

Woodwater Academy

Woodwater Lane, Exeter, EX2 5AW

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders at all levels in the academy trust, including the head of school and local governors, have the highest expectations about the academy's continuous improvement and are working hard to ensure that this is happening. This outstanding leadership and management is bringing about rapid school improvement.
- Attainment and progress are now securely good throughout the academy. This includes in English and mathematics.
- Teaching in all parts of the academy is consistently good and this is helping pupils to achieve well.
- The early years' provision is highly effective in supporting children's rapid development and learning.
- Pupils' behaviour at all times is of the highest order. Relationships are strong and the academy instils in pupils a clear understanding of fairness and respect.
- The academy ensures that every pupil is safe and secure. Close links with external partners mean that any vulnerability is addressed swiftly and sensitively. All pupils benefit from the wide range of activities that take place beyond the school day. These help to ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Parents, carers and staff are very positive about the academy's work. They value the different ways that they are encouraged to help with their children's learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most able pupils do not yet achieve at the highest levels.
- All pupils would benefit from wider opportunities to learn about modern British society. A wider range of experiences would help pupils to deepen their understanding of life in modern Britain.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all parts of the school and observed lessons jointly with the head of school and deputy head of school.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils' work throughout the school, including in English and mathematics.
- Inspectors talked to parents and carers before the start of the school day and took account of the 17 responses submitted to Parent View, the online questionnaire. They also considered the 40 returns given by staff through the staff questionnaire and parent surveys conducted by the academy over time.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and their views about the academy.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed with them their attitudes to reading for pleasure.
- Inspectors met with the head of school and other academy leaders. They met a member of the local governing body and a member of the board of the academy trust to explore governance.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents relating to different aspects of the academy's work. This included information about pupils' progress, how the quality of teaching is checked and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Marion Hobbs, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Matt Middlemore	Additional inspector
Paul Hodson	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Woodwater Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 January 2013. When Ofsted last inspected its predecessor school, Walter Daw Primary, it was judged to require improvement. Woodwater Academy is part of the Primary Academies Trust.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. This is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The academy has a nursery on site offering full- and part-time places to children aged three and over. The Reception class is full time.
- The academy provides wrap around care through a breakfast club and an afterschool club.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of the most able, so that they attain at the highest levels.
- Provide a wider range of educational experiences that provide pupils with an even deeper understanding of life in modern Britain.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The Primary Academies Trust (the trust) structure provides an over-arching framework that is enabling rapid and sustained school improvement to the benefit of all pupils.
- The head of school, senior leaders and members of the local governing body all share and communicate the highest expectations both to staff and pupils. They work closely with the directors and members of the trust in monitoring all aspects of the academy's work. Middle leaders are highly effective in their roles to coordinate teachers' work in each part of the academy. As a result of this highly focused and cohesive leadership and management, Woodwater Academy is improving rapidly.
- A rigorous system is in place to check on the quality of teaching and teachers' performance. This is linked to pupils' progress and the academy development plan. It ensures that pay increases are used to reward good practice.
- The rich network of focus groups across the trust allows staff to share and develop best practice regularly through the year. This, in turn, is supporting rapid improvements in achievement throughout the academy.
- The additional pupil premium funding is distributed effectively to help those pupils who require extra help receive the support they need in order to catch up with their peers.
- The academy is seeking continuously to improve the already good range of experiences offered to all pupils across subjects. These ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. School leaders are constantly looking to find further opportunities, for example through educational visits or guests to the academy to enrich pupils' understanding of the wider world. Respect for all and equality of opportunity are integral to the academy's ethos and work. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is very well developed through the wide range of experiences pupils encounter.
- Pupils benefit from a wide variety of competitive and sporting clubs and tournaments. These are having a very strong impact on pupils' health and well-being. The government's additional primary sport grant is being used imaginatively to employ professional sports coaches as well as provide transport for pupils and high quality physical education equipment.
- The academy's arrangements for safeguarding are outstanding. Statutory requirements are met by robust systems that are checked regularly. More than this, senior leaders with responsibility for dealing with any incident relating to vulnerability are skilled in managing these sensitively and swiftly. Links with external partners are also strong and effective in meeting these needs.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance operates at a strategic level across the academy trust and locally through the local governing body. Together, these two groups are highly effective in providing robust challenge and support to all aspects of the academy's work.
- The local governing body works closely to monitor the quality of teaching and all pupils' attainment and progress. Governors are able to ask challenging questions of senior leaders about the performance of different groups, including those who are disadvantaged as well as the most able. They recognise that, as yet, the most able are not achieving as well as they should and are working hard to address this with senior leaders. They understand the academy's finances, although these are managed by the academy trust at a more strategic level. Governors understand the links between teachers' performance and increased pay. Governors ensure that this is tied to pupils' progress and is part of the academy's development plan. They check on the use of the pupil premium and sport funding and the impact of each on pupils' achievement.
- Governors are a visible presence around the academy and are always available to speak to parents.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Throughout the academy, pupils are keen to engage with their learning and are proud to show visitors their work. Classrooms and open spaces are vibrantly filled with pupils' wide range of achievements. Cedric the centipede, hanging as part of pupils' work on the rainforest, is just one telling example of this.
- Relationships are a real strength. Pupils show great respect for each other as well as the adults who help them, and this supports their good progress in lessons.

- Disruption of any kind is rare in lessons and does not interfere with learning. Should an incident occur, it is managed quickly and appropriately by staff.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying means in its different forms. Since its opening, all staff in the academy have worked hard to create a culture of respect and fairness. This is understood and valued by pupils, who say it helps them to sort out problems if they happen.
- Parents are highly positive about all that the academy does for their children. The 'Book of Smiles' is valued by parents as a document where they can record comments about their children's achievements.
- Attendance has improved rapidly since the school opened and is now above average. The academy works effectively with parents to help them understand the importance of good rates of attendance.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Systems to manage child protection are robust and maintained to a high standard.
- Senior leaders who work with vulnerable pupils and families do so tirelessly in order to ensure the best possible support. Strong links with external agencies make sure that response to any identified need is put in place quickly and effectively.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in different situations. This includes when working online or using smartphones.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching across the academy is good and this supports pupils' good rates of achievement. It is not yet outstanding because challenge for the most able is inconsistent between different classes and year groups, with the result that these pupils do not attain sufficiently at the highest levels.
- High expectations and activities that respond to pupils' interests characterise lessons throughout the academy. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils' wider exploration of the Romans, to include the making of Roman shields and models of the Colosseum from an original starting point in a reading text, is one example of this.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in using a range of techniques to check on pupils' progress and understanding in lessons. These help all groups of pupils to achieve well.
- The topic approach to the planning of learning means that literacy and numeracy skills are woven into the range of activities pupils encounter. This too helps their good rates of progress in different subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Pupils' work is checked regularly through marking. Pupils respond well to teachers' comments and show that they understand how to improve their work further.
- Those pupils who need extra help of any kind to catch up in their learning are well supported through a wide range of interventions. These are delivered by highly skilled teaching assistants. Senior leaders check systematically on the effectiveness of this work and adjust provision according to need.
- Homework is set at an appropriate level throughout the academy and helps pupils to deepen their understanding and skills.

The achievement of pupils is good

- As a new school, the academy has robust evidence to show that it is now ensuring that pupils in all years are making rapid rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspectors' close scrutiny of pupils' work over time confirmed this.
- The 2014 National Curriculum test and teacher assessments relate to the predecessor school. These show that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6 was broadly in line with national expectations. 2014 Key Stage 2 progress outcomes, which were less than expected, related to the outcomes of the predecessor school.
- 2014 Key Stage 1 results show that reading and writing were below national expectations and mathematics was in line with these.
- Current information shows that the strategies put in place by senior leaders have had a significant impact on the attainment and progress of pupils in all year groups. Inspectors were able to test this through their discussions with school leaders, observations of lessons and discussions with pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now making progress in line with their peers in the school and those nationally

in reading, writing and mathematics. Gaps are closing rapidly.

- Pupils with special educational needs are making the same good rates of progress as their peers in all subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The most able are now making rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics but have yet to attain at the highest levels, that is level 6, by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Reading has been a special focus for the new school and pupils in all years are now reading often and widely. Pupils talk animatedly about their enjoyment of reading and the wide range of texts available to them to choose from.
- The organisation of learning for each part of the academy means that all pupils develop and apply their skills and understanding appropriately. An example of this was seen in the Years 1 and 2 class where pupils benefit from group activities that nurture their particular language and mathematical needs.
- Pupils' enjoyment of after-school clubs, educational visits and participation in a wide range of sporting and competitive events helps them to be well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- A significant group of children enter the nursery below a level of development that is typical for their age. From their starting points, children make rapid progress in the nursery. This, in turn, contributes to their success in achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. In 2014 this was above national averages for all children, boys and girls.
- Most children in Reception have already attended the nursery, which means that staff understand their individual needs well, that provision is tailored to their needs and is highly effective. Teaching is consistently good or better over time and this supports children's high levels of achievement. Senior leaders check regularly on the quality of teaching and children's achievement through their visits and observations.
- The design of the early years foundation stage area provides nursery and Reception children with free choice to the many high quality resources. This benefits their very positive attitudes towards learning. All children mix well together and share happily in their different learning experiences. This promotes high levels of self-control and respect for others.
- The early years foundation stage leader and her team of teachers and teaching assistants plan with great care to make sure that no child is left behind in any aspect of their learning. Staff constantly check children's development through observations of their play and adjust activities to ensure that their needs are well met.
- The many high quality resources on offer allow children to develop their language and physical skills in a safe, stimulating environment. Indoor and outdoor experiences allow children to manage risk safely and to cooperate well with each other.
- Children's development is recorded in high quality 'Learning Journeys' and these are shared regularly with parents and carers. A daily 'Communication Diary' enables any concern or celebration to be shared between home and school immediately. These are valued as an effective means of supporting both children and parents.
- Staff offer parents opportunities every term to come and learn for themselves about different aspects of their children's learning, for example in reading. These are much appreciated and well attended. They provide another means of creating strong home/school links. Teachers and teaching assistants benefit from regular training with other staff across the trust. This means that the quality of provision is maintained at the highest level to the benefit of all children.

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	139019
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	447829

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	332
Appropriate authority	The Local Governing Body
Chair	Shane Cox
Headteacher	Chief Executive Officer Gary Chown Head of School Ashley Leeson
Date of previous school inspection	October 2012
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