

The Woodlands Community Primary School

Canning Road, Glasgote, Tamworth, B77 3JX

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2013

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | 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

- Although pupils' achievement is improving, it is still not good in all year groups. Attainment in both Key Stage 1 and 2 is not rising as quickly in writing as in mathematics and reading. Pupils who benefit from extra government funding are now making good progress but their attainment is still below that of other pupils.
- The most able pupils are not given sufficiently challenging work and this means that they are not doing as well as they should.
- Not enough teaching is good or outstanding, and too much still requires improvement.
- Marking does not consistently give pupils enough guidance to help them understand their next steps in learning, and some teachers do not systematically check to see if advice given through feedback has been followed up.
- Leaders do not make enough use of the existing good practice in some classes or in other schools to improve the quality of teaching of the less effective teachers.
- The extended leadership structure is not yet sufficiently strong to support the process of improvement that has been started and is being led by the headteacher.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher's strong leadership and drive for improvement have been successful in raising standards and increasing rates of progress across the school. He has set targets with teachers which are beginning to bring about improvements in teaching.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils show respect for each other and get along well together. They are keen to learn.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage to reach average standards by the start of Year 1.
- The governing body has a good knowledge of the strengths of the school and challenges leaders to ensure that it improves where necessary.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons, including three joint observations with members of the school’s senior leadership team. They attended two assemblies.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ work in books, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and checked their progress in learning the sounds that letters make (phonics) in Years 1 and 2. They also looked at the school’s tracking systems for assessing pupils’ progress in English and mathematics.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other members of the leadership team and three governors. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Pupils’ behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and around the school was observed. Inspectors talked to groups of pupils to gauge their views on their progress and spoke to them about how safe they felt in school and the wider world.
- Inspectors spoke to parents as they brought their children to school and to parents attending an assembly. They also took account of the 44 responses to the online survey (Parent View).
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school’s improvement plans and evaluations of its own work, records of governing body meetings and information on pupils’ attainment and progress.
- An inspector looked at the school’s arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including its child protection policies and procedures.

Inspection team

Adam Hewett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Karen Davies

Additional Inspector

Edgar Hastings

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Reception children are taught in single-aged classes. Pupils in all other year groups are taught in mixed-aged classes.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding, known as the pupil premium, is above average. This provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A breakfast club, run by the school, operates each day during term time.
- There have been several changes at leadership and management level this year. The headteacher has been in post since April 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to consistently good or better across the school by:
 - setting work at the right level for all pupils so they make the progress of which they are capable
 - making sure that teachers consistently provide pupils with clear guidance through marking that shows them how they can improve their work, and check that pupils act on this feedback
 - encouraging pupils, at every opportunity, to use their reading, writing and mathematics skills in different subjects.
- Enable more pupils who are capable of doing so to reach the higher standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - providing pupils with sufficiently challenging tasks and opportunities for independent learning that require them to take greater responsibility for their own learning
 - developing greater use of targeted questions that are accurately matched to the abilities of individual pupils.
- Secure consistently good quality leadership and management by:
 - fully establishing an extended leadership team who can ensure through monitoring and evaluation that all lessons are sufficiently challenging for all pupils
 - sharing best practice from within and beyond the school to bring about consistently good or better teaching
 - ensuring that teachers use the data available to them to bring about accelerated progress for pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' overall achievement requires improvement. In recent years, attainment and the progress made across the school were below average. However, assessments and national tests for 2013 showed a significant improvement and standards at the end of Year 6 were broadly average. In the Year 6 tests in 2013, more pupils had made the progress expected of them in reading and writing but progress in mathematics is less consistent. The attainment of more-able pupils was still below that expected nationally. While most pupils in 2013 had made expected progress from the end of Year 2, few pupils exceeded this. This is because, until recently, the school's aims for pupils' progress were too low.
- There is still some variation in pupils' progress between different classes, year groups and subjects due to differences in the quality of teaching. Attainment is weaker overall in writing but progress is slower in mathematics. There is evidence of pupils making rapid progress in some classes but this is not consistent across the school.
- Progress for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. They make similar rates of progress to other pupils in the school but their levels of attainment are still too low. The school has identified improving the achievement of these pupils as a priority and is now making good use of trained teaching assistants to lead small group and individual sessions for them.
- Children join the school in Reception with skills that are below those expected for their age, especially in communication and language. They settle in very well and make good progress. By the time they start in Year 1, standards are broadly in line with those found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who have met the expected standards in the national screening test in phonics (letter and sounds) have been above the national average. They know how to break down words when they are unsure about new vocabulary. Pupils across the school are enthusiastic readers and are well supported by the school in a range of reading activities.
- Attainment at Key Stage 1 is now in line with or above expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics for the majority of pupils, but not enough pupils who are capable of reaching the higher Level 3 do so.
- Progress for pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium now make the same or better progress than other pupils in the school. This is due to targeted additional support and additional opportunities to enhance the experiences of eligible pupils. Although they are on average two terms behind other pupils in English and nearly a year in mathematics, this gap is narrowing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The overall quality of teaching requires improvement. While there are examples of good teaching within the school, the quality is uneven with very little that is outstanding. As a consequence, pupils' progress across the school is inconsistent.
- Although the recently introduced whole-school marking policy is being used well in some classes, this is not a consistent picture throughout the school. Teachers' marking does not always provide pupils with sufficient indication of how they can improve or what the next steps in learning are. Teachers do not consistently check that pupils have taken note of their comments

and have put them into practice in future work.

- In lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers set the same work for the whole class and their expectations of pupils, particularly the most able, are not sufficiently high. This means that the pace of learning is slowed down for these pupils and they do not make the progress of which they are capable. Learning tasks are too easy for some pupils and they are not given sufficient time to work independently or think for themselves.
- Teachers and other adults do not always use questioning effectively to probe pupils' understanding. They ask the same questions of the whole class and accept short answers from the few pupils who respond. They do not direct more challenging questions to more-able pupils and do not adapt questions to the particular needs of individuals.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers use information on pupils' prior learning carefully to adapt the tasks, level of support and challenge to the needs of the different pupils. Good teaching featured detailed subject knowledge that was used effectively to engage pupils' interest and build upon what they had previously learnt. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson on data interpretation, there was a rapid pace to the learning, with groups of pupils given a range of tasks and opportunities to apply previous learning to multiplication of decimals.
- Support staff and additional adults are used well to support the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They break tasks down into small steps and engage pupils in purposeful discussion.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff plan well to provide a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities and use well-focused questions. They make good use of both the indoor and outdoor areas to stimulate the children's interests. Children were able to sustain concentration over a period of time to independently write lists based on the book *The Tiger Who Came To Tea* and made good progress within the session.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils at Woodlands Primary enjoy coming to school and show positive attitudes to learning. They are friendly, caring and show high levels of respect for each other and to adults. They have a very well-developed sense of right and wrong.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good in school and this was evident during the inspection. At break time and lunchtime, pupils played sensibly with each other and made good use of the recently improved outdoor play areas and equipment.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about behaviour and safety, and they recognise and appreciate the work that the school has undertaken to bring this about. They believe that their children are well cared for and safe in school.
- Pupils are very aware of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and they know how to protect themselves and keep themselves safe. They say that there is very little bullying in school and are confident that if it does occur, it will be dealt with effectively by all staff.
- Pupils appreciate the wide range of activities the school offers, including extra-curricular clubs and groups, and they enjoy the trips and visits that are arranged to support their learning.
- Attendance is good. This is the result of the very high expectations that the school has regarding

punctuality and the measures it takes to celebrate achievement and attendance.

- The school provides a breakfast club which is popular and well attended. It has a positive impact on pupils' personal and social development, including for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have yet to eliminate the remaining inconsistencies in teaching that hold back pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher's strong leadership and commitment to ensuring that every pupil can succeed have led to some improvements in teaching. He has brought in rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures that have identified inadequate teaching and resulted in movement of some teaching staff. He recognises, however, that there is further to go before teaching is consistently good or better.
- The school does not yet have a permanent senior leadership team to support the headteacher in bringing about further necessary improvements in teaching. Currently, other senior leaders have full-time teaching commitments and this limits their effectiveness in identifying where improvements need to take place and ensuring that all teaching is good or better.
- Outcomes from monitoring and evaluation are used to inform well-thought-out plans for improvement. These plans clearly show the actions that the school intends to take and the expected outcomes. The school is accurate in its own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. However, there are not yet sufficient opportunities for all teachers to observe and learn from teaching that is good or outstanding in this and in other schools.
- School leaders now use a wide range of performance data to set targets for achievement for all pupils. The headteacher has introduced a rigorous system of managing teachers' performance based on the national standards for teaching. He ensures that governors have the information to link pay to teachers' performance and outcomes for pupils. However, this has not been in place for enough time to ensure that all teachers have sufficiently high expectations about what pupils can achieve.
- During the past year, the school has revised its curriculum so that it much better meets the needs of the pupils. It is beginning to enable pupils to make more use of their literacy skills in other subjects, but this is less evident in respect of pupils' numeracy skills. The school provides significant enrichment to the curriculum and makes good use of visits and visitors to engage pupils' interests.
- The school works very well with parents and they are very positive about the work that it does with their children. Parents appreciate the changes that the headteacher has brought about since his appointment and recognise the improvements.
- The pupil premium is being used well to raise achievement for eligible pupils. The school has identified how it will use the recently introduced additional primary sports funding through an increase in the amount of swimming taught through school and greater opportunities for the active participation of all pupils in competitive sports.
- The local authority provides appropriate support. It is working closely with the school to bring about the necessary improvements in teaching.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors provide effective challenge and support. They are well informed about the strengths of the school but also recognise the areas needed for improvement. They recognise that achievement has been below that found nationally and are actively involved in ensuring that recent improvements are maintained. They use available data well to evaluate how well the school is doing and make regular and frequent visits to monitor its effectiveness. They ensure that appropriate checks are made on the performance of teachers, and that the information from these checks is linked to pay rises and promotion. The governors ensure that resources are managed effectively and expect value for money. They understand how the additional funding available through the pupil premium is used and have been involved in deciding how it is spent. They ensure that national safeguarding requirements are all met.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 124159 |
| Local authority | Staffordshire |
| Inspection number | 426995 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 289 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Colin Robey |
| Headteacher | Jonathan Baker |
| Date of previous school inspection | 8 December 2011 |
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