

# Woodford Church of England Primary School

High Street, Woodford, Kettering, NN14 4HF

## Inspection dates

26–27 February 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Standards at the end of Year 6 have fallen since the last inspection and were low in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 was low in mathematics and below average in reading last year.
- The proportion of children who reached a good level of development at the end of their time in Reception has varied greatly from year to year. It was low in 2014.
- Of the pupils who left school last year, not enough made expected or better than expected progress in mathematics during their time in Years 3 to 6. The proportion of pupils who made at least expected progress was also below that of schools nationally in reading and writing.
- Over time, staffing difficulties and weaknesses in teaching have resulted in too many pupils underachieving.
- On occasion, teachers set work that does not provide the right level of challenge. They do not provide pupils with enough guidance in lessons so that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Teachers with leadership responsibility for specific areas of the school's work, including subjects, have not contributed enough to raising achievement and improving teaching.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement. Staff do not use assessment information effectively to check children's progress.
- Planned activities in the early years, especially for children in the nursery, do not always promote their learning as well as they could.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher provides good leadership and has the necessary skills to move the school forward. Since her appointment was made permanent, she has taken firm action to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- The governing body makes a good contribution to school development. Governors have provided strong support to the headteacher in raising achievement and tackling underperformance.
- Teaching has already begun to improve and there is now some teaching that is good.
- Most pupils currently in the school have made the expected amount of progress. Pupils' work in lessons and in their books show that their achievement is improving.
- Pupils behave well and feel very safe in school. They are eager to learn and willing to work hard.
- There has been an increase in the attendance rate and it is now above average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 13 lessons, almost all jointly with the headteacher. She looked at pupils' books, talked with them about their work, and checked their progress over time. The inspector heard some pupils in Year 1 read and observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the senior teacher, and informal discussions took place with some other staff. A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, and a telephone discussion took place with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector considered the 20 responses to the online survey, Parent View, took into account the written views of a small number of parents and spoke to a few parents when they brought their children to school. The four questionnaires completed by staff were also considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation. This included: the school's self-evaluation and development plan; records of pupils' attainment, progress, behaviour and attendance; and systems for protecting and safeguarding pupils.

## Inspection team

Margaret Goodchild, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.*

### Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Reception Year attend full time; those in the Nursery Year attend for up to five half days each week. There are currently 14 children in the Nursery Year and nine in the Reception Year. The two age groups are taught in the same class.
- Pupils in the rest of the school learn in mixed-age classes for Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6.
- Nearly all pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is just above average. This funding is for disadvantaged pupils who are either looked after children or are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is just above average.
- The number of pupils on roll has increased since the last inspection and there is now more movement of pupils in and out of the school other than at the usual times.
- There were too few pupils in Year 6 in 2014 to report the school's performance against the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- When the last inspection took place, the school had an interim headteacher for two days a week. Her time in school was subsequently reduced to one day a week because of her commitments at another school where she was deputy headteacher. She was then appointed as permanent headteacher at Woodford in September 2013, working for four days a week. The senior teacher, who teaches the early years class and deputises for the headteacher for one day each week, has been in post since 2012.
- There have been major staffing changes in the remaining classes over the last year, and the school has had to use supply teachers to cover for long-term teacher absence. A new permanent teacher began in the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6 in January 2015, and a new teacher took up post in the Year 1 and 2 class a week before the inspection. One of the two part-time teachers in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4 joined the school half way through the autumn term in 2014 and the other returned after a period of absence.
- The school is receiving support from Lincroft School, which is a National Support School, and from the Pilgrim Learning Trust (PLT), of which it is a member.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement and increase the amount of teaching that is good or better by:
  - increasing the proportion of pupils who make more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stages 1 and 2 so that it is at least in line with schools nationally
  - increasing the proportion of children who make good progress in the early years, thus reducing the wide variations in attainment at the end of the Reception Year
  - making sure that teachers always communicate high expectations to pupils and set tasks that provide the right level of challenge
  - providing enough guidance in lessons so that pupils are clear about what they are meant to do and how to succeed
  - making the indoor and outdoor areas more stimulating in the early years so that they contribute more effectively to children's development in all areas of learning
  - making sure that all activities in the early years, including for Nursery-aged children, provide opportunities for deep learning and promote children's language, speaking and listening, and thinking

skills.

- Strengthen leadership and management and increase the rate of school improvement by:
  - developing the leadership skills of teachers with responsibility for specific areas of the school's work, including subjects, so that they contribute fully to raising achievement and improving teaching
  - sharpening the way staff in the early years use assessment information to check children's progress, to identify gaps in their learning and to pinpoint the next steps in their development.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- The school has been through a number of changes and difficulties that have had a negative impact on its effectiveness. It is now emerging from a period where the quality of education has been inadequate and is better placed to improve than at any time since the last inspection.
- The staffing turbulence since the last inspection coincided with weaknesses in teaching. In addition, the school went through a period with very little external support at a time when it was most in need of help. Taken together, these factors meant that pupils' achievement declined.
- When the current headteacher's appointment became permanent in September 2013 and her time in school increased to four days a week, she immediately set about tackling weaknesses in teaching in order to raise achievement. Staff were provided with a great deal of support which brought about some improvements, but rigorous checks on teachers' performance revealed some inadequate teaching. Setting targets for improvement where teaching was weak gave rise to periods of staff absence and, during this time, the school was obliged to use supply teachers to cover two of the four classes.
- The headteacher's strong leadership of teaching meant that temporary teachers received close support and challenge, with regular checks on their planning and pupils' progress. This enabled the headteacher to go some way towards making sure that all pupils received equal opportunities. As a result, the proportion of pupils making at least expected progress has increased over the last year.
- Once the school was in a position to replace teachers who had left, the headteacher and governors were very clear about what they were looking for. Through a careful selection process, they have made some strong recent appointments. While it is too soon to see the full effect of this, it has greatly increased the school's capacity to improve.
- After a period with limited involvement, the local authority has provided good support to the school since the beginning of this academic year. It has undertaken a number of focused reviews that have clearly pinpointed what needs to be improved, and it is providing additional funding for the school to support, develop, and monitor teaching and learning.
- The headteacher has high expectations and communicates these clearly to staff. She is ambitious for the school and is working closely with the new teachers to maintain a strong focus on raising standards. Support from a National Support School and the PLT is also contributing to school improvement. Senior leaders are making the most of the opportunities this brings to strengthen a number of aspects of the school's work, including the training of staff.
- Up to now, the headteacher has received only limited support from staff with leadership responsibilities for subjects, and the leadership of the early years requires improvement. With so many staff changes, most teachers have taken over new leadership roles very recently and they have not had time to contribute to raising achievement and improving teaching. Training is planned through the PLT in order to develop the leadership of subjects and other areas of the school's work.
- Senior leaders have successfully established an atmosphere in which teaching can flourish and pupils are expected to behave well. Leaders keep a close check on any possible discrimination and promote positive relationships between pupils.
- The headteacher has forged stronger links with parents, including through the creation of a parents' forum, in order to involve them more closely in school improvement. The large majority of parents who completed Parent View are satisfied with the school's work. Those who expressed their views during the inspection said that 'the school has come on by leaps and bounds' under the leadership of the present headteacher.
- The school has introduced the revised National Curriculum and is in the process of reviewing learning opportunities to see how they can be made to reflect pupils' interests more strongly. A good range of

clubs and special events, such as the Greek Day held during the inspection, help to motivate pupils. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development and British values well. It instils in pupils the importance of treating people who are different from themselves with tolerance, kindness, and respect. This helps to prepare them effectively for life in modern Britain.

- The school uses its pupil premium funding appropriately to support pupils for whom it is intended. It has provided extra support for pupils' learning and funded eligible pupils' participation at breakfast club. This has helped to raise the attendance rate of these pupils and enabled them to make at least as much progress as their classmates.
- The school makes good use of its primary physical education and sport premium. It has used the funding to increase pupils' participation in sports festivals and to provide qualified coaches to work alongside teachers. It has purchased gymnastic equipment, provided additional sports clubs and trained older pupils as sports leaders so that they now organise activities at playtime for younger ones.
- The school has good systems in place for safeguarding pupils. Leaders carry out very thorough checks to make sure that pupils are kept safe and that everyone is appropriately trained. The school works very closely with other agencies and staff are vigilant in identifying pupils who might be at risk.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is effective and makes a strong contribution to school improvement. Governors have an in-depth knowledge of the school's work, including what data reveal about its effectiveness. They are clear about where improvements are still needed and are prepared to take decisive action when necessary. They have provided strong support to the headteacher in tackling ineffective teaching and make sure that teachers' pay closes reflects their impact on pupils' progress.
- Governors regularly check the effectiveness of pupil premium spending. They have been instrumental in putting in more support recently for pupils at Key Stage 2 who need extra help to boost their achievement.
- The governing body makes sure that the school's finances are managed well and that it meets statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding pupils. Governors recently undertook an audit to check how well the school promotes British values and prepares pupils for life in modern British society.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school and like the way they are able to get to know everyone. Parents and pupils agree that behaviour is good and records confirm that past weaknesses in teaching did not lead to any significant increase in behavioural incidents.
- In lessons, pupils show that they are eager to learn and willing to work hard. Now that teaching is improving, they readily engage with the tasks teachers set them, especially in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6. Behaviour in the early years is consistently good.
- The school is quick to take action when any inappropriate behaviour occurs and senior leaders work closely with parents to resolve issues. Pupils appreciate the way they can work their way up to a gold award for behaving well, and they have good relationships with one another and with the staff.
- The school has been particularly successful with a number of pupils who have moved to Woodford having experienced emotional and behavioural difficulties in other schools. It has also enabled a number of looked after children to settle in and flourish.
- The attendance rate has improved since the last inspection and is above average.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They have gained a good understanding of e-safety from the recent training that the school provided for

pupils and their parents. They are also able to talk about ways in which to keep themselves safe in the outside world and how to respond if something suddenly happens that might put their safety at risk.

- Pupils say that there is no bullying because 'most people here are nice' but add that 'people do sometimes have disagreements'. Records show that there has been a small amount of name calling but that work to raise pupils' awareness earlier this year has minimised disagreements between pupils.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- Weaknesses in teaching over time have been key to pupils' underachievement. While the school tackled inadequate teaching and was obliged to cover staff absences with temporary teachers, pupils' learning suffered.
- Weaknesses in teaching in Years 3 to 6 led to low test results, especially in 2014, and a lack of consistency in teaching has been a particular issue over time for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' books at Key Stages 1 and 2 as recently as the beginning of the autumn term show that previously teachers often accepted a small amount of recorded work without challenging pupils to produce more. Their expectations were not high enough and they did not place enough importance on accurate spelling and punctuation.
- Pupils themselves say that they only learnt a small amount in the past compared with the amount they are learning now. Those in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is now good, are particularly aware of how much things have changed for the better in recent months. As a result, pupils in this class are now 'switched on' to learning and enthusiastic about their lessons.
- Improvements in teaching are most evident in the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6, but the quality of teaching is improving throughout the school. Pupils' achievement was either good or required improvement in almost all the lessons observed during the inspection and inadequate progress in lessons is now a rare occurrence.
- There are still some lessons where teachers' expectations are not as high as they could be. For instance, they do not all insist on neat handwriting and using time to maximum effect. At times, teachers set work that is not pitched at the right level for pupils, such as in an information and communication technology lesson where the task was much too difficult for nearly all the class. There are instances where teachers do not provide pupils with enough guidance about what they need to do to succeed. In the early years, activities do not always provide enough opportunities for learning.
- In the past, inaccuracies in assessment made it difficult for the school to judge how well pupils were achieving. Joint assessment with teachers from other schools has enabled the headteacher to check that teachers' recent judgements have been more accurate. The school has effective systems in place for checking what pupils can do when they join the school other than at the usual times.
- Improvements in teaching and the appointment of some effective new permanent teachers are key to the school's capacity to improve. The teaching of reading has improved and staff are now much more competent in the teaching of phonics (linking letters and the sounds they make). Work was matched well to the next steps in learning for different groups in phonics sessions during the inspection.
- The teacher in the class for pupils in Years 1 and 2 only arrived at the beginning of the week of the inspection so it was too soon for her to have had an impact on pupils' achievement. Nevertheless, in a stimulating literacy lesson, she set about immediately conveying high expectations to pupils. By showing them a piece of high quality writing that a pupil had produced in her previous school, she raised their expectations about what they might be able to achieve.
- In a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher made work on shapes and angles interesting by giving pupils a series of flags from different countries to analyse. In a literacy, lesson he made very good use of images and music as a stimulus to introduce pupils to techniques for building suspense in a piece of writing.



- In nearly all the lessons seen, teachers made effective use of their teaching assistants to support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Teaching assistants typically worked on adapted materials or used practical equipment to support pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Marking, which was an issue for improvement at the last inspection, is now a strength. The school has done a lot of work to establish a clear system for informing pupils about what they have done well and what they could do to improve. There is a new marking policy and teachers' detailed comments in pupils' books often include a further challenge to extend and clarify their understanding.

### **The achievement of pupils is inadequate**

- Standards declined significantly following the last inspection, when they had been well-above average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. In 2014, pupils' attainment was low in reading, writing, mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling. Half the pupils failed to reach the expected standard (Level 4) in mathematics and no pupils reached higher levels (Level 5 or above) in reading and writing at the end of Year 6. The proportion reaching level 4 in mathematics was very low compared with that nationally.
- Of the pupils who left school in 2014, the proportions who made expected or more than expected progress at Key Stage 2 were low in mathematics. Girls and average-attaining pupils did particularly badly. The proportion of pupils making expected progress was also low in writing for those who did not receive support through pupil premium funding. The proportion of pupils making expected and better than expected progress in reading was below average.
- Pupils in the current Year 6 still have gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding due to past underachievement, though they are beginning to catch up as a result of recent improvements in teaching. A higher proportion of these pupils have made the expected amount of progress during their time in Key Stage 2 but hardly any have made good progress. Attainment in reading, writing, and mathematics is currently well-below average, but this is partly because some pupils joined the school during the key stage with low prior attainment.
- Children generally start in the early years with skills that are broadly typical for their age, though this varies from year to year. Attainment at the end of the Reception year has shown very wide fluctuations – greater than those normally found in even smaller schools. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the early years was very low in 2014. The skills and rate of progress of those currently in Reception shows a marked improvement, but the progress of children in the Nursery year is more varied.
- The school's results in the Year 1 screening of pupils' knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make) were below average in 2014. A recent check conducted by the school indicates that pupils in the current Year 1 have a much better grasp of phonics. Less-able pupils who read to the inspector showed confidence in tackling new words and were beginning to read with expression.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 was average in writing in 2014, below average in reading and low in mathematics. The school's own records suggest that pupils currently in Year 2 have made the expected amount of progress across Key Stage 1, and they are working broadly in line with expectations for their age.
- Disadvantaged pupils reached the same standards as their classmates at the end of Year 6 in 2014 in reading and mathematics, and they were a term ahead of them in writing and in English grammar, punctuation, and spelling. They made better progress than the rest of their class in reading and mathematics, and their progress was good in writing. However, they were four terms behind other pupils nationally in writing and three terms behind them in reading and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have not always made as much progress academically as other pupils. Nevertheless, the school has been successful in integrating a number of pupils who have failed to make progress in other settings. Combined with recent improvements in



teaching, this is now enabling these pupils to make generally good progress.

- In 2014, there were no pupils in Year 6 identified in the school's published data as being most able because none had reached high standards at the end of Key Stage 1. Very few pupils reached Level 3 at the end of Year 2 last year. Very few pupils are expected to reach Level 5 in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6 this year, although the most-able pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class are now making better progress than before.
- Pupils' books across the year groups show that there has been a marked improvement in the quantity and quality of their work this term compared with early in the autumn term. At that time, pupils' written work was often very brief and sometimes unfinished, showing clear underachievement. Pupils are now producing longer pieces of written work and covering an appropriate amount of work in mathematics.

### **The early years provision**

### **requires improvement**

- Provision in the early years requires improvement and children's attainment at the end of the Reception year has varied widely from year to year. It was low in 2014 so that these children were not ready for their move to Year 1. While children in the current Reception Year are making good progress, the school is not meeting the needs of those in the Nursery Year as well as it could.
- Some of the activities provide limited learning potential and staff do not always pay enough attention to developing the language, speaking and listening skills of Nursery-aged children. For instance, during the inspection a group of children spent a long time sticking pieces of fabric onto a pre-drawn outline of a bear. The activity provided very little opportunity for them to exercise their imaginations or make decisions for themselves, and they received insufficient adult input to develop their thinking. As the children are used to following instructions, they remained in one place rather than moving off to seek greater stimulation elsewhere.
- The indoor and outdoor learning areas provide some interesting activities and resources. However, they do not promote children's development or reflect the different areas of learning as well as they could. The space at the school's disposal is not used to full effect to promote children's learning.
- Nevertheless, children currently in the Reception year are making good progress, especially in literacy and numeracy. This is because they receive good teaching when they work regularly in small groups with the teacher. Focused questioning and challenging work are moving their learning on quickly. The 'job of the day' develops their skills well. For example during the inspection, a group of Reception-aged children concentrated for an extended period of time, ordering pictures to represent the series of events in the story of Goldilocks. In the outdoor area, another group worked very well together, independently creating a map which combined images and words.
- Children behave very well and staff make sure that they are kept safe. Children get on well together and clearly have trusting relationships with the teacher and teaching assistant.
- There are good systems, including through home visits, for finding out what children can already do when they join the early years. Parents are kept well informed about what their children have learnt and benefit from guidance about how to support their development at home.
- The leadership and management of the early years require improvement. While staff observe and record details about what children have done, they do not systematically identify the next steps in their development. There is not a clear system in place for tracking children's progress and identifying gaps in their learning. This is partly why there has been so much variation in attainment from one year to the next.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122005
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	453563

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jane Thorpe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Ransome
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 February 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01832 733221
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