

Woodhouse Community Primary School

Walker Drive, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL14 6QW

Inspection dates 22–23 October 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		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils' achievement is not yet good because standards in Key Stage 2 are too low, particularly in reading and writing. Targets set for improvement are not sufficiently challenging and pupils have too few opportunities to write longer pieces of work in Years 3 and 4.
- Standards in reading are too low because insufficient time is allocated in the school day for individual pupils to read, particularly those who receive little support at home.
- Teaching requires improvement because work set for the most able pupils is not sufficiently challenging. Pupils spend too long listening to teachers when their responses indicate that they are ready to move onto working independently. As result progress slows.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement overall because incidents of difficult behaviour are still too frequent outside lessons. Although attendance has improved over the last year it is still below the national average.
- Development plan targets are not yet sharp enough to accelerate pupil progress.
- Governors do not yet have sufficient knowledge of achievement data to offer effective challenge to senior leaders in raising standards in Key Stage 2.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage made good and better progress and standards in Key Stage 1 rose last year because of better teaching.
- Behaviour in the majority of lessons is good. Pupils feel school is a safe and happy place.
- The newly formed senior leadership team have improved many aspects of the school in a very short time. This includes the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and developing better relationships with parents.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons and parts of lessons taught by nine teachers. Joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher. The inspection team also listened to pupils from Year 1 read and examined the quality of work in the books of pupils from across the school.
- The inspection team held meetings and had discussions with pupils, senior leaders, members of the school staff, four members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took into account the views of 19 parents who they met informally at the school gate and during activities during the school day. One parent made their views known through the on-line questionnaire (Parents' View).
- Twenty one members of staff also made their views known to the inspection team.
- The inspection team studied health and safety documentation as well as teachers' curriculum planning documents. They also studied documents relating to the procedures to check the performance of staff, the quality of teaching and the schools system for checking pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lucie Stephenson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Woodhouse Community Primary school is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils who attend come from families of White British heritage. A small number come from families from other ethnic groups.
- A much larger than average number of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those from forces' families.
- The number of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is almost three times the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly higher than the national average.
- In 2012 the school met the current floor standards set by the government for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In the last year the school has undergone a significant period of change with the appointment of a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. Three new teachers have also joined the school.
- The school has a range of awards and accreditations including Healthy Schools and Active mark.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring the most able pupils are offered sufficiently challenging activities which enable them to maximise progress
 - improving the pace at which pupils learn by reducing the amount of time pupils spend listening, and increasing opportunities for pupils to work independently or in small groups in order to accelerate learning
 - ensuring sessions delivered by teaching assistants, designed to improve progress for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, are more closely monitored by teachers to ensure maximum progress is made.
- Improve standards of attainment and accelerate progress in reading and writing in Key Stage 2 by:
 - ensuring targets set for improving pupils' progress in English are sufficiently challenging in order to maximise progress for all groups of pupils
 - giving pupils more opportunities to undertake extended pieces of writing across the curriculum
 - providing more opportunities for individual pupils to read more often in a variety of different contexts including reading more regularly to an adult.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring targets set in the school development plan are sufficiently sharply focussed on improving pupils' achievement
 - improving governors' levels of understanding of school achievement data in order that they can offer more effective levels of challenge to school leaders
 - an external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The vast majority of pupils start school with skills and knowledge that are well below those typically expected for their age. In 2012 standards reached at the end of Year 6 were also below those expected nationally. Although current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach levels of attainment much closer to those expected nationally in English and mathematics, this represents achievement that requires improvement overall.
- Achievement in reading requires improvement overall, particularly in Key Stage 2. Whilst reading is beginning to be better promoted across school through an increase in books in classrooms, pupils are not yet offered sufficient opportunity to improve their reading skills, for example, through reading to an adult or reading text in class. As a result, standards are rising more slowly than they should.
- Standards in writing are also lower than those in mathematics particularly in Years 3 and 4. This is because pupils are not regularly offered opportunities to write longer pieces of work across the curriculum.
- Schools recent focus on mathematics has improved achievement particularly in Key Stage 1 however attainment is still lower than the national average at the end of Year 6.
- Achievement in Key Stage 2 has been significantly below national expectations for a number of years. Recently pupils' progress has begun to accelerate particularly in Years 5 and 6 thanks to the improvement in the quality of teaching brought about by the new senior leadership team.
- The vast majority of children who join the Reception classes start with reading, writing and numeracy development well below that typically expected for their age. Children settle quickly and become familiar with routines set by staff who are skilled at recognising their needs. A wide range of exciting and innovative activities both inside and outside engage children well. Improvements in the quality of teaching helps them to make good progress and enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge which are close to those expected nationally.
- In 2012 fewer Year 1 pupils than the national average achieved the expected performance in the phonics screening check which tests pupils' ability to link letters to sounds. However, data shows that last year the number of pupils attaining expected levels had increased due to a recent improvement in the quality of phonics teaching, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2012 was below the national average. However, data from 2013 national tests shows that this trend has been reversed and standards reached by pupils were broadly average. Current school data shows staff are building further on this improvement. Lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and listening to pupils read during the inspection confirmed the continuation of this improvement.
- The vast majority of pupils who attend the school are known to be eligible for free school meals. Attainment for this group was broadly similar to others nationally in the tests at the end of Year 6 in 2012. Attainment was lower in comparison to others in school by approximately a term. Data from current tracking information shows gaps are beginning to narrow and attainment for this group has improved in line with others within the school. This is due to the effective use of pupil premium monies which school has used to ensure permanent staff deliver extra support to boost pupils' achievement through one-to-one and small group sessions.
- School staff identify and provide for the extra needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Although this group, those that are most able, and those from other ethnic backgrounds make equal progress in English and mathematics to others in the school, their progress requires improvement.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although much of the teaching observed during the inspection was of good quality, some of this improvement is very recent and has yet to impact fully on pupils' levels of attainment by the end

of Year 6. This, coupled with too few pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4, making the accelerated progress needed to catch up with other pupils nationally, demonstrates teaching which requires improvement overall.

- The pace at which pupils learn in some classrooms is slower than it should be because too little time is devoted to pupils' learning independently.
- Most teachers are effective at using information about how well pupils are doing to plan future lessons. However, planned work for the most able pupils often lacks challenge and as a result they make less progress than they could.
- Parents of children who attend Nursery and Reception classes feel that the school gives their children a good start. 'The staff have worked hard to make us to feel welcome' was a comment made by several. Teaching in these classes is often innovative and children clearly enjoy learning. An example of this could be seen in an exceptionally well prepared Halloween themed phonics session in which reception age children made outstanding progress when learning letter sounds. The teacher's excellent information technology and communication (ICT) skills were used to produce a short video sequence using the unit's giraffe puppet dressed as a witch. Children were further captivated by the potions which the teacher produced, really believing they were about to drink blood and pumpkin juice and frogspawn and shrieking with relief when they were revealed to be fruit juice!
- Whilst teachers and support staff have the opportunity to plan work together and effective working partnership are evident across the school, extra sessions planned for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs are not always as well focussed as they could be. The impact of these sessions on pupils' progress is not yet evaluated as effectively as it should be by teachers. As a result, progress for this group of pupils is slower than it should be.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Behaviour and safety require improvement overall. Although behaviour was judged to be good in the school's previous inspection report, pupils and staff confirm that standards of behaviour subsequently deteriorated. The newly introduced five steps behaviour management policy has helped reverse this trend and, as a result, behaviour in lessons has now improved significantly.
- Behaviour in the playground has also improved. On the recommendation of the school council more activities are now planned at lunch time and new play equipment is available. However, incidents of difficult behaviour still occur and although pupils' attendance in the 'cool down' facility is dropping some pupils still attend more regularly than they should.
- 'We just love coming to school' commented a group of pupils. This was clear evidence of the safe and happy place the majority of pupils feel school is. Parents spoken to feel that behavioural incidents are effectively dealt with by staff, but accept that at times their children do not behave well.
- Pupils say they feel valued as members of the school community and their views are communicated well to senior leaders through the school council.
- Pupils are clear about the different forms bullying can take. They feel that incidents are rare because pupils are made aware through, for example, the school's internet safety policy of the effects bullying can have on others. They are clear about where to seek help should an incident occur.
- Attendance has improved year on year for the last three years due to the work of the parent support advisor who works tirelessly with the learning mentors to support parents to ensure their children attend regularly. Despite this improvement, attendance is currently slightly lower than the national average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The newly appointed headteacher and senior leadership team have brought about significant change at a fast pace. Their unswerving focus on improvement has ensured that behaviour in lessons is now often good. The quality of teaching is also improving as evidenced by the rise in achievement in Key Stage 1 and the improved quality of work observed in pupils' books.
- A clear success of the headteacher has been in uniting staff in a quest to improve the school even further. However, whilst the school's development plan identifies those areas of the school's work which require the most improvement, some targets are too broad and are not yet sufficiently sharply focussed on the next steps needed to accelerate pupil progress, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is effectively monitored across the school and actions are being taken by the headteacher through the management of staff's performance to improve areas of weakness.
- School leaders ensure performance targets for staff link directly to pupils' achievement and targets within the school's development plan. Checks on the performance of staff are undertaken and the headteacher has used this information to make decisions on teachers' pay.
- Although the school's curriculum requires improvement, it is enriched by visits away from the classroom offering pupils opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of other areas of the country. For example a recent residential visit to Lockerbie was described by one pupil as: 'Awesome' because it was the first time I had been away from home and I thought I was brave until I got to try the zip wire'. These experiences increase pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum meets the needs of children well by offering a good balance between activities which are adult led and others which children choose for themselves. This helps to increase children's social and independence skills.
- The school has developed a clear plan for using their allocation of sports partnership monies. This includes further training opportunities for staff to develop new skills which are beginning to improve the quality of physical education teaching and the health and wellbeing of pupils.
- Since the arrival of the new headteacher the local authority has offered the school leadership a good level of support by instigating a partnership with another school and through organising professional visits from school improvement staff. Further support visits are planned, for example in order to support the school's special educational needs co-ordinator.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - School governors bring a range of skills and experience to the governing body which they have updated through attending further training. Whilst they offer support to senior leaders in a variety of ways, too many lack a clear understanding of achievement data and because of this they have been unable to offer sufficient challenge to current and previous leadership teams. This has contributed to a continued decline in standards which has only recently been halted. In partnership with senior leaders, governors have now developed an effective system for checking the performance of all staff which rewards good teaching and addresses any underperformance. They manage pupil premium funding prudently and this careful management has enabled them to support eligible pupils. Safeguarding procedures and policies within school meet current requirements.

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

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	131919
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	425854

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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brenda Jones
Headteacher	Tracy Page
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2011
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