

Woodthorne Primary School

Woodthorne Road South, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton, WV6 8XL

Inspection dates 19–20 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- New leadership has been effective in driving school improvement since the previous inspection.
- Better teaching means pupils' learning has improved so they now achieve well.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 has improved significantly and is now above the national average in English and mathematics.
- As well as helping pupils learn basic skills in English and mathematics, teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 give them lots of opportunity to practise and strengthen skills through applying them across a range of subjects.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school. Their attitudes to learning are outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy school and the school's work to keep them safe is good.
- Leaders regularly carry out detailed checks on the quality of teaching and learning. They use the results well to help teachers improve.
- The governing body is knowledgeable and its contribution to helping the school improve is considerable. Governors are very well informed about the school's effectiveness.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are shortcomings in the systems for checking pupil progress, this reduces the progress pupils make in Year 1, particularly for the more-able.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) in Year 1 is not of a consistent quality.
- Not all adults working in the school are given rigorous enough targets to improve their work.
- The time span for teachers to work towards achieving their improvement targets is too short.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons. Five lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders and other staff with leadership responsibility. Inspectors spoke to a group of pupils and during lesson observations and around the school. An inspector had a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school’s own judgements on its strengths and weaknesses, and the data it collects on pupils’ progress. Documents detailing the school’s arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed.
- Questionnaire responses from 26 members of staff were analysed.
- Inspectors took account of the 47 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school’s view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Paul Topping

Additional Inspector

Elaine Stevens

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils come from a range of minority ethnic groups. The largest group is Indian. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is about average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. In this school, the additional funding is for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection a new governing body has been formed. There was an interim headteacher before the current headteacher could take up his post in December 2013. Five teachers have joined the school since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that more teaching is good and outstanding in all key stages so pupils make consistently good and better progress by:
 - providing adults with the skills required to teach phonics effectively
 - improving procedures for checking children's progress in the Reception Year to ensure a smooth transition to Year 1 for more-able children.
- Review systems for setting performance targets for all staff by:
 - making sure there is enough time for adults to achieve their challenging targets
 - including support staff in a more rigorous performance management process.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children start school, their levels of knowledge and understanding are similar to those expected for their age. Pupils make good progress and attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is above the national average.
- In Nursery, children make good progress and transfer into the Reception classes generally in line with expected levels, but with a significant number above. At this point, a large number of children who have not been to the school Nursery, about half the cohort, join Reception. Children make expected progress in the Reception Year and the proportion that achieves a good level of development is above the national average.
- Children concentrate and stay on task for lengthy periods, both in teacher-led activities and those they choose for themselves. During adult-led learning activities, children talk confidently with adults and develop their language well. By Reception, most children are writing short sentences independently.
- Attainment at Key Stage 1 improved last year and was above average overall. It was higher in reading than in writing and mathematics, where it was broadly average. This is because there is a strong focus on establishing secure reading skills for pupils at all levels of attainment. This year there has been further improvement in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in each subject is now above average and this represents good achievement across the key stage.
- Inspection evidence shows that pupils make better progress in Year 2 than in Year 1. Attainment currently in Year 1 is at the level expected for this age and in-year progress has been as nationally expected. Progress in Year 2 is more rapid.
- Since the school was last inspected, there has been good improvement in pupils' achievement and attainment at Key Stage 2. In 2013, achievement was good and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average.
- The school's detailed analysis of pupils' progress shows a continued improvement for pupils currently in school. The current Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve improved standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Year 5 pupils are achieving standards that are well above those expected for their ages in English and mathematics.
- Outcomes of the Year 1 phonics screening check were just below average. The few pupils who did not reach the required level have been given extra support, but some are still not using phonics to read words accurately. However, attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 is above average, supporting a judgement of good progress in Year 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress against their individual targets and in reading, writing and mathematics. This year's assessment information shows pupils making more than expected progress in all key stages.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well in English and mathematics. They soon achieve a good level of English and access the full curriculum, making good progress. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, targeted groups make good progress in learning English.
- The most-able pupils make good progress. In 2013, the proportion achieving the higher levels

was above that nationally in mathematics and writing. The school's current assessments show further improvement in the number of pupils set to achieve the higher levels.

- In 2013, despite making better progress than non-eligible pupils, the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium was up to a year behind, reflecting their lower starting points. When compared to national attainment data, these pupils closed the gap, being only a term behind in reading, in line with the national average in writing and two terms ahead in mathematics. Current eligible Year 6 pupils are catching up with other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils learn effectively because teaching enables them to consolidate newly learned skills across a range of subjects. Pupils in Year 4 developed writing skills further for example in science, where they also reviewed their knowledge and understanding of the water cycle.
- Teachers build well on what pupils have learned and in most year groups ensure good or better progress. At Key Stage 2, teaching challenges pupils at all levels of attainment and this has a positive impact on learning and progress.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly. Marking identifies areas where pupils have done well and those they could improve. It is consistently helpful in different subjects. Pupils say it supports their progress and they were able to talk about specific improvements in their work because of marking. Most parents responding to Parent View and those spoken to before school agree that teaching is good.
- Displays of useful information on classroom walls are kept up to date so they are appropriate to current work and help pupils find things out for themselves.
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well. They support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs effectively through small-group and in-class support so they make the same good progress as other pupils.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults engage with children well and effectively extend children's language skills while checking learning. There is particularly good support for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The teaching of phonics is not of a consistent quality across all groups. In Year 1, groups are large and teachers are not able to keep the attention of all pupils throughout the sessions. Conversely, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are in smaller groups with effective adult lead. Children are attentive and the level of participation is high.
- Systems for monitoring progress from Reception into Key Stage 1 lack continuity. Staff are not entirely effective at tracking the progress of the more-able Reception children when they have achieved the Early Learning Goals and begin work on the Key Stage 1 curriculum. Teachers find it difficult to show the progress these children make due to weaknesses in the current tracking system.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They have excellent attitudes to learning and approach tasks with enthusiasm and a determination to do their very best. They try to overcome any

difficulties they experience for themselves. For example, pupils use a wide range of readily available resources and classroom displays to work things out.

- Pupils at all ages take great care to present their work neatly and tidily. Work in books is set out with careful thought in most cases. Only very occasionally do pupils not fully act upon teachers' comments in marking. Pupils look after the school site, which is free from litter and graffiti.
- Pupils speak exceptionally well about behaviour. Lessons are very rarely interrupted. In school assemblies, pupils pay full attention and readily engage in activities, showing high levels of self-discipline. School records indicate this type of behaviour is typical.
- At break times behaviour is excellent. Pupils from different backgrounds and of different ages mix freely. They say bullying is very rare and any isolated cases are dealt with swiftly.
- Pupils enjoy school a great deal. Attendance has improved this year and is now good. Pupils arrive in good time, enabling a prompt start to the school day.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. It is not yet outstanding because leaders, including the governing body, are currently updating policy documents ready for review. They are also checking that all relevant training for new governors is up to date.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe at school because school leaders ensure their safety is a high priority. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay safe while using the internet and are fully aware of security related to social media sites. Bullying, including that which is prejudice based, is very rare and when it occurs it is dealt with effectively
- Pupils are cared for very well in the before- and after-school clubs. Activities are of a high quality. This provision is carefully monitored and excellent practice underpins a very positive experience for pupils at the beginning and end of each day.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View agree their children are happy, safe and well looked after, and that behaviour is good.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the school's previous inspection, leadership has been effective in improving the school. New governance and two headteachers, one interim and more recently, a new permanent headteacher, have worked effectively to improve the quality of education provided by the school. Leaders have shown their capacity to improve the school through:
 - rigorous monitoring to improve teaching
 - close checking of pupils' progress leading to better achievement and higher standards at Key Stage 2
 - more robust challenge for senior leaders from the new governing body
 - holding class teachers to account more regularly for pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders use regular classroom observations and 'drop-ins' to check the quality of teaching. They match this to pupil progress tracking data and scrutiny of work samples. In addition teachers are required to account for pupils' progress in regular meetings. As a result, teaching has improved.

- Leaders set challenging targets for the work of teachers and these have helped improve teachers' performance. However, this process does not allow teachers a reasonable amount of time to achieve their pupil progress targets, because they are set later in the year than is usual. Additionally, systems for checking the work of support staff are not yet robust.
 - Leadership at all levels has developed well since the previous inspection. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a realistic view of provision in the Nursery and Reception and has clear ideas about how to further improve provision. The leader of special educational needs provision has revolutionised systems for registering, teaching and monitoring the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Provision is regularly checked against pupil progress to ensure quality.
 - The range of topics and subjects is carefully planned to engage pupils' interest. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing literacy skills and mathematics, from the very earliest age. There are good links between subjects so learning is meaningful. This is a key factor in forming pupils' positive attitudes to learning. There is a good level of attention paid to creative aspects of the school's work such as art and music.
 - The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. Each area is equally well developed. Of particular note is the pupils' understanding of social and moral aspects, typified by the way pupils of different backgrounds get on exceptionally well and their excellent behaviour.
 - Specific grants are managed well. Pupil premium funding is used to improve the progress of eligible pupils through providing one-to-one support, small-group work and additional teacher time where needed. Qualifying pupils are helped to attend school clubs and go on school visits and funds support their attendance at breakfast and after-school clubs. The school has made detailed arrangements for spending the primary sports fund to have a positive impact on pupils' lifestyles. Teachers' skills in teaching gymnastics and dance will be improved through training. Swimming tuition is provided to reduce the number of non-swimmers and there are out-of-class activities to encourage physical activity. The impact of these initiatives has yet to be evaluated.
 - The local authority has made a significant contribution to this school's improvement because they responded quickly following the previous inspection. They put in a new governing body with a knowledgeable Chair. Knowing the current headteacher could not start straight away, the local authority seconded an interim headteacher from a local outstanding school to ensure continuity. The current school improvement partner knows the school well. The support provided is good and has been an important factor in moving the school on.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Members of the governing body are knowledgeable, well experienced and have quickly formed into a group prepared to challenge and support for the good of the school. They participate in suitable training activity
 - Under the strong leadership of the Chair, governors are active in dealing with important issues identified through early monitoring and through checking school effectiveness for themselves.
 - Governors are regular visitors to the school and have a good knowledge of how well teachers are doing through first-hand experiences and through discussions with staff. This means they are fully aware of how well the school is doing and how the achievement of pupils compares with other schools.
 - They challenge senior leaders on school improvement. They set clear targets in managing the performance of the headteacher and staff, making sure teachers' pay increases link to competence. They are aware of shortcomings in the current performance management

arrangements and are ready to deal with related issues.

- They make sure statutory requirements are met, including for safeguarding.

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	104354
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	442535

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	435
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Hardacre
Headteacher	Justin Crilly
Date of previous school inspection	25 October 2012
Telephone number	01902 558544
Email address	woodthorneprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

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