always make sure that their assistants work with pupils with a range of abilities.
- In their programme of classroom visits, leaders and managers do not always focus sharply enough on how well pupils are learning. Their advice to teachers has not resulted in enough pupils making good progress from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6.
- The governing body has not secured sufficient improvement in the overall achievement of pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is popular with parents and carers, pupils and staff. Parents and carers like its warm, friendly ethos and the good communications between school and home.
- Pupils from a wide range of heritages get on well with one another. They are confident and polite, and want to learn. They feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe.
- The school contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has improved in some respects. For example, the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved considerably. Children have a range of inviting activities, enabling them to learn well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons across a range of subjects, mostly observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteachers.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at samples of their work and attended assemblies.
- Meetings were held with: leaders and managers; pupils; the Chair, Vice-Chair and three other members of the Governing Body; and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors took account of the views of staff in 63 questionnaires.
- There were 89 responses to Parent View, the online survey of the views of parents and carers. Inspectors considered these, and also spoke to several parents and carers during the inspection, one by telephone.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including development plans; the school's self-evaluation report; information on pupils' attainment and progress; safeguarding information; records relating to behaviour and safety; and the governing body minutes.

Inspection team

Natalia Power, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter McCarthy

Additional Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Additional Inspector

Clementina Olufunke Aina

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Woodcote is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Around one pupil in eight is known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides schools with additional funding for children looked after by the local authority, for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and for those with a parent in the armed services. This proportion is half the national average. At Woodcote, nearly all of the pupils who qualify for the pupil premium are currently eligible for free school meals or have been at some stage over the past six years, with very few being in the care of the local authority or with a parent in the armed services.
- Almost half of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages, and this proportion is higher than usual. Around one pupil in seven speaks English as an additional language, and this proportion is a little lower than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is lower than average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- There is no alternative provision, such as a resource unit for disabled pupils or those with special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Teachers should expect more from their pupils, and enable them to make faster progress, by:
 - providing tasks that are accurately matched to the abilities of the pupils, so that each task has a good level of challenge
 - improving the quality of the teaching resources, so that pupils have access to materials that will speed up their learning
 - improving the quality of their marking in all subjects, so that pupils understand how to improve their work
 - making sure that teaching assistants are always deployed effectively and given all the guidance they need to help pupils of all abilities.
- Leaders and managers should speed up the progress made by all pupils and raise the quality of teaching and learning, by:
 - basing their observations squarely on how well pupils are learning, rather than on teaching styles
 - giving teachers clear advice, through training and coaching to improve their performance in the classroom, and checking regularly to make sure that it is improving.
- Governors should use the information they receive from the school to ensure that the school takes speedy and powerful actions to improve the achievement of all pupils, including those eligible for the pupil premium.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved. Ofsted will make recommendations on governance to the local authority responsible for the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Though pupils obtain results in the national tests taken at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 that are generally well above average, they do not always make the rapid progress they need, to have the best possible chance in their future education. This is why pupils' achievement requires improvement.
- The proportion of Year 6 pupils making steady progress in reading, writing and mathematics since Year 2 has been slower than average over the past two years. Information provided by the school indicates that the proportion of current Year 6 pupils making steady progress is likely to be close to the national average. However, the proportion making good progress is likely to remain below average, as has been the case in the previous two years, because the quality of teaching at present is not yet good enough to secure faster progress.
- Children do well in their learning in the Nursery and Reception classes. They are given a range of interesting and inviting tasks that successfully develop their language, number, social and physical skills.
- The school successfully teaches the youngest children their sounds and letters, and how these combine to form words. As a result, pupils in Year 1 did much better than average in the 2012 national survey of their ability to read familiar and unfamiliar words. The school promotes a love of reading in all its pupils and, as a result, their reading skills throughout the school are secure, and pupils typically leave Year 6 around two terms ahead of pupils nationally. Pupils who read to inspectors told them how well the school instils in them a love of reading.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils from all heritages are supported effectively, so that they quickly catch up and do as well as the other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive support in class and in small groups, and make progress in line with others in the school.
- The number of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is small, and information about them should be treated with caution. The funds available are allocated specifically for these pupils' benefit, and governors are appropriately informed about what is being done. Figures for the small group of pupils concerned vary from year to year. Broadly, while they tend to make progress in line with others at the school, the gap between their attainment and that of others nevertheless tends to be somewhat wider than the national average, and governors have not addressed this sufficiently

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, over time, the quality of teaching has not been good enough to promote good achievement.
- In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of the pupils, and set tasks that are matched accurately to their abilities. In one Year 3 English lesson, for example, on writing dialogue in a story, pupils knew exactly what goal they were trying to reach, and kept checking their targets to ensure that they were succeeding. The teacher had planned varied tasks that successfully provided a stimulating challenge to each group of pupils.
- However, tasks are not always so well matched to pupils' abilities. Too often, the task set is too easy, so that pupils are not challenged to do their best work, or too hard, so that some pupils are daunted and give up. In these cases, pupils' learning slows.
- Inspectors saw a number of instances where pupils, particularly in mathematics lessons, were not provided with the most suitable materials to help them to understand tasks and carry them out confidently. For example, Year 1 pupils were sometimes not given small blocks to help them add and subtract.
- Teaching assistants work hard with individuals and with small groups of pupils, but do not always receive sufficient guidance from teachers and leaders about which groups they should

work with, to ensure that the teachers are able to get round to all groups of pupils.

- Marking in pupils' English workbooks is helpful in encouraging them to understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. However, marking in other subjects is sometimes less helpful, and then pupils tend to repeat the same errors.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes have a wealth of interesting activities that they can choose for themselves. They are also gently guided to learn literacy and numeracy skills through enjoyable activities, linked to topics that interest them, such as pirates. As a result, they learn well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are confident in speaking to visitors, and are polite and welcoming. Pupils show their enjoyment of the school through their attendance, which has been rising and is now average for primary schools.
- Pupils from a wide range of heritages get on well with one another, and this shows that there is no discrimination, and that the school is fully committed to equal opportunities.
- Pupils have positive attitudes in the classroom and want to learn. They are respectful to adults, for example responding promptly when asked to move on to a different task.
- The youngest children in the Nursery and Reception classes are encouraged to share and take turns. They get on well and help one another, for instance to dress up in penguin or dog outfits.
- Pupils feel safe at the school. They told inspectors that there was hardly any bullying, such as racist or cyber-bullying, but that some pupils could be unkind to one another. However, they know to whom they should turn if they have any worries and are confident that these will be quickly dealt with. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the online survey of their views agreed that their children are safe and happy at the school.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, and are aware of dangers from traffic and fire, and from strangers, whether in person or on the internet.
- The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities well. For example, in an assembly for pupils from Years 3 to 6, the headteacher told a story with a strong moral dimension about the importance of obedience, but not at all costs. The pupils were interested and prompt in contributing their ideas.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because teaching and pupils' achievement are not yet good.
- Nevertheless, there are strengths within leadership and management. The headteacher has created a harmonious school. Nearly all staff submitted favourable responses to their questionnaires. Parents and carers told inspectors that they liked the effective communication between school and home, and the care given to their children. For example, one parent commented, in a phrase reflecting similar appreciative comments by others, that the school has 'a lovely family ethos'.
- Leaders are accurate in recognising the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning, and their evaluations of lessons observed jointly accorded closely with the inspection findings. Leaders are exacting in ensuring that teachers' pay progression is related closely to pupils' progress and the quality of the teaching.
- However, leaders have been less successful in ensuring that their observations secure sufficient improvement in the quality of teaching. Observations over time, as seen in the school's portfolio of lesson observations, have a tendency to describe how teachers are teaching, rather than to focus rigorously on how pupils are learning, and this means that the needs of some pupils get overlooked. Plans to improve the quality of teaching are not at the

forefront of the school's overall planning, and are not always sharp enough about precisely what needs to be achieved.

- The school's evaluation of its own performance is not always rigorous enough. For example, the school describes pupils' achievement as good, whereas national data, information from the school about progress in 2013, and inspectors' observation of pupils' learning and progress over time all point to achievement that requires improvement. The local authority does not sufficiently challenge the school with regard to its somewhat overgenerous self-evaluation.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has improved in some areas, but not others. For example, the Early Years Foundation Stage is now well led and provides a good learning experience for the children. However, the impact of teaching in the rest of the school over time has not improved.
- The school keeps pupils safe and ensures that those who work with them have been properly checked.
- The curriculum provides a sound focus on the key skills of English and mathematics, and provides pupils with the opportunity to write on a variety of topics. For example, pupils told inspectors that their school trips and visits to places of interest, such as Duxford Museum, brought their understanding of history to life and helped them to write vividly about what it would have been like to be an evacuee.
- There is a wide-ranging programme of activities to broaden pupils' horizons and develop their curiosity about the world around them. The Art Exhibition during the inspection provided pupils with good opportunities to showcase their talents and to involve their families in looking at a wide range of pictures.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are not yet effective in using information that the headteacher provides and that they gather from visits to ensure that the school takes prompt and effective action to secure improvements in pupils' achievement.
 - Governors who spoke to inspectors are experienced and highly committed to the school. Governors receive full and informative reports from the headteacher, including information about the attainment and progress of pupils and how it compares with similar schools. The governing body minutes show that they do ask searching questions, but they do need to more fully hold leaders to account for the impact of improvements.
 - Governors understand that pupils' progress is a continuing concern, and are clear about the need to link teachers' pay with pupils' achievement. They are aware of the strengths and areas for development in the school's teaching. They visit the school regularly to see the work of the school. They contribute fully to the school's self-evaluation process.
 - Governors have a firm handle on the school's budget and know how much funding the school receives for pupils eligible for the pupil premium, and what it is spent on. However, they have been less successful in monitoring the achievement of these pupils and ensuring that the gap is closing between them and other pupils.
 - Governors take advantage of a wide range of training opportunities and effectively carry out their statutory duties to keep pupils safe.

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	135525
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	412731

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	676
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roz Turner-Drage
Headteacher	Timothy Rome
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2010
Telephone number	020 8660 9972
Fax number	020 8763 8303
Email address	office@woodcoteprimary.croydon.sch.uk

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