

Woodhall Community Primary School

Mayflower Way, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 1ST

Inspection dates

17–18 March 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Assessment is weak across the school except in the early years, and is not used to plan for pupils' needs. Consequently, pupils make too little progress and standards at the end of Year 6 are inadequate.
- Leaders, including governors, have not taken effective action to secure improvements and have allowed standards to fall to a low level. Checks on teaching have not been rigorous enough and teachers have not been held to account for the standards they achieve.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils and what they are capable of are too low. Teachers do not plan lessons which support pupils who need it and challenge those who can do more.
- Governors have not been provided with an accurate picture of the school and they have not been sufficiently proactive in ensuring that they receive better information.
- Middle leaders have not been expected to fulfil their leadership roles previously and while they are now planning for improvements, steps taken are not yet having an impact on driving up standards.
- Money provided to support disadvantaged pupils has not been targeted to support these pupils and the impact of money spent has not been evaluated.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are well cared for in school but make limited progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the early years have an engaging and interesting curriculum and make good progress.
- Pupils behave well. They respect adults and are sociable with each other.
- The school works well with the community. The school is seen as a haven of calm for pupils and their parents.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement so that standards across the school, and by the end of Year 6, rapidly improve through:
 - accurate use of assessment by leaders and teachers
 - rapid improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - all staff have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - teachers use assessment effectively to plan lessons that are challenging for pupils
 - feedback and questioning by teachers is used to deepen pupils' learning
 - professional development opportunities are provided and best practice existing within the school is shared.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders drive improvements with a sense of urgency
 - there is greater rigour of monitoring by leaders at all levels
 - leaders hold all staff to account for the standards achieved through robust performance management procedures
 - governors have accurate information, including first-hand information, about the standards in the school so that they can fulfil their role in holding leaders to account for the school's performance
 - middle leaders are given appropriate support and guidance to enable them to fulfil their roles
 - funding for disadvantaged pupils is targeted towards supporting those pupils for whom it is intended.

An external review of governance and of the use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

The school may not employ newly qualified teachers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- The school has suffered a turbulent period with regard to staffing and leadership since the last inspection which affected the whole school community. This was coupled with other staffing changes and the expansion of the school to include pupils in Years 5 and 6. Over this period, leaders and governors have not remained focused on the quality of teaching and learning in the school. As a result, teaching has declined, pupils' achievement is low and the school has gone from being a good school to one that is currently inadequate.
- A lack of shared leadership in the past has left the school floundering in the absence of a substantive headteacher. Current staff are only now developing a shared sense of responsibility for the low standards achieved at the school.
- Leaders, including governors, have taken some steps to eradicate weak teaching over the past two terms, but have not done enough in this respect. Teachers have not been held to account for their performance, because performance management arrangements have been weak.
- Leaders have not ensured that the new system for tracking the progress pupils are making is understood and used properly by teachers. As a result, assessment is weak except in the early years.
- Leaders now have a broadly accurate view of the school, its strengths and its weaknesses, but have not acted with sufficient urgency to address the weaknesses that exist. Monitoring that has been carried out has not clearly identified the most important things that teachers and other adults need to do to improve, and so has not had sufficient impact on improving teaching which is inadequate.
- Funding provided for disadvantaged pupils has not been used effectively to help the pupils for whom it is provided. Instead it has been used for whole-school initiatives, such as improving the outside area for early years, and for purchasing a mathematics scheme. As a result, the achievement of these pupils remains low and is not improving, except in the Reception classes.
- Local authority support has been provided for the school, including the provision of the interim headteacher. However this support has not secured improvements. Actions recommended have not been followed up and advisers have not ensured that robust action has been taken to arrest the decline in standards.
- Many middle leaders are new in post and have only very recently started to make plans for improvement. These are at the earliest stages and are yet to have an impact. Those middle leaders who have been in post for longer do not have a clear view of what is working well and what needs improvement. A number of teachers have been allowed to relinquish leadership responsibilities because they say they do not want to hold others to account. This reflects a lack of commitment to continuous improvement.
- Parents are very positive about the school. Some parents told inspectors that they had chosen the school because it has a warm and caring ethos.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with interesting and engaging opportunities for learning. For example, during the inspection pupils enjoyed a Roman day, when pupils in Year 3 dressed up as Romans and enjoyed learning about Roman life.
- Leaders and governors provide effectively for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils are taught about respect and tolerance and are prepared appropriately for life in modern Britain.
- Funding to promote participation in sports is used appropriately, including to provide coaching for pupils in a variety of sports and to train pupils as play leaders.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are very committed to the school. The chair of the governing body has faced many challenges since taking on her role. Governors have not always been given accurate information by senior leaders about the standards and quality of teaching at the school. However, they themselves have not been proactive in securing more accurate information. Some governors visit the school very regularly, but only recently have begun to visit lessons with leaders to look at examples of pupils' work and to ask more challenging questions of leaders.
 - Governors have not recognised that the low standards achieved at the end of key stage 2 reflected weaknesses in the quality of teaching. They have rewarded teachers through additional salary points without checking thoroughly that pay increases were deserved.
 - Governors have not checked that the high proportion of teachers who are on the upper pay scale,

including some with additional teaching and learning responsibility allowances, are effectively fulfilling their roles.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school carries out rigorous checks on staff appointed to the school. They maintain careful, detailed records for pupils who cause concern and follow up with appropriate agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. All staff have received training and policies and practices are robust. The vast majority of parents agree that their children feel safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- Teachers' use of assessment to plan lessons is weak. Lessons are not planned effectively. Consequently, work is too hard for some pupils and too easy for others. Pupils in Year 6 told inspectors that they sometimes found work too easy and that nothing was provided for them to do if they finished quickly. This was also observed in lessons during the inspection.
- The impact of teaching on improving pupils' learning is minimal and in some cases hinders learning. Tasks are frequently planned which do not allow pupils to move on in their learning.
- The majority of teachers do not expect enough of pupils. They accept too little work, or work which is not of a high enough standard.
- Time is not well used in lessons and so pupils have too little time to practise or apply what they are learning.
- Questioning of pupils is often at too low a level. It is not used to accurately gauge what pupils know, or to extend their thinking. Teachers frequently require pupils to recall basic information rather than to reflect on, or apply, learning.
- The most-able pupils are not extended and enabled to apply and deepen their knowledge. For example, in mathematics, where additional challenges are provided, often pupils spend too long completing work which they can easily do and do not progress to the next challenges.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is weak. Teachers do not understand well enough how to support pupils who are struggling, or the next steps needed for those who quickly understand. They introduce concepts to pupils which they are not able to explain. For example, in Year 6, pupils were learning about the area of a parallelogram but were simply told which measures to multiply and were not able to explain why this was the case.
- Teachers do not use their assessments of pupils to help them build on what they already know. This means that pupils sometimes unnecessarily repeat learning and so progress is too slow.
- Feedback to pupils is provided regularly but it is rarely used by them and so it does not help to improve their work or extend their learning.
- Progress in subjects such as science and history is slow because tasks are not planned which support or challenge pupils.
- In some classes, teaching assistants do not contribute to pupils' learning. They listen to the teacher speaking, manage pupils' behaviour or carry out routine tasks rather than move learning on. However, in a few classes, teaching assistants are given much clearer direction by teachers and so are able to support pupils well.
- In some small-group sessions, teachers have much higher expectations of pupils and in these sessions pupils make much faster progress. For example, in a Year 6 boys' support group, the boys were highly focused and the teacher used questioning to probe their learning. He encouraged pupils to think deeply, for example, asking 'what is an angle?', and did not accept answers without full explanations.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They generally listen and do what is asked of them by teachers, even when lessons do not meet their needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils are willing to learn but not enough is expected of them by teachers. Teachers frequently accept pupils' first attempts at work and have not developed an ethos in the school where pupils are expected to take responsibility for improving their work.

- Pupils are confident in talking with adults and, when given opportunities, can be responsible, reflective and thoughtful. Pupils enjoy being play leaders and take these responsibilities seriously. They enjoy being part of the school council. However, meetings sometimes are spent with the adult providing information rather than the pupils discussing or taking decisions.
- Adults and pupils have good relationships. Adults in school know the pupils well and pupils say they feel cared for. Parents agree that pupils are safe and well looked after in school.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and their lessons. They feel safe in school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when using technologies such as mobile phones and the internet.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well. Pupils learn about other cultures and countries, and about other faiths, such as Hinduism and Islam. Pupils enjoyed singing at a concert for Suffolk schools and a number of parents wrote to thank the deputy headteacher and staff for providing this opportunity for pupils to expand their experiences of the world.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. They are respectful of adults, for example saying good morning and holding doors open, and towards each other, listening to each other's views sensibly. However, in some lessons where their needs are not met, pupils do not focus on their learning as well as they could and do not make as much effort with their work as they should. On these occasions, where teachers do not expect enough of them and work does not meet their needs, they make slower progress.
- The school has taken steps to improve attendance and these have been effective. Attendance has improved, including that of disadvantaged pupils. However, there are still a number of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent. These pupils miss school frequently and so are unable to make sufficient progress.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and that any incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils understand the school's behaviour policy.
- Pupils are tolerant and welcome pupils from different backgrounds and cultures. They recognise that racism and other forms of discriminatory behaviour are wrong.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- In the two years that the school has had Year 6 pupils, the proportion reaching the standard expected in reading, writing and mathematics has been well below average. In 2014, the school failed to meet the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum standard required of schools, and in 2015, the school only just met this standard.
- Assessment information and pupils' books indicate that the proportion of Year 6 pupils set to achieve the standard expected in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of this year is likely to be lower than the government's minimum standard. This is because teaching is inadequate and assessment is not used to identify where pupils currently are and to plan work to move their learning on. As a result, pupils continue to make too little progress across the school.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 2 achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics has remained around the national average for the past three years, but has shown no significant improvements during this period. In Year 1, the proportion meeting the standard expected in the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) assessment has declined and is below average. A proportion of pupils currently in Year 1 are still at a very early stage in reading and are unlikely to meet the expected standard in the phonics assessment this year.
- In other year groups, standards are also too low because teachers do not expect enough of pupils.
- The progress of pupils currently in the school, with the exception of those in the early years, is slow and many pupils are working at levels significantly below the standard expected for their age. This is because too little has been done to improve teaching and to accelerate progress.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is too slow, because support for these pupils has not been sufficiently well targeted. Inspection evidence indicates that the better support now put in place is resulting in progress beginning to improve but it is early days and the attainment of these pupils remains significantly below that of others in the school, and nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are making too little progress because provision is

only recently being properly checked and support provided is having a limited impact on accelerating the progress of these pupils.

- The most-able pupils are not being challenged because they are not given enough opportunities to expand and deepen their knowledge. The school's assessment information indicates that hardly any pupils are currently working beyond the standard expected for their age and work in books confirms that this is the case.
- In other subjects, such as science and history, achievement is not high enough. Work is not tailored to pupils' needs sufficiently and progress is slow.

Early years provision

is good

- From starting points which are broadly typical for their age, children make good progress. The proportion achieving a good level of development by the end of reception has increased and is now above average.
- Provision in the early years is good. The early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the Nursery and Reception classes. She has created a strong team who are working together well to secure further improvements.
- The school's nursery provides pupils with a good start to their education and this is developed further in the Reception classes. Teachers know the children well and assess their progress carefully. They use their knowledge to plan activities which are well matched to their needs.
- Outside areas are well used and enhance learning. Teachers look for ways to combine different areas of learning such as literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world, so that activities support children's whole development.
- Children in the early years behave well. They are sociable and independent. Children take responsibility for finding the correct resources, for example finding their boots for outside play. They talk enthusiastically about their learning. For example, during the inspection children were excited by finding 'dinosaur footprints' in the classroom and were motivated to write about what they had discovered.
- Adults take good care to meet children's needs, including their emotional needs, ensuring that they are happy and feel safe in the Nursery and Reception classes. The decision to have a small afternoon nursery class of mainly summer-born children demonstrates the thought and care provided for children in the early years.
- Links with parents are good because in the early years adults look for opportunities to develop partnerships. Parents contribute to the children's learning journeys, using an online programme to provide information for teachers. Parents spoken to during inspection were full of praise for the way that adults had taken time to ensure that their children settled and had a positive start to school.
- While children make good progress generally, in previous years few children have ended the Reception Year beyond the standard expected for their age. Teachers are now doing more to extend those children further.
- The achievement of disadvantaged children in the early years lags behind that of others. Steps taken by early years staff are beginning to have a positive impact on improving the progress of these children.

School details

Unique reference number	124560
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10004289

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	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hazel Crane
Interim Headteacher	Clare Woodward
Telephone number	10787 373661
Website	www.woodhall.suffolk.sch.uk
Email address	admin@woodhall.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 June 2011

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are, or have been, eligible for free school meals at any time in the last six years, and children in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability who are supported by a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of changes of teaching staff and a new chair of the governing body is now in post. There is currently a local authority interim headteacher in post, with a substantive headteacher appointed and due to begin his role in September 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all classes, playtimes and lunchtimes. Some observations were carried out jointly with the interim headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books, school assessment information, the interim headteacher's evaluation of teaching and learning and a range of school documents.
- Inspectors met with a selection of parents in the playground and with some pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Inspectors heard a small number of pupils read from Years 1 and 2.
- Inspectors met with a representative from the local authority and with two members of the governing body.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined, including mandatory checks made during the recruitment of new staff, arrangements for e-safety (keeping children safe online when using electronic media) and risk assessments undertaken for educational visits.
- The views of 54 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account.

Inspection team

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