

Woolston Community Primary School

Barnfield Road, Woolston, Warrington, WA1 4NW

Inspection dates 21–22 April 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Woolston Community Primary School is much improved. The effective headteacher, senior leaders and governors are single-minded in their ambitions for the school.
- The school extends a warm welcome to pupils and visitors. The new building is attractive, colourful and vibrant. Pupils feel safe and well-supported.
- Pupils are extremely polite and very well behaved. They are confident, engaging young people.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children in the Reception class make good progress and blossom because of the tempting variety of activities both indoors and outside.
- Pupils achieve well and so standards are rising, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in early years.
- Pupils are keen to learn because teaching is at least good. They work hard because expectations of their achievement are high. They enjoy gaining knowledge.
- Pupils present their work well and take great pride in it. Their work is marked regularly.
- Good support is provided for all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and in the designated provision.
- Parents and their children are very positive about the school's effectiveness. Pupils enjoy coming to school and with parental support they achieve above-average attendance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In 2014 results at the end of Year 6 were below average in mathematics. Too few pupils made more than the progress expected of them in mathematics, reading and writing.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent in Key Stage 2. Too much work is set at the same level despite the different abilities of the pupils.
- Basic skills in mathematics and English are not always built on consistently enough. This sometimes slows down pupils' achievement at the higher levels as they move through school.
- There are some inconsistencies in the quality of marking and teachers' expectations of pupils to act upon the advice given.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons across the school, some accompanied by the headteacher. They looked at pupils’ books, talked to pupils about their work and assessed their progress over time. Inspectors listened to some pupils reading from Key Stages 1 and 2, observed lunchtime and break time arrangements and talked with groups of pupils.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and the vast majority of the governing body. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the 40 responses to the online survey, Parent View, as well as the school’s surveys of parents’ views. The 22 completed staff questionnaires were also taken into account.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school’s work and a range of documents. These included the school’s view of its effectiveness, improvement plans and records of pupils’ achievement, behaviour, attendance and systems for safeguarding pupils.

Inspection team

Marie Cordey, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Maureen Hints	Additional Inspector
Marilyn Massey	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Woolston Community Primary is an average-sized primary school.
- Children in the Reception class attend full time.
- The school offers specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs in the form of designated provision for eight pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.
- The school is newly built in the grounds of the previous school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below average. This funding is for pupils looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards by the end of Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics, and increase the numbers of pupils who make more progress than expected by:
 - making sure that teachers set work to match the individual abilities and interests of the pupils in their class
 - building on pupils' basic skills in number bonds, spelling and grammar to improve their work in mathematics and English
 - ensuring that marking provides clear guidance for pupils to improve their work so that misunderstandings are cleared up and further challenge provided
 - ensuring that pupils act upon the guidance in marking in order to accelerate progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and governors work well together to make a difference to pupils' lives. They have acted strategically and successfully on the areas for improvement highlighted at the last inspection and monitoring visit. As a result, standards have risen consistently since 2012 and teaching has improved. Staff share leaders' ambitions for improvement because they are all considered as part of a team.
- Pupils are ready to move on to the next stage in their education because they are taught well and their achievement is good. A focused curriculum teaches pupils about British values, democracy and tolerance. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Systems of government both local and nationally are central to teaching through work on 'The Rule of Law'. Local councillors attend school to explain their roles and pupil councillors are effective representatives of their classmates' views.
- Pupils' progress is carefully recorded and reviewed by senior leaders. Particular attention is paid to making up for some previous under-achievement. However, in some cases teachers do not build upon pupils' basic skills in number bonds and spelling and grammar quickly enough to help prepare them for higher-level work.
- Leaders ensure that they base the management of teachers' performance on the quality of their teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. This has contributed to raising standards. For example, specific training for teachers to provide further challenge for pupils has led to improvements in the achievement of the most-able pupils.
- Leadership promotes the good progress of pupils with special educational needs and those pupils offered designated provision. Heart-warming letters were received by the inspection team about the transformation of pupils' lives because of the effectiveness of the designated provision.
- Middle leaders in particular have improved the leadership of subject areas. Standards in English and mathematics as well as in music, art, history, geography and science, for instance, have risen because of a rich curriculum and strong leadership.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. The money is used to improve the quality of teaching as well as to provide specialist support.
- Leaders use the primary physical education and sport premium well to improve pupils' physical education and their awareness of living healthily. Pupils learn well from specialist sports coaches appointed jointly with neighbouring schools. Taking part in sporting activities in school and in the local area is a favourite activity of pupils.
- Leaders work hard to promote good relations in the community through good communication and a range of community activities. For example, there are visits to the school from members of different faiths and backgrounds and 'Good Citizen' parties are held. These parties celebrate pupils' contribution to their school community when they act as 'play buddies', for instance, or help somebody. Pupils are not discriminated against and diversity in school is celebrated. Pupils are interested in learning about different ways of life.
- The new school curriculum is deliberately planned to offer a wide range of knowledge and skills across many subjects with English and mathematics at its core. There is much evidence in pupils' books about a wide variety of knowledge from 'Rule Britannia' to the Great War, for instance. Although there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching pupils have equal opportunity to achieve well and their standards are continuing to rise.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. Pupils appreciate the 'Above and Beyond' award for exceptional behaviour. This award might be made for extra learning effort or for a kind and thoughtful action.
- The local authority has supported school improvement well. It has provided specialist support and guidance to guide and challenge the school effectively.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. The school has detailed and thorough systems to keep pupils safe. Governors conduct health and safety checks around school on a regular basis. They take part in appropriate safeguarding training to improve their knowledge and effectiveness in keeping children safe.

The governance of the school:

- The governing body challenges school leaders diligently and it governs the school effectively. The governing body has been largely re-formed since the last inspection and new members take part in regular, rigorous training to help them govern the school. Governors are passionate and motivated about improving pupils' preparation for their future and raising standards. The use of pupil premium funding is carefully considered and linked to its effect on raising standards. Governors are involved in improving the quality of teaching and in monitoring its effect on improving pupils' progress. Teachers'

progression related to pay levels is based upon this. Governors know how good teaching is because they visit lessons and undertake local authority training on the features of good teaching. They track pupils' progress and data on the school's performance well. Governors use this information to help them judge the quality of teaching. They recognise effective teaching that accelerates pupils' progress. Any under-performance is tackled through clear systems to both support and challenge staff.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They enjoy school life because they are each made to feel special and because teaching is lively and interesting.
- Pupils are thoughtful and kind. They think about the effect their actions might have on others because the school promotes fairness and tolerance. They are a credit to their school and their families.
- Behaviour is well managed and pupils' learning is rarely affected by poor behaviour. Pupils learn to manage their own behaviour through 'taking time out' to consider their actions. Behaviour of pupils in the designated provision is good.
- Pupils take their roles on the school council and as 'play buddies' very seriously. They were the inspiration for providing organised games activities at lunchtimes. Their request was acted upon and pupils are now involved in activities such as skipping and football each lunchtime. Pupils are pleased to help to look after and play with younger children.
- Parents say that behaviour is good. They are instrumental in encouraging their child's above-average attendance and in helping their learning at home. Pupils are well prepared for lessons and look very smart in their uniforms.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know who to turn to if they have any concerns and say that they feel safe. Right through from the Reception class pupils are well aware of how to keep themselves safe on the internet and how to manage their own behaviour. Children as young as five are able to say exactly what they would do if they were suspicious about anything on a 'tablet' or laptop computer as well as, remarkably, exactly what is included in the school's behaviour policy.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying and the effects this can have on people. For this reason they were keen to explain to inspectors that bullying is not something that happens in their school. There are always many staff on duty at break and lunchtimes who help ensure good behaviour.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching has improved and the 'great lessons and nice teachers' are among many positive comments made by pupils. Right from the start, pupils walk into bright, welcoming classrooms decorated with vibrant displays of their work. This, together with high expectations of pupils' achievement, challenges pupils to achieve at the higher levels and creates an atmosphere of joy and achievement in learning.
- Some aspects of teaching are outstanding such as for older pupils in Key Stage 2, especially in English. Pupils are expected to persevere and to apply their learning in all subjects. Consequently, pupils use sub-clauses and sophisticated vocabulary in their writing in many subjects. Skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling have improved significantly across the school in the last year because literacy skills have been a school priority. This improvement slows occasionally when teaching does not emphasise the need to be accurate in spelling, the use of capital letters, punctuation and grammar.
- Good-quality books for each class have been purchased. They have been skilfully selected to capture pupils' imagination and interests and this has improved reading, especially for boys. Pupils take it upon themselves to select books which are carefully organised by teachers to reflect pupils' abilities and interests.
- Support and training for the teaching of mathematics are beginning to improve standards. More and more pupils are using their basic mathematical knowledge to solve problems. Occasionally, however, the planning of pupils' work does not take into account gaps in some pupils' learning. When this happens their progress slows.
- A deliberate school policy to improve the effectiveness of the work of support assistants is successful in raising standards for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs. It is also reflected in

the good-quality teaching and support of pupils in the designated provision class. Support staff are knowledgeable, skilled and challenging. Pupils learn to think for themselves and to become more independent.

- There is some inconsistency in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 when work is not precisely matched to the abilities of pupils. In addition, pupils do not always receive clear guidance to help them improve their work. At other times, when such guidance is given in teachers' marking, it is not always checked by staff to ensure that pupils act upon the advice. When this happens pupils' progress is not as fast as it is in other classes.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Since the dip in standards in 2012, leaders have focused on raising standards and improving pupils' progress. Pupils' attainment and their progress has improved year-on-year since then. Records of pupils' progress and the work in pupils' books show that standards are rising further and that pupils' progress is good.
- Overall, pupils now join Year 1 with skills that are broadly typical for their age. Pupils currently in Years 4 to 6 joined Year 1 with skills that were broadly below those typical for their age. In 2014, results in the Year 1 screening of phonics (the sounds linked to letters) were above average and are a significant improvement on previous results.
- In 2014, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were above average by the end of Year 2 and this was also a significant improvement on previous years. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 6 in 2014 attainment in reading and mathematics was a little below average and was average in writing. Pupils made broadly expected progress in all subjects.
- Work in pupils' books and the school's records show improved progress and higher standards in the current Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy lessons in art, music, history, geography and science and they do well in these subjects. Learning is brought to life well in topics such as 'Indian spice', 'the home front', 'tomb raiders' and 'Roman rule'. Pupils are knowledgeable about the world and their heritage.
- In 2014, at the end of Year 2 disadvantaged pupils performed better than other pupils. At the end of Year 6 they attained just over a term behind other pupils in the school in reading and mathematics and around four terms behind their peers in writing. When compared with other pupils nationally, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was over two terms behind in reading and mathematics and five terms behind in writing.
- Currently, pupils' work and the school's tracking shows that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress and that gaps in attainment between them and other pupils are narrowing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because the teaching and support they receive meets their needs.
- Pupils in the designated provision also make good progress. Their rates of progress are similar to those of other pupils in the school with special educational needs.
- The most-able pupils are making good progress across the school and have hastened their progress significantly in Key Stage 2. The number of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 and the highest Level 6 is significantly higher than in previous years.

The early years provision is good

- Children make good progress from individual starting points that are broadly typical for their age. Good teaching prepares them well for learning in Year 1.
- The good teaching is focused on providing activities and challenges that match the skills and interests of children both indoors and outside. Skills in early reading, writing and mathematics are encouraged in lots of different activities. Sessions on phonics teach children to link sounds and letters. They then reinforce this knowledge through a variety of activities. For instance, they practise writing in sand or on laminated cards. Number work takes place in taught sessions about counting but is also evident in other activities such as hopscotch or budgeting for a special present.
- Activities are purposeful and so children show enthusiasm and want to discover and learn more. They are encouraged to use their initiative, to be creative and to do their best. Activities are mostly well matched to children's learning needs. Occasionally, however, explanations are not clear enough and so children are unsure about what is expected of them and so they do not learn as fast as they could.

- Children are valued as unique individuals. They learn to think for themselves, know right from wrong and learn about people from different backgrounds and faiths. In turn, their confidence develops well as does their self-esteem.
- All procedures are in place to keep the children safe. The indoor and outdoor areas are regularly checked for safety by staff, leaders and governors. Children are well cared for. They are well behaved and keen to think of others.
- Good leadership has promoted the effectiveness of the setting. Children’s behaviour, achievement and the quality of teaching have all improved over the past two years. Adults work together as a team and children’s progress is assessed regularly and monitored closely to check whether any children require further guidance or need greater challenge.

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	111182
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	462299

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	249
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cath Shipton
Headteacher	Nick Toyne
Date of previous school inspection	10 July 2013
Telephone number	01925 837764
Fax number	01925 850719
Email address	woolston_primary@warrington.gov.uk

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