

# Woodlea Junior School

Woodlea Road, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 1JL

**Inspection dates**

2–3 February 2016

**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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils’ outcomes have declined since the last inspection. Some pupils have large gaps in their knowledge and skills as a result of previously weak teaching. This is stopping them from reaching the levels expected for their age.
- The quality of teaching and learning is not consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils across the school make good progress in all subjects.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils consistently present work and handwriting to the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils, including the most able, do not have enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve problems in real-life contexts and other subjects.
- Teachers do not always check carefully enough pupils’ spelling, grammar and punctuation for errors.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged and eligible for pupil premium funding do not achieve as well as their peers. This is because this aspect of the school’s work has not been well led in the past.
- Subject leaders are not yet effective in developing teachers’ skills to ensure that all curriculum subjects are taught well and to a sufficient depth.
- Leaders, including governors, do not use the range of assessment information well enough to analyse how effective their actions are in driving school improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has a clear vision and ambition for the school, which is shared by governors and the majority of staff. A culture of ambition and high expectation is evident across school.
- The headteacher and senior leaders know what needs to improve and there are clear signs of improvement.
- There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching in recent months because of focused actions by leaders and local authority support.
- Pupils behave well and are polite and well-mannered. They feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in different situations.
- Overall, pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The school’s values are central to pupils’ work and development.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have very positive relationships with pupils which encourages pupils to be confident in their own skills and abilities.

## Full report

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good across all classes and subjects in order to improve outcomes for all pupils by ensuring that:
  - teachers' checks on pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation are consistent across all classes and subjects so that errors are addressed quickly
  - pupils' presentation and handwriting are always at the highest standards of which they are capable
  - pupils, particularly the most able, have more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to solve problems in real-life contexts in mathematics and across other subjects.
  
- Improve outcomes for pupils who are disadvantaged and eligible for pupil premium funding so that they do as well as their peers. Support this by embedding current improvements to leadership in this area.
  
- Enhance the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - developing the skills and knowledge of subject leaders to ensure that they are able to check that teachers have the skills to teach the full range of subjects well and in enough depth
  - ensuring that leaders, including governors, analyse assessment information more rigorously so that they are able to measure more sharply the impact of their actions on driving school improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management **requires improvement**

- Significant changes to leadership and teaching staff explain to a great extent why Woodlea has not improved its overall effectiveness since the last inspection. The headteacher took up post in September 2015 and the restructured senior leadership team has also only been in post since September 2015. From January 2015, the school had an associate headteacher, supported by the acting headteacher. Almost every member of teaching staff has taken up post since the last inspection, four of them having started this academic year.
- The newly appointed headteacher and senior leaders have been quick to identify where the main weaknesses are and are working hard to bring about the necessary improvements. The headteacher has a drive and ambition for the school which are resulting in higher expectations across the school. This is fully supported by governors and the vast majority of staff.
- Pupils' outcomes declined because inadequate teaching had not been tackled quickly enough. However, this underperformance has been addressed more recently and the quality of teaching has improved. There is now no weak teaching and an increased consistency in the quality of teaching is showing that pupils' outcomes are beginning to improve quickly.
- Current leaders have developed a clear system for tracking how well pupils are doing. This is combined with a regular and focused timetable of checking on the quality of teaching. As a result, leaders have a much better picture of pupils' progress. However, leaders are not analysing this assessment information rigorously enough to ensure that they can measure how effective identified changes have been in improving school performance.
- As many of the teaching staff have been in school for a short period of time they are only just beginning to get started in their subject leadership roles. This means that their skills and knowledge are not developed fully enough to check how successfully their respective subjects are being taught across all classes. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across subjects.
- Due to insufficient rigour, both in the use of pupil premium funding and in assessment of its effectiveness, the gap between disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and those of their peers did not close. However, as a result of a review by the local authority and by the new leadership, there is now more rigour in application of this funding, and there are some signs that the gap is starting to narrow.
- The school has recently reviewed its curriculum, and pupils follow a particular theme each half term. This is now more closely linked to the school's assessment system. There are opportunities for pupils to extend their learning through themed weeks each term. The most recent of these was on the British Empire, which taught pupils, in their own words, about 'all things British', including, for example, the monarchy and democracy. This work supports pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain. Nevertheless, evidence from observations and pupils' work shows that although teachers plan related activities in the different subject areas, these vary in quality and depth.
- Overall, pupils have good opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills. Visits and visitors enhance pupils' experiences, including a residential visit and opportunities to debate issues at the Council Chambers. Pupils are able to consider each other's viewpoints and show tolerance and respect where these differ from their own. Pupils learn about different faiths and have had opportunities to visit different places of worship. Although pupils have some understanding of different cultures, leaders are aware that this could be further developed. Consequently, the new leader has planned activities to extend pupils' understanding of different cultures and an appreciation of the diversity of life.
- Performance management of teachers is now more robust and closely linked to pupils' outcomes. Regular meetings and checks on how well pupils are doing ensure that teachers are held accountable for pupils' progress. Staff have benefited more recently from a substantial and comprehensive provision of professional development activities. These activities have included the support of specialist consultants and observations by staff of best practice in other settings. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving quickly.
- The local authority has provided a wide range of support for the school and its new leadership and teaching staff during the period of instability. It has, in conjunction with the new headteacher, undertaken several reviews of how effective different aspects of the school's performance are. This has helped leaders identify key priorities in tackling weaknesses. Consequently, there has been swift action in addressing these, which is leading to improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' outcomes.
- Sports premium is spent effectively to ensure that pupils have opportunities to take part in a variety of

sports, both in school hours and in after-school clubs. The school benefits from the expertise of external coaches, such as in gymnastics. Teaching assistants also support pupils' lunchtime play and organise netball and football sessions. Teachers have opportunities to observe how coaches deliver sessions in order to improve their own skills. Pupils talk about all the different clubs they can go to improve their skills and physical fitness.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has undergone a change since the last inspection, with a number of new governors joining the governing body and the appointment of a new chair and vice chair of governors. Governors accept that in the past they, as a body, have not held past leaders sufficiently well to account for the school's performance.
- As a result, governors have undertaken their own review of governance and identified priorities to develop their role. Consequently, they are now more actively involved in the life of the school, especially if they are 'governor of the month'. They are able to use first-hand experiences to question leaders more rigorously.
- Governors now have clear roles and responsibilities and meet with senior and subject leaders to discuss different aspects of school performance. This, accompanied by a more rigorous programme of training and higher expectations, has led to governors holding leaders more effectively to account for school performance. They have also held teachers to account for their performance and linked this more rigorously to pay progression.
- Governors have a good understanding of the assessment information which is provided, and are increasingly able to question leaders about this. However, alongside leaders, they need to analyse this information more rigorously, in order to measure more sharply the impact of actions, particularly upon the school's effectiveness in different funding areas such as pupil premium.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils have a good understanding as to how to keep themselves safe, and parents overwhelmingly agree that their children are kept safe. Staff training is kept up to date and staff receive regular updates about the latest information, such as the 'Prevent' agenda. Records show that staff are diligent in reporting any concerns to the relevant staff and that these are appropriately dealt with.

**Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**requires improvement**

- Weaknesses in teaching had not been fully addressed until recently. The legacy of this weak teaching has meant that some pupils, particularly in Year 5 and 6, have had an uneven journey through school. This is the reason for the gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills, and accounts for why leaders are having to play significant catch-up with some pupils.
- The recent changes to staffing, primarily over the last few months, have meant that this position is changing rapidly and that pupils are benefiting from stronger teaching across the school. This is particularly evident in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics, where pupils are making gains in their learning. In other subjects, the quality of teaching is more variable and doesn't always extend or challenge pupils' learning enough.
- The standard of marking has improved and teachers are following the school's marking policy, providing guidance on how pupils might improve their work, particularly in writing. During an extended writing session, pupils were using the teacher's comments to improve their writing, including more interesting vocabulary and descriptive words. However, teachers are not always picking up on pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation errors, which means that common mistakes sometimes go uncorrected.
- The presentation of pupils' work and the standard of handwriting is not of a consistently high standard across school. There are good examples of presentation and expectations have increased. Pupils are encouraged to improve their handwriting and presentation and they are keen to get their 'pen licence'. However, performance in these skills is too variable across school.
- The teaching of maths has improved and pupils are taught how to tackle different concepts to answer sums. Pupils were showing increased confidence in working out long division sums in a Year 6 class, while in a Year 5 class, pupils were successfully plotting coordinates of shapes. Pupils have some opportunities to apply their knowledge to solve word problems, which is improving their understanding of mathematical reasoning. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils, particularly the most able, to practise these skills in real-life contexts or in subjects other than mathematics.
- Teachers plan activities in English and mathematics which are more closely matched to pupils' needs

because teachers now have a clear picture of each pupil's starting points. Teaching assistants support the learning of different groups in class effectively, as well as providing small groups with additional support. Inspection shows that, as a result, pupils' progress is beginning to improve quickly.

- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to find out what pupils know and understand. In a Year 4 class, pupils were using a Wallace and Gromit clip to write a piece using speech marks. Effective questioning by the teacher enabled pupils to consider what they were writing, the structure of the sentence and the vocabulary used.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have very positive relationships with pupils, which encourage and support pupils in tackling new concepts and building confidence in their skills.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to look after themselves in different situations. They have received visits from the local community policeman and local fire personnel. Older pupils have learnt how to ride their bikes safely. They know how to keep safe on the internet and spoke about how they had made posters about this at the beginning of the year.
- There is weekly focus on aspects of pupils' learning behaviours, such as learning from mistakes, welcoming challenge and perseverance. This is reinforced in assemblies. The recently appointed Family Support Worker supports both pupils and families who may be having difficulties. Her role extends across both the infant and junior school and she therefore supports the effective transition between the two schools.
- Pupils are adamant that there have never been any racist incidents and that derogatory language is rarely used. On the rare cases when it is, it has been swiftly dealt with. Pupils understand that people can be in a variety of different types of relationships and the older pupils spoken to said that 'it doesn't make any difference' and that 'you don't judge a book by its cover'. As a result, there are very few incidents of bullying. Pupils understand that there are different types of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- Older pupils make a positive contribution to the life of the school and the wider community. They have a range of responsibilities, which they take seriously, such as being school councillors, eco councillors and fair trade representatives. Each class has the name of an endangered animal and they raise money through an enterprise week where they make and sell different things. During the inspection, Year 5 were busily making keyrings and badges for their enterprise week.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered and talk positively about their school. They say that behaviour has improved because of the new policy, which is consistent across all classes. Pupils look forward to 'Golden Time', when they can choose from different activities which allow them to mix with children in other classes and year groups.
- Year 6 pupils are particularly keen to become 'role model prefects', setting a positive example for younger pupils. They wear their blue school jumpers with pride and some enjoy being part of the 'Super Six', which helps around school at lunchtime. Pupils know and understand the school's values, because these have been made central to the school's work.
- Pupils' behaviour around school, as well as in lessons, is of a similar high standard. Pupils in the dining hall were eating quietly, sharing conversation with their friends. There was little mess and pupils were aware it was expected at home, or by the school, that they should eat a full and healthy meal.
- In the playground, pupils play well together and show consideration for each other, lining up quietly when it is time to come back in to school. Pupils share the playground equipment and adults support some pupils in their play.
- In lessons, pupils are attentive and are keen to get on with their work. They share their ideas and work well together. The vast majority of pupils concentrate well and are developing greater levels of independence in their learning because of the changes in the way that lessons are structured. Occasionally, pupils become distracted but this does not disrupt others' learning.
- The vast majority of pupils attend regularly. Attendance has been in line with the national average for a

number of years. The school recognises that some pupils' attendance or punctuality is not as good as it could be and provides a separate breakfast club for specific pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- Standards by the end of Year 6 have declined over the past three years and last year were significantly below the national average. Too few pupils made the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015 and very few made more than expected progress. Over the last three years, from their different starting points, pupils have not made the progress expected of them, particularly in writing and mathematics. This reflects the historic underperformance of pupils from when they started at the school. It is apparent that pupils, including the most able, have not been challenged enough academically to do as well as they are capable.
- The new headteacher and leadership team have recognised the need to address this decline in standards and have ensured that action has been taken to do this. The considerable change in teaching staff has led to a period of instability since the last inspection. The recent changes have also strengthened the quality of teaching across the school. However, there is still a considerable amount of work to do to compensate for the earlier underperformance of pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils was not as good as that of their peers or of all pupils nationally. This gap has not lessened over the past three years. New, appropriate leadership of this area and a clarity as to what needs to be done has ensured that provision for these pupils is now more carefully allocated and tracked. Inspection evidence shows that these gaps are beginning to close, particularly in Year 6. However, gaps remain across all year groups and more work is needed to ensure that these continue to close.
- Pupils' outcomes in writing are below expectations in most classes. This is because pupils have not had the opportunity to write at length in the past. There has been a change in the way in which this is taught in order to interest and engage pupils, with a new focus on good quality texts, such as 'Stig of the Dump' and 'The Highwayman'. Pupils also have an additional extended writing session once a week. As a result, pupils are writing more extended pieces, which are improving in quality and show greater use of different features of writing.
- In 2015, the most-able pupils did not make the progress expected, particularly in reading and writing. Inspection evidence shows that these pupils are now making better progress because teachers are planning tasks which are meeting their different needs more effectively. Occasionally, the most able could be given more challenging work to enable them to apply their learning in different ways to deepen their understanding, particularly in mathematics.
- According to assessment information provided by the school during the inspection, standards are improving quickly across the school, particularly in writing and mathematics. Senior leaders have worked diligently to ensure that this information is accurate and robust, by working with teachers in other schools, including the local infant school. Work seen in pupils' books and pupils' progress observed in lessons during the inspection provided good evidence to support leaders' views that progress across school is improving, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils do better in reading. Pupils enjoy reading and know that there is a clear expectation that they read regularly at home as well as at school. Daily guided reading sessions allow pupils to practise their comprehension skills. Pupils who read to the inspectors spoke about the different authors who they enjoy reading, pointing them out in the school library. The majority of older pupils read fluently and with expression, while younger pupils are confident readers, working out unfamiliar words successfully.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is improving because the provision is more closely matched to their needs and teaching assistants provide appropriate and effective support.
- The teaching of mathematics is now more consistent. Staff are using a consistent approach to planning and teaching of key concepts. Pupils are taught different concepts in small groups so that teachers can check pupils' understanding before they move to work more independently.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119208
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002240

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	221
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Park
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jillian Shorrocks
<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 421992
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.woodleajuniors.co.uk">http://www.woodleajuniors.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:Bursar@woodlea.lancs.sch.uk">Bursar@woodlea.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 December 2013

## Information about this school

- Woodlea Junior School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all of the pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the last inspection there has been considerable staff turbulence and change, including to senior leadership. From January 2015 to July 2016, the school had an associate headteacher. The new headteacher and an additional assistant headteacher started in September 2015. The majority of teaching staff have been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school has received support from a national leader of education, who is the headteacher of Sherwood Primary School.
- The school runs a breakfast for specific pupils. This was visited as part of the inspection.
- There is a private breakfast- and after-school club on site which is subject to a separate inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons and also looked at pupils' work.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from four different year groups reading, and talked with them and other groups of pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the head teacher, senior and middle leaders, teaching assistants, representatives of the governing body and representatives of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- The inspectors spoke to parents, took account of the 19 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's consultations with parents and other communication from parents. The views of staff were also taken into account, informed by the 21 returns to the Ofsted questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Vanessa MacDonald, Lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lesley Curtis

Ofsted Inspector



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