

Woodfield Infant School

Woodfield Avenue, Penn, Wolverhampton WV4 4AG

Inspection dates

8–9 December 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Over the past 18 months, following the federation of the infant and junior schools, there have been significant changes to the school's leadership team and staff. This has disrupted learning for pupils in some classes.
- Last year, school leaders and governors took their eye off the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Consequently, some routines for checking on pupils' progress slipped.
- The high standards seen at the school over several years dropped in 2015. Standards are now rising again, but there is still more to do to get academic standards in mathematics back to where they once were.
- In recent times, leaders have not checked carefully enough to see if pupils are acquiring the mathematical knowledge and skills they need.
- Teaching and assessment in mathematics in Year 2 is not consistently strong enough to ensure pupils build confidently on the gains made in the early years and Year 1.
- Currently, the federation of Woodfield Schools is without a subject leader for mathematics and a permanent head of school for the infants.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher provides strong leadership. The school's current leadership team, while still incomplete, is capable and shows promise.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children get a great start to their schooling at Woodfield Infant School.
- Teaching in Year 1 is effective.
- Pupils' conduct is exemplary. They are exceptionally well mannered, behave well and show concern for others.
- Procedures for keeping pupils safe work well. Pupils are well cared for and are happy at school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the leadership and management team by making sure:
 - the newly created leadership structure operates with maximum efficiency so that the executive headteacher does not have to shoulder an excessive workload
 - leaders' checks on teaching and learning in mathematics are sufficiently focused on making sure pupils acquire the skills they need
 - newly appointed leaders continue to get the support and training they need in order to do their jobs as well as possible.
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics in Year 2, so that the high standards usually seen at the end of Key Stage 1 are regained, by making sure teachers:
 - set work at the right level and check the depth of pupils' understanding before moving on to new work
 - adjust their explanations and classroom tasks according to pupils' learning needs
 - make their expectations of what is to be achieved in a lesson very clear
 - make sure pupils are listening before explaining what they need to do next
 - plan lessons that provide sufficient coverage of key mathematical skills during pupils' time in Year 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- In 2014, when the school federated with the junior school, the long-standing headteacher of the infant school became the executive headteacher of both schools. She is a capable leader who has a well-informed understanding of what constitutes effective teaching and learning. She commands the respect of pupils, staff and parents, and deservedly so. Under her leadership the infant school had demonstrated a strong performance for several years. However, over the past year, her attention has been diverted away from the infant school by the responsibilities of her new role.
- On top of this, the post of head of infants, which was filled for a short period of time, was left without a permanent post holder from Easter 2015. Furthermore, there were several changes of staff during the 2014/15 academic year.
- All of these changes resulted in disruption to the school's routines for checking on teaching and learning. Consequently, some teachers did not get the feedback and support they needed, the quality of teaching slipped and pupils' achievement dipped.
- While aspects of teaching still require improvement, leaders are now getting the school back on track. The executive headteacher now has more time to give to school improvement and the senior leadership team is driving forward improvements with energy and ambition. Currently, newly appointed leaders are still getting to grips with all the aspects of their role. Senior leaders are alert to this and have well-thought-through plans in place to develop, support and train them in their roles.
- Leaders encourage staff to organise and deliver different subjects in ways that build upon pupils' interests and experiences and promote values such as perseverance and respect. Trips and after-school activities serve to feed pupils' curiosity and enhance their learning and enjoyment of school. The school leadership has produced a 'non-negotiables' statement, which states clearly that school life and learning must assist and support pupils' well-being and prepare them for their future lives. In recent times, however, leaders' overview of the mathematics curriculum has not paid enough attention to making sure pupils get the breadth of study and depth of understanding they need before moving on to junior school.
- Currently, leaders make frequent checks on teaching and give immediate advice to staff about how practice can be improved. Teachers willingly share and comment on one another's work and this is indicative of the open, evaluative culture operating in the school. Teachers regularly film themselves teaching and review their own and colleagues' practice. Leaders set clear targets and meet with teachers to talk about their work and pupils' progress.
- Specific funds, such as the pupil premium and primary sport fund, are used appropriately. Pupil premium money has been used to provide extra tuition and specialist support. It has also been used to ensure that everyone gets the chance to take part in extra-curricular activities. The sport funding has brought benefits too. There is now a climbing wall in the playground and specialist sports teachers visit the school to share their expertise. Pupils who need help to develop their physical skills take part in a special programme to improve their balance and coordination. This support helps them with physical education and with their concentration and handwriting skills in lessons.
- Parents hold the school in high regard. The school provides parents with plenty of information about school life and ways to help with their children's learning at home. Of those parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 98% of parents would recommend the school to others. Without exception, parents who spoke with inspectors said very complimentary things about the school, the staff and their children's experiences in the classroom.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has a clear long-term vision for the development of the infant school. Governors are aware that their decision to restructure the school's leadership team, which happened when the school federated with the junior school, disrupted routines for checking on the quality of the school's work. It appears that governors had an eye on the future but took their eye off the present during this time.
 - Governors know about the current quality of teaching and understand the systems that are in place to manage staff performance. They are actively involved in staff recruitment and are determined to make sure they employ the right people in the right jobs. In this, they are uncompromising. Governors have yet to appoint a permanent head of infants.
 - Governors are proud to be associated with Woodfield Infant School and are positive ambassadors for its work.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Procedures operate as they should and record-keeping is thorough and up to date. The recently appointed inclusion manager has an excellent grasp of requirements and is capable and efficient. Information is acted upon as needs be, and all understand that the safety of pupils takes priority over all other matters.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The teaching of mathematics in Year 2 has some shortcomings. Observations in class, checks on books and conversations with pupils and leaders all confirm that teaching is not building carefully enough on pupils' current levels of understanding. At times, pupils are given work they do not understand, and at other times, it is too easy. In addition, teaching does not react quickly enough to adjust tasks or explanations because teachers' checks on understanding during lessons lack precision. This means that time is not always used to best effect and learning is not moved on as well as it might be. Inspectors also noted that work covered this year so far has focused heavily on number, with other aspects of the mathematics curriculum being less evident.
- Teaching in reading and writing in all year groups is more effective and, consequently, pupils' progress across the school in these subjects is stronger.
- Teaching in Year 1 is effective. Teachers make their expectations and explanations clear, ask questions to test out pupils' understanding and provide them with well-chosen tasks that make them think hard and help them to learn. In one class, for example, pupils who had clearly demonstrated mastery of a newly acquired skill were given extra challenges that required them to explain their reasoning as they worked out whether certain statements about doubling were true or false.
- In all classes, relationships between pupils and staff are good. Teachers provide warm encouragement and pupils are responsive and keen to learn. Just occasionally, teachers do not check that everyone is listening before talking to the class. However, when pupils are reminded to pay attention, then they do so.
- Books are marked regularly and pupils can explain how marking helps them to improve their understanding. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is well organised. There are established routines that hold pupils' attention and ensure that all make progress. Pupils' writing shows phonological awareness with the most-able pupils in all year groups using some impressive vocabulary to inject interesting description into their work.
- Teachers bring imagination and a sense of fun into lessons. Work is displayed with care and pupils' achievements in many different subjects are celebrated. All of this motivates pupils to put effort into their work and to be proud of what they produce.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school's arrangements for gathering information about each and every child are excellent. The staff know pupils very well because they take time to find out about their interests, aptitudes and needs. Consequently, pupils feel valued, secure and confident at school.
- When upsets do happen, these are dealt with promptly and with sensitivity. Bullying of any sort is extremely rare and if any thoughtless or overly boisterous behaviour does occur then staff are quick to intervene. If pupils have a worry, they know that they can always talk to an adult or use the school 'worry box' to post their concern if they prefer.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in different situations, such as when crossing the road. School leaders are aware that there is a bit more to do to improve pupils' awareness of internet safety.
- School records confirm that pupils get praise when they deserve it. Rewards, such as star of the week or the values cup that is presented weekly, serve to recognise pupils who have displayed positive attitudes or demonstrated a particular value, such as kindness or respect. These thoughtful incentives help to build self-esteem and promote a positive school ethos.
- The school site is well maintained and kept secure. Arrangements for the supervision and safety of pupils at the before- and after-school care are good and first-aid arrangements throughout the day are efficient.

- Pupils feel safe at school and parents express high levels of confidence in the school's work to keep their children safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In fact, it is not far off outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct around school is impeccable. The 'Woodfield Way' behaviour code, which politely but firmly requests that pupils remember to be their 'smart selves', have 'tidy hands' and give themselves a 'polish and shine' in order to stay bright, is adhered to with impressive consistency. Consequently, pupils have an excellent understanding of the school's expectations of their behaviour and are keen to please. Their good manners are exceptional.
- Pupils willingly take on responsibilities around school. In conversation with inspectors they talked about how they were proud of the jobs they are 'hired' to do, such as acting as toy, milk or corridor monitors. In these roles they check that routines work as they should and that rules are followed. School council members can explain how they consider pupils' suggestions and other pupils agree that their ideas are valued. Indeed, during this inspection, pupils were observed writing down their thoughts about how to improve their school and posting them in the school council 'in tray' folder.
- Most pupils attend school regularly and on time. The overall level of attendance is similar to that seen nationally. The school's work to promote good attendance and punctuality is a model of good practice. Every morning, pastoral support staff and senior leaders are out on the playground checking that pupils arrive on time and, if they are late, finding out why. Conversations are polite but the message comes across clearly: being punctual is important. School records show that these efforts are meeting with some success. Nevertheless, a small minority of pupils still arrive late.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Up until 2015, pupils left Woodfield Infant School at the end of Year 2 having reached above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2015, there was a significant drop in standards, particularly in mathematics and writing. There were several reasons for this. School leaders' attention was diverted by matters associated with the reorganisation of the school, there were some staff changes and the quality of teaching slipped from its previous good standard. In addition, the movement of some pupils in and out of the school during the 2014/15 academic year had an impact on the school's end of Key Stage 1 assessment results.
- Currently, standards are rising again. This is most noticeable in reading and writing. Achievement in mathematics, however, still has some way to go if Year 2 pupils are to realise the ambitious targets that school leaders have set for them.
- While pupils' starting points vary, many enter school with levels of knowledge and skill that are below those typical for their age. Pupils make good progress in their learning in the early years and, currently, this is continuing in Year 1 due to effective teaching. Progress in Year 2 in reading and writing is increasingly better than it was last year, but progress in mathematics in this year group is still too slow.
- Over time, disadvantaged pupils have done well at this school, although in 2015 their end of Year 2 attainment dipped so that they left infant school around two terms behind other pupils nationally in both writing and mathematics. Their attainment in reading was stronger. While these results are not too far away from the picture seen in many other infant schools, it was a marked drop for Woodfield Infant School. Disadvantaged pupils currently at the school are doing better this year. Like other pupils, they still have some catching up to do in mathematics but their current performance is at least equal to, and in some cases better than, that of other pupils in the school.
- The most-able pupils benefit from a good level of challenge in Year 1, but the challenge provided in Year 2 is not always set at the right level. The standard of current work shows that the most-able pupils in Year 2 are further ahead in their reading and writing than in mathematics.
- In the main, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do well at school. Staff display a high level of care and attention and support is tailored to pupils' needs. The recently appointed head of inclusion is capable. Her work is building further on the school's existing strengths in order to make sure pupils always get the right help at the right time.

Early years provision

is good

- Children get a great start in early years. Teaching is consistently strong, staff are well trained and teamwork is good. The confidence and competence of the provision shines out clearly. Children are kept safe, behave well, enjoy learning and do their best.
- When children start in the Nursery, many have levels of knowledge and skill below those typical for their age, particularly in language and communication and in aspects of their physical development. They make good, and in some cases excellent, progress because of effective teaching and well-informed leadership. Children who need help to catch up get the support they need. Consequently, the proportion of children who reach a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year has been above average year after year. Children develop good learning habits, learn to cooperate and to do things for themselves and are very well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Arrangements to support children when they first start school are excellent. Staff make home visits and parents come into school to share in activities with their children. During these visits, parents and staff make a photographic record of the day. This helps children to become familiar with school routines and to settle in quickly when they start. Children who start in the Nursery or those who start straight into the Reception class are helped to settle in with equal success.
- The early years leader has a good understanding of how children learn and an accurate view of the quality of provision. As the early years leader takes on more responsibility across the school, he is focusing attention on developing the leadership skills of other key early years staff. In addition, while checks on learning work well and lead to timely and well-planned activities, the focus and precision of these checks across all areas of learning could be even sharper.

School details

Unique reference number	104300
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10001120

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	335
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Fred Pezhman
Executive Headteacher	Ms Shelpa Patel
Telephone number	01902 558635
Website	www.woodfieldinfantschool.uk
Email address	woodfieldinfantschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 October 2010

Information about this school

- Woodfield Infant School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion that speak English as an additional language are both well above the national average. About half the pupils are from an Indian background.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils at the school is below the national average. The term disadvantaged pupils is used to describe those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority. These pupils receive additional support from pupil premium funding.
- The school offers early years provision in Nursery and Reception classes. Before- and after-school care operates on the school site and is managed by the governing body.
- The governing body is also responsible for Woodfield Junior School which shares the same site.
- Since the previous inspection, the infant school has federated with the junior school. When this happened in 2014, the headteacher of the infant school became the executive headteacher of both schools. The infant school is currently without a permanent head of school. This role is being filled on a temporary basis. In recent times, there have been several staff changes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classrooms. Some of these observations were carried out alongside the headteacher. Inspectors also examined pupils' work in books and on display, considered school assessment information and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour, and the school's procedures, at the beginning and end of the school day, at lunch and breaktimes, and when pupils were moving about the school site, taking part in activities and preparing for a school nativity play.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, school leaders, governors and a local authority adviser.
- By the end of the inspection, there were 106 recent responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors looked at these and talked to some parents at school. In addition, inspectors considered nine responses to Ofsted's school staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors examined a number of school documents. These included: information about pupils' progress, the school's own evaluations of its work and school improvement plans. Records relating to behaviour, attendance, safety, safeguarding and staff performance were also scrutinised. The school's website was checked.

Inspection team

Martin Pye, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Helen Quinn	Ofsted Inspector

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