

Woodfield Junior School

Woodfield Avenue, Penn, Wolverhampton, WV4 4AG

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	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. It is not good because

- Leadership, management and teaching all require improvement so that pupils' behaviour and achievement can be improved.
- Although the progress pupils make is in line with the national average, it is not yet good.
- Despite pupil premium pupils making better progress, the gaps in their attainment when compared to other pupils, are not closing quickly enough.
- Teaching is not good because pupils do not always undertake activities that are matched to different ability groups, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- At times pupils' language development is hampered because they are not required to fully explain their ideas in lessons.
- Lessons have too many objectives therefore the important learning is not always clear to either the teachers or pupils.
- Teaching assistants are not always used effectively.
- In a few year groups, teachers' assessments are not universally accurate. This hinders the ability of senior leaders and the governing body, to hold staff to account for the progress pupils make.
- There are weaknesses in the leadership of some subjects, year groups and the management of pupils with disabilities and special needs.
- There are inconsistencies in the way staff manage behaviour and rewards.
- Not enough attention is given to pupils' achievement in the school's safeguarding records.

The school has the following strengths

- Improvements have been made to pupils' reading and there are some strengths in the teaching of mathematics
- Marking is effective, particularly in helping pupils improve their writing.
- The Executive Headteacher and Head of School demonstrated an impressive grasp of the priorities that need to be urgently addressed.
- Since the last inspection the governing body has taken action to improve the effectiveness of senior leadership.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 24 lessons and, in addition, a number of short visits were made to lessons. They held meetings with pupils and spoke to pupils in lessons, at break-times and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school’s improvement planning, governing body minutes and a wide range of policies, including those designed to ensure that pupils are safe. They also examined the work in pupils’ books and a range of information about their progress.
- The inspectors met with teachers, senior leaders and three members of the governing body including the chair. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority
- The views of parents were considered through the 84 responses to a recent questionnaire that had been administered by the school. The 26 responses on the ‘Parent View’ website were also considered. The views of some parents were gained through informal discussions as they brought their children to school and one letter that the inspection team received.
- Inspectors also considered the views expressed in questionnaires returned by 18 members of staff.
- 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

Kevin Sheldrick, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Michael Onyon

Additional Inspector

Hazel Pulley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are both well above the national average. About half the pupils are from an Indian background.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care) is a slightly lower than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs that are met through school action is below average. The proportions supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also below average
- The school met the government's floor standard, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress, in 2013.
- The governing body is also responsible for Woodfield Infants School which shares the same campus.
- The governing body has implemented a new senior leadership structure to ensure much greater continuity as pupils transfer into the junior school. An executive headteacher now oversees both schools and the previous separate headteacher posts were abolished.
- The previous headteacher of the junior school left the school at the end of last term. The executive headteacher is the former headteacher of Woodfield Infants School. She has been in post since the 1st May. The former deputy head of the junior school was appointed as head of school at the same time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by
 - ensuring pupils consistently undertake activities that are matched to different ability groups, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics.
 - reduce the number of objectives (success criteria) in lessons and give greater emphasis to the most important learning
 - improve teachers' questioning so pupils have to give more extended responses
 - improve the use of teaching assistants in lessons and through their greater involvement in addressing pupils' weaknesses in sessions outside of normal lessons.
- Improve leadership and management by
 - ensuring the accuracy of all assessments so staff can be more effectively held to account for the progress their pupils make, particularly for those eligible for pupil premium
 - ensuring the leadership of all subjects, year groups and the management of special needs is fully effective.
- Improve behaviour, including aspects of safeguarding, by
 - ensuring all staff consistently apply the school's behaviour policy
 - implement an approach to rewards that more quickly recognises the achievements of all pupils
 - eradicating the instances of off task behaviour in lessons associated with the weakness in teaching
 - giving greater consideration to the progress made by pupils in the school's safeguarding records.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- On entering the school, pupils' attainment is normally average. Pupils are making expected progress but there is some variation across different year groups and between different subjects.
- Attainment has been consistently average although results in mathematics are better than in the case in other subjects. Pupils make faster progress in mathematics because teachers are using assessment more effectively in this subject.
- More recently pupils are making better progress in writing largely because of strengths in the marking of this aspect. Teachers are ensuring that pupils respond to the next steps identified in marking and this is resulting in better writing.
- The 2013 national test results indicated that pupils, particularly those eligible for pupil premium, did not make as much progress in reading compared to mathematics and writing. In lessons, pupils were observed to be making better progress in reading. This improvement is because more time is devoted to this and pupils are reading more outside of lessons. In addition, steps have been taken to improve the reading abilities of the youngest pupils who have gaps in their understanding of letters and sounds.
- In 2012, pupils supported by the pupil premium were about two terms behind other pupils in the school in writing, reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6, which was a bigger gap than existed in 2011. In 2013 the situation improved from the previous year although it has not yet matched the better results from 2011. Throughout the school, not all staff, including teaching assistants are giving these pupils enough attention.
- Generally, pupils who speak English as an additional language and Indian background pupils progress as well as other pupils. They have benefitted from the additional attention being given to the promotion of reading.
- In lessons pupils' language development, particularly of those pupils who have English as an additional language, is sometimes hindered because they are not required to make more extended responses when answering questions.
- The progress pupils made in lessons observed was variable. This variability was also reflected in pupils' books. Progress was strongest in Years 3 and 4 where lessons tended to move at a brisk pace and a good variety of approaches were adopted to ensure the work undertaken by pupils was at the right level of difficulty. Progress seen in Year 5 lessons was the weakest because the strengths evident lower down in the school were less apparent in this year group. Pupils' books indicated that rates of progress accelerate in Year 6, but that this does not quite match the progress pupils make in Years 3 and 4.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school. They particularly value the opportunities they have to participate in a wide range of trips and after school activities. They are enthusiastic about learning. During the inspection there was great excitement surrounding the imminent performance of 'We will Rock You'.
- Pupils do not make as much progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. This deficiency is because these lessons are not sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of pupils of different ability in the class.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not progress as well as other pupils. The weaknesses in the use of assessment impact more on these pupils.
- More-able pupils make at least expected progress in English and mathematics. A focus on achieving at levels normally associated with secondary school has helped accelerate the progress these pupils make in these subjects in Year 6. More able pupils do not make enough progress in other subjects because they are not always given activities that they find challenging.
- Primary school sports funding has been used to ensure pupils have greater access to out of school activities. This has been effective because it has been targeted at the pupils with the greatest need, including many pupils eligible for the pupil premium.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because in some year groups pupils are not devoting sufficient time working at the right level of difficulty. This weakness was seen in a few mathematics and English lessons but it was more common in other subjects. Comments made by pupils provided further confirmation that this aspect requires improvement.
- Teaching is less effective when the really important learning is not sufficiently emphasised, often because there are too many 'success criteria'. In one lesson, pupils devoted too much time to answering questions that simply required remembering facts. Not enough time was devoted to challenging work that required pupils to critically evaluate and apply their learning.
- Teachers' questioning is not always effective. Although questions are sometimes directed towards named individuals, opportunities are often missed to involve all pupils in thinking deeply about the key ideas in lessons. Very few examples were seen of probing questions being used to encourage pupils to provide more extended responses.
- Teaching assistants do not contribute enough to learning because they are not always managed effectively. Not enough attention is given to their role in lessons and they are not sufficiently involved in leading sessions to address clearly identified weaknesses.
- Teachers do not plan well enough to ensure that the work is carefully adjusted to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs although some do benefit greatly from the support provided by teaching assistants.
- Assessment information is used more effectively to promote mathematics. Pupils spoke positively about the rewarding mathematics they experience that commences with an exercise to identify the gaps in their understanding. The teaching that follows is effective because it is tightly focussed on precisely the difficulties that have been identified.
- Marking is regular and always identifies strengths and the steps for improvement, particularly in English. This is helping pupils improve their writing because teachers are ensuring that pupils respond to their comments.
- Pupils' reading is improving because they read more as a result of the re-introduction of reading records. The greater emphasis being placed on letters and sounds for the weakest readers is also raising standards. As a result, Year 3 pupils were found to have a good knowledge of letters and sounds, which they used well to read unfamiliar words. Improvements in the variety and quality of reading books, and more time for reading, have also helped raise standards.

- There are strengths in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils appreciate the learning gained from regularly hearing about the varied backgrounds of pupils attending the school. Pupils spoke very positively about the opportunities they have to fund raise for charity and the regular assemblies that make them think deeply about issues 'weeks afterwards'. Pupils understand right and wrong and are therefore quite critical of pupils who do not behave very well in lessons. Inspectors observed many lessons in which pupils worked well in pairs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils behaviour requires improvement because there are times when pupils indulge in off-task behaviour that detracts from learning. Most pupils behaved well during the inspection. However all inspectors observed a few examples of behaviour that was less than good. This was almost entirely associated with weakness in teaching. A few pupils indulged in off-task behaviour (usually chatting) because the pace of learning was too slow.
- Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is generally good but that there are occasions when learning is affected by off-task behaviour in lessons, for example when they do not have enough to do in lessons, often in the afternoons when they study subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Whilst staff think that pupils' behaviour is good, parents were more divided in their views about this.
- Pupils spoke positively about the greater clarity in the behaviour expected since the arrival of the new executive headteacher. However they indicated that there is a lot of variation in the behaviour that staff expect, particularly at lunchtimes
- The current approach to rewards is not fully effective because it takes too long to gain recognition for any achievements and some pupils do not receive any acknowledgement.
- Attendance has improved and is at least average for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils and their parents indicate that incidents of bullying are very rare. When they occur they are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils know about the forms that bullying can take, including that which is prejudice-based. In one year group, a few pupils have engaged in some homophobic name calling. This has been dealt with and the very large majority of pupils know that this is wrong.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Records for behaviour and absence are well organised. Child protection incidents and contacts with external agencies are logged systematically and are reported. Although safeguarding records include all incidents they do not take sufficient account of pupils' achievement.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although more challenging targets have been adopted, and performance management is being used more effectively, not all staff, including teaching assistants, have been fully held to account for the progress pupils make. This shortcoming stems from the fact that a few assessments have not been sufficiently accurate and, therefore, in a few classes it has been difficult to evaluate pupils' progress. In addition, this has reduced the effectiveness of some interventions designed to address the gaps in pupils' previous learning, including for pupils with special needs and those eligible for the pupil premium. The school has recognised this problem and has introduced measures to ensure the accuracy of all future assessments.
- Until very recently, teaching has not been improving quickly enough. Although some under-performance has been successfully challenged, some evaluations of teaching have been overly-generous. In the recent past, not all weaknesses have been highlighted and therefore staff have not been able to improve. Staff have not had all of the training they need to improve in all areas.
- The quality of leadership throughout the school has been too variable in its effectiveness. Some year leaders, subject leaders and the leadership of special needs have not ensured a sufficiently rapid rate of improvement. This shortfall is largely because senior leaders have not held middle leaders fully to account and middle leaders have not had the training they need to be fully effective.
- The leader of special educational needs has ensured the effective day-to-day management of this provision but has a limited overview of its effectiveness; for instance, the rates of progress made by the different groups of special needs pupils.
- Leaders have used the pupil premium funding to reduce the gap in attainment that exists but this is not happening quickly enough because not all staff are giving these pupils sufficient attention
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching albeit rather slowly. The leaders of English and mathematics have ensured some improvement: for instance, the effective use of assessment in mathematics and the improvements to reading and marking in English. The head of school has provided helpful critical feedback to staff through a combination of information obtained through lesson observation, pupils' books and assessment information.
- The current leadership team have an accurate awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. Evaluations of teaching are now much more accurate and staff are receiving much more useful feedback about their teaching. Improvement planning clearly shows that leaders understand the urgency needed in addressing the weakness that have prevented the school from making more rapid progress.
- Staff and parents have responded enthusiastically to the new executive headteacher; one parent captured the views of many others in stating that 'I am really pleased that the very good leadership we have had in the infants is now going to be extended into the juniors'. Leaders have taken action to improve behaviour and are already implementing a new structure to strengthen leadership.
- The local authority has provided relatively little support to the school because leadership and management of the school was judged good at its last inspection. The executive headteacher and governors spoke positively about the support they have received from the human resources department of the local authority.

■ The school has allocated its additional funding to promote sport, following the careful evaluation of which pupils would benefit most. Funding is being used to promote more sport through external providers, particularly to cover the gaps in the expertise of existing school staff. The pupils involved reported positively about the opportunities that this has provided.

■ **The governance of the school**

- Governors are clear about the role they play in ensuring that the school achieves high standards and continues to improve. They have an accurate view of pupils' attainment and the progress that different groups of pupils make.
- Governors undertake training to ensure that they have a detailed knowledge of the information related to the school's performance.
- The governing body has made reasonable arrangements for the use of pupil premium funding and is well informed about how the money is used. It is holding leaders to account for ensuring that these pupils make better progress.
- Governors are familiar with how teachers' performance is managed to improve their practice. They ensure only effective teaching is rewarded. They know, and support, how senior leaders are tackling any remaining underperformance in teaching.
- Since the last inspection, the governing body has taken action to improve the effectiveness of senior leadership through performance management and through a re-structuring exercise.

An external review of governance and pupil premium is recommended.

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	104299
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	442534

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Fred Pezhman
Headteacher	Shelpa Patel
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2013
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