

The Woodlands Primary School

The Crescent, Woodlands, Doncaster, DN6 7RG

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils do not make enough progress across Key Stages 1 and 2. Consequently, many do not reach the levels they are capable of.
- Over a short period of time there have been significant changes to the leadership of the school. This has caused instability and, as a result, the school's overall effectiveness has declined since the last inspection.
- The newly appointed subject leaders are not yet fully involved in improving the quality of teaching and raising standards.
- Teachers' expectations of what their pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Sometimes the work that is set for pupils is too easy and as a result, they do not achieve as well as they might.
- Teaching assistants are not always used well to support pupils' learning in the classroom.
- Behaviour is not consistently good. The attitudes to learning by some pupils are not sufficiently strong and, as a result, this hinders their learning.
- The outside areas in the early years do not give children enough opportunities to investigate and explore.
- The quality of provision in the Reception class does not support good progress.
- The instability and frequent changes to the leadership of the school have meant that governors have had limited opportunities to challenge leaders robustly enough to make the necessary changes.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are safe at this school because safeguarding procedures are secure.
- Most pupils take a pride in their work. The presentation of their work in books is generally of a good standard.
- Children in the Nursery class get a good start to school because the quality of teaching is good.
- The newly appointed acting headteacher has brought stability to the school. She is receiving effective support from an experienced headteacher of another local school.
- Senior leaders and governors have a good understanding of how well the school is doing and are taking effective action to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Parents praise the teachers highly and feel that their children are well cared for and safe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 27 lessons or parts of lessons, eight of these jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They scrutinised a range of pupils' work from all classes; this was also done jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the headteacher, subject leaders, governors, a representative from the local authority and a headteacher from a teaching school alliance.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's self-evaluation, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes from governing body meetings, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Key Stage 1 and 2. They also observed pupils moving around the school outside lessons, including on the playgrounds during breaks and in the dining hall.
- The 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account by inspectors. In addition, parents were asked for their views at the beginning and end of the school day.
- The inspection team considered the 30 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Alan Chaffey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Davis

Additional Inspector

James Reid

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is higher than average. (The pupil premium is additional funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- Since the previous inspection there has been a number of changes in leadership; the current acting headteacher, who has been seconded from another primary school, took up her post in January 2015.
- The acting headteacher is supported by a Local Leader of Education from the Partners in Learning Doncaster Teaching School Alliance.
- The school is an alliance member of the Partners in Learning Doncaster Teaching School Alliance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement and eliminate instances of poor behaviour in lessons by:
 - ensuring all pupils are consistently challenged by moving them onto more demanding learning tasks as soon as they are ready
 - raising teachers' expectations about how much pupils can, and should, achieve in lessons
 - deploying teaching assistants effectively so that they are used effectively to help pupils achieve the best learning they can.
- Further raise the achievement of children in the early years by:
 - improving the quality of their outdoor learning by providing more opportunities for imaginative play, problem solving and investigation
 - ensuring all teachers and support staff in the Reception class build on children's interests through support and questioning that challenges children to improve further.
- Continue to strengthen leadership at all levels by providing training and support for subject leaders so that they are able to contribute to improving teaching and learning and raising pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school has been through a very difficult period over the last two years. Instability in leadership led to a decline in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. As a result, leadership and management require improvement.
- The new acting headteacher, with good support from a Local Leader of Education and other senior leaders in the school, is beginning to address long-term deficiencies in the quality of teaching and the standards that pupils reach. As a result, the school is starting to move in the right direction. Supportive governance gives the school the capacity to meet the challenges it faces with confidence.
- Many subject leaders are new in post. They share the determination of senior leaders to make the vital changes that are needed to improve the school's performance. However, they currently lack the necessary skills and therefore require training in order to drive improvements forward.
- The curriculum is based on enquiry and investigation and is tailored to meet the needs of pupils through a series of themes. It is broad and balanced, and enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to learn to play a range of musical instruments, and all pupils are able to participate in numerous activities such as cooking, sport, arts and crafts, and choir. During the inspection, pupils from Years 3 and 4 performed a production of *Oliver* for parents, carers and other pupils in the school.
- The school focuses well on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares them well for life in modern Britain. For example, a curriculum theme, 'Stars in Our Eyes', studies individual people who pupils feel are effective role models, such as Mother Teresa, Isaac Newton and the Queen. Furthermore, during discussions with pupils they were able to talk confidently about British values such as democracy, fairness and tolerance.
- The school fosters positive relationships with parents who are well informed and supportive. One parent commented that 'Staff are great; they've got the time of day, not just for the kids but for parents as well.'
- The school has had a review on how it uses the pupil premium funding because pupils who are supported through this funding attain standards that are significantly below other pupils nationally. An action plan has been produced and implemented so that support for eligible pupils is more effectively targeted. This has included the appointment of additional teachers who provide more focused support in mathematics and English and a Family Welfare Manager who supports vulnerable children and families.
- The school has made effective use of the primary sport funding and regularly evaluates the impact of this spending. Pupils have more opportunities to take part in a greater range of sports and school teams have had considerable success in local sporting competitions. As a result, the school has good evidence to show that there is greater participation in sports and games which is contributing to pupils leading healthier and more active lifestyles.
- Good relations are fostered throughout the school and staff do not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Staff ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to benefit from all the school offers. This includes consulting pupils on what extra-curricular activities they would like other than sport.
- The Partnership in Learning Doncaster Teaching School Alliance has provided valuable support to the school through a period of difficulty, and is continuing to do so. The local authority has also provided effective support through performance reviews each term and the brokering of support from the teaching school.
- The school meets statutory safeguarding requirements. Safeguarding arrangements are reviewed regularly so that pupils are kept safe at all times.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Through a period of turbulence and significant difficulties, the governing body has remained loyal to the school and shares a determination to work closely with leaders to drive improvements in teaching and learning.
 - Governors are aware of the variations in the quality of teaching and what is being done to address this. They know what the data indicate about how well groups are achieving and how this compares to pupils elsewhere. Governors regularly check on progress and hold school leaders to account.
 - During the autumn term 2014, a review of governance from an external provider identified that governance is strong and effective but some improvements were necessary. As a result, they now consistently challenge and support school leaders in equal measure.
 - Governors understand how performance management is used to improve teaching and achievement. They scrutinise teachers' targets and their performance to make informed decisions about salary increments.

- The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met, including those relating to safeguarding. Finances are well managed, despite the impact on the budget caused by the instability the school has faced.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because the attitudes to learning of a few pupils in some classes are not good enough. In some lessons pupils lose interest and do not concentrate as well as they should.
- Most pupils, however, behave well in lessons and around school. The conduct of pupils around the school and on the playground is generally good.
- Although pupils feel that behaviour in the school is not a problem they say that some pupils on the playground can be boisterous and at times unruly. However, they say that there are usually adults on hand to help. They trust adults and are confident that their concerns are dealt with promptly.
- Parents believe that behaviour in the school is managed well. Most of the parents spoken to by the inspectors and those who responded to Parent View feel that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved.
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance through a range of incentives and rewards. Overall attendance is improving but remains below the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for in school.
- The school has undergone a rigorous safeguarding audit, which was carried out by the Teaching School Alliance, and as a result, all statutory requirements are now met fully.
- Pupils have a good awareness of potentially unsafe situations including when on-line using computers or other devices.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying and say that it is rare in the school. A large majority of parents who responded to Parent View feel that the school deals effectively with bullying and most believe that their children are safe in school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because teachers' expectations of what their pupils can achieve is not consistently high enough in some classes. Evidence from pupils' books and observations of teaching shows that teachers do not always set work that is sufficiently challenging. This means that pupils do not always reach the standards they are capable of.
- Where learning is most effective activities are appropriately challenging and there is a clear sequence to learning. For example, this was seen in Year 2 mathematics books where high expectations, challenge and progress were clearly evident. Similarly in a Year 5 mathematics lesson on measurement conversion, high expectations and challenge underpinned the learning that was going on.
- Where learning is least effective activities lack clarity and expectations are not high enough the pace of learning slows and pupils lose interest in what they are doing resulting in low-level disruption.
- In mathematics, pupils do not always have opportunities to apply the skills they have learned to problem solving and investigative work. In some classes, pupils complete numerous and similar calculations correctly before they are moved onto more demanding and thought-provoking problems.
- Written work in books varies in quality and quantity. Expectations of what pupils can achieve and opportunities to write at length are both inconsistent across the school. However, there are some good examples of written work, such as in a Year 6 class where pupils were planning and writing shorter sections each lesson to build a longer extended piece of persuasive writing. In this lesson pupils were inspired to write a letter following a visit they had made to a centre that taught pupils about how to keep themselves safe.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) is taught well in the early years and in Key Stage 1. Pupils read regularly at school, including a timetabled guided reading session each morning, and often use their knowledge of phonics to help them read unfamiliar words.

- The school provides a range of programmes that supports pupils with their learning, especially for those who need to make more rapid progress. Focused sessions with small groups of pupils, and on a one-to-one basis, include phonics, speech and communication, numeracy and 'Time to Read'.
- Pupils generally take a pride in their work which is well presented. A scrutiny of books by inspectors found that pupils take great care with the presentation of their work.
- Teaching assistants in some classes effectively support children's learning but this is not consistent across the school. In some lessons teaching assistants are not used well enough to support pupils' learning, particularly when teachers are addressing the class.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. However, the school's marking policy is not followed consistently in every class, although the marking and feedback given by some teachers is quite extensive. A scrutiny of books shows that some teachers do not give as much guidance as other teachers do to help children improve their work.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because the inconsistencies in progress have had a negative impact on overall attainment, especially in Key Stage 2. In the 2014 Year 6 national tests pupils achieved standards that were below national averages, significantly so in mathematics, writing and English grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Most children enter the early years with knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. Even though they make at least the progress expected of them, children start Year 1 still below the expected standards. Expected progress continues in Key Stage 1 and although standards have improved for reading and writing, they are still below national averages by the time they start in Key Stage 2. The number of pupils making the progress expected of them by the end of Key Stage 2 has improved. However, too many pupils leave Year 6 with standards that are below what is expected for their age.
- The number of pupils who reached the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2014 was below the national average. However, the attainment of these pupils when they left the Reception class was significantly below what is expected for their age.
- Raising the achievement and accelerating the progress of the most able pupils is a priority in the school improvement plan. These pupils are not always sufficiently challenged during lessons to make the best possible progress. As a result, fewer pupils than seen nationally attain the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- In the 2014 national tests for Year 6, the gap in disadvantaged pupils' attainment compared with other pupils nationally was close to three terms behind in mathematics and writing and approximately two terms behind in reading. When compared to other pupils in the school the gap is narrower. Disadvantaged pupils attained similar standards to other pupils in the school for mathematics; for reading they were over a term behind and for writing it was close to a term behind.
- However, disadvantaged pupils in the school made better progress than other pupils nationally in reading; for writing and mathematics it was below. Also, the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils in the school and other pupils nationally has shown a slight improvement; when compared to other pupils in the school the gap has noticeably narrowed.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well from their relative starting points for mathematics and reading. The percentage of pupils making the progress expected of them is higher than similar pupils nationally for these two subjects and just below for writing.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Most children start Nursery with skills and knowledge that are below what is typical for their age. By the time they leave the Reception class, children have made progress but are still below what is typically expected for their age. This is because the quality of provision is inconsistent. As a result, the early years requires improvement.
- However, standards have shown a significant improvement. Although standards at the end of the Reception class for 2014 were below the national average, standards have improved this year by 30%.
- The early years is well led and managed. The leader has a good understanding of how well children are doing through regular checking of their progress. As a result, she has accurately identified the issues that are limiting children's progress and she is beginning to take positive action to address them.
- Teaching, and the support children receive, is stronger in the Nursery class. For example, every

opportunity is used to develop language, and the indoor provision gives children access to a wide range of stimulating activities.

- Although the Reception class is well staffed, not all adults are skilled in providing experiences that fully engage children and develop their understanding. Opportunities are missed to seize on children's interests and, as a result, some of the activities that children do become less of a learning experience.
- Children are generally happy learners and their behaviour is good. In the Nursery they are still learning to play cooperatively and stay on task; in the Reception class they are keen to learn but at times are less motivated through some of the activities they have access to.
- Adults have established warm relationships with children who are very well cared for and nurtured within a safe environment. Safeguarding procedures are secure.
- Although children make progress in the early years, their progress is not as good as it could be, because their learning experiences in the outdoor areas are limited. For example, opportunities to engage in imaginative play and for solving problems for themselves are few.

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	134236
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	456130

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	469
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	S Gardner
Headteacher	J Potts (acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2012
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