

# Woodslee Primary School

Croft Avenue, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside CH62 2BP

## Inspection dates

5–6 October 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	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 do not make consistently good progress throughout the school.
- The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 in 2016 was not high enough.
- At times, the activities provided in lessons are not tailored well enough to meet pupils' differing needs.
- Teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough, particularly for the most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- Staff do not consistently follow the school's policy for providing feedback to ensure that pupils are aware of their next steps in learning.
- Middle leadership is still at an early stage of development.
- Pupils' behaviour at times, falls short of the standard expected.
- Pupils' understanding of different cultures beliefs and faiths is underdeveloped.
- Provision in the early years does not yet ensure that children make consistently good progress and attain well.

### The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed acting executive headteacher, acting headteacher and interim executive board have an aspirational and clear vision for the future direction of the school. Some improvements are already evident in the quality of teaching and learning, safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Staff are supportive of the new leaders and share leaders' strong commitment to further improvement.
- According to a number of pupils, the school has become a calmer, more orderly environment since the change in leadership.

## Full report

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

- Strengthen leadership by:
  - developing the capacity of middle leaders to secure improvement in subjects
  - ensuring that middle leaders play a full part in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning to bring about improvement
  - ensuring that all staff consistently follow the school's agreed feedback and marking policy so that pupils know what their next steps in learning are
  - working to improve behaviour by more firmly establishing a culture of respect and positive attitudes to learning
  - extending pupils' understanding of other cultures, faiths and beliefs.
- Improve the quality of teaching and outcomes, including for children in the early years by:
  - ensuring that staff have high expectations and challenge the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils
  - ensuring that staff make better use of assessment to meet pupils' differing needs.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

# **Inspection judgements**

## **Effectiveness of leadership and management**

## **Requires improvement**

- The school has been through a period of turbulence since the previous inspection. Significant changes to staffing and difficulties within leadership and governance have hindered the pace of improvement. With the appointment of an interim executive board and new senior leadership team, the school has entered a time of stability. Changes put in place by new senior leaders have not had time to impact fully on the quality of teaching and outcomes. Although improving, teaching is not yet good and outcomes require improvement.
- Middle leadership is still in the early stages of development. Some roles previously held by middle leaders are currently being covered by senior leaders. Senior leaders are ensuring that existing middle leaders are helped to develop skills of monitoring and evaluating teaching and planning the way forward. This work has had little time to impact on improving teaching and outcomes.
- Senior leaders have established robust systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and drive improvement. Staff report that they feel supported and have clear targets for improvement. Recent training in the teaching of grammar, phonics and mathematics and mentoring of staff is showing impact in raising the quality of teaching. This has not yet resulted in consistently good teaching across the school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, and provides interesting activities which engage pupils. Pupils say they enjoy learning through topics. They are involved in extra-curricular activities, which reinforce and extend learning. However, the curriculum does not provide enough chances for pupils to learn about other faiths, cultures and beliefs. As a result, pupils' understanding of these aspects is limited.
- Leaders ensure that pupil premium funding is spent to support disadvantaged pupils' learning. However, differences remain in the progress of these pupils compared to other pupils nationally, particularly for the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders make effective use of the primary sports premium funding to enhance pupils' physical skills and abilities and enjoyment of sport. The funding has been used to provide the services of a specialist physical education teacher, and more resources and opportunities for pupils to attend sporting events and competitions.
- The acting executive headteacher, acting headteacher and senior leadership team have taken concerted and effective action to improve the accuracy of assessments of pupils' learning in early years and key stage 1. As a result, staff and leaders have a clear idea of children's starting points and progress. This means that the school's evaluation of pupils' progress and attainment is well-informed.
- Leaders are making good progress in establishing a positive, respectful culture and a calm, purposeful environment. Staff morale is high. Pupils, staff and leaders comment on how behaviour has improved, although there are still aspects to improve further.
- In the short period of time they have been in post, leaders have brought about improvements to the cleanliness and tidiness of the learning environment, and have ensured that a much improved early years learning environment. These measures have established the school as a much more inviting place to learn.
- The local authority has provided effective support to school leaders and continues to monitor and support the school's progress.

- Evidence from discussions with parents and responses to Parent View and views shared by text message indicate that the majority of parents have a positive view of the school. A minority expressed concern about the number of changes the school has experienced in recent months. Parents whom the inspectors spoke with felt that communication was positive and had improved.

### **Governance of the school**

- The interim executive board provide effective support and challenge to senior leaders.
- The board has a wealth of expertise and experience to contribute and has been proactive in overseeing the school during this time of significant change.
- Board members have an accurate view of the school and share senior leaders' passion for further improvement.
- Board members hold school leaders to account well for the improvements they are making to the school and pupils' progress.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders are vigilant to ensure that all arrangements are robust and in place. Leaders have made improvements to the safety of the building. For example, new fencing has been put up and the staff car park moved to ensure safe access for pupils entering and leaving school.
- Leaders have created an environment in which staff are encouraged to report any concerns or worries they may have about the safety of a child.
- Staff receive regular training to ensure that their knowledge is up to date. They are aware of their responsibilities with regard to child protection, including how to protect pupils from the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.
- Close work with external agencies and clear communications with parents supports the school's work and maintains pupils' well-being.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching, although improving, is not consistently good. At times, teaching is not closely enough matched to pupils' needs and abilities. On these occasions, their progress slows.
- Staff do not have consistently high expectations for pupils' learning, or provide sufficient opportunities for them to extend their skills and knowledge. For example, in computing, the most able pupils in Years 4 and 5 were unable to extend their skills in creating a newspaper report as all pupils were provided with a ready structured template to use.
- At other times, tasks are too difficult for pupils, for example, Year 1 and 2 pupils' learning was limited as some found reading their mathematics problems too difficult, and others found their addition tasks were at too high a level for them to complete.
- Teaching does not ensure that pupils are sufficiently clear about what their next steps in learning should be. Older pupils report that they are unclear about their targets for learning. Work in pupils' books is marked in accordance with the school's policy; however, pupils do not always know what their next steps in learning should be.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is improving. Recent staff training in the teaching of grammar, phonics and mathematics, and monitoring and coaching

from senior leaders, is resulting in better-quality teaching and more accurate assessment.

- Staff establish positive relationships with pupils and provide interesting activities which usually engage their interest. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils focused well on a caption-writing exercise after designing their own 'monster' to describe.
- Where learning is more effective, learning is well matched to pupils' abilities. For example, the most able Year 5 pupils learning about speech writing were effectively challenged to change direct speech into reported speech.

## 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' attitudes to learning are becoming increasingly consistent as teaching improves and the school's emerging culture of respect becomes more firmly established. However, there are a minority of pupils who have not yet adjusted to the new expectations and at times do not engage fully with their learning, unless closely managed.
- Pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of democracy, for example, through elections to the school council. They have a limited understanding of different cultures, faiths and beliefs.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and have an appropriate awareness of how to keep themselves safe, including how to stay safe online.
- Pupils show an understanding of the different types of bullying. They report that bullying is an uncommon occurrence, and where it happens it is dealt with by staff.
- Pupils relish their roles as prefects, eco-warriors and school council members, and the responsibilities these roles give. They praise the range of extra-curricular activities offered weekly, including drama, photography and art and craft.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils are generally polite and respectful of adults. However, where teaching does not fully meet pupils' abilities, and where older pupils have not adjusted to new expectations, pupils become inattentive and distracted.
- Pupils are aware of the consequences of poor behaviour, and say that on occasions there is inappropriate behaviour in class on the playground. They report, however, that behaviour has improved since the school's change of leadership.
- Movement around the school during the day and at lunchtimes is orderly. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve attendance and levels of persistent absence. Attendance is rising and is now broadly in line with national average. Persistent absence is affected by the high level of absence of a small number of pupils but is also reducing.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because not enough pupils are making consistently good progress across a range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics. 2015 published results showed that pupils made progress over time.
- Provisional results from 2016 assessments at the end of key stage 2 were below those found nationally. This is because teaching has not met pupils' needs well enough over time and because in 2016 national expectations have risen with the introduction of a more challenging assessment system.
- Evidence from pupils' books and the school's own information from recent reading and mathematics tests show that, since the arrival of the new leadership team, progress is improving and more pupils are now making faster progress.
- Outcomes for the most able pupils require improvement, as this group does not always make good progress to reach the standards of which they are capable. Published results from 2015 show a lower than national percentage of pupils attained the higher levels by the end of key stage 2. Although not directly comparable, few pupils attained the higher levels in the 2016 tests.
- The progress of pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities is variable. The recently appointed special educational needs coordinator and acting headteacher are working to further improve the support to these pupils. Both in the resource base and in class, pupils receive appropriate support to make progress.
- The most able disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as they should. As a result, differences remain in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and other non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- Until recently, the school's assessment of children's skill levels on entry and exit from the early years were inaccurate. Teachers gave an overgenerous picture of children's starting points and attainment by the end of the early years foundation stage. Revised and accurate assessment of the proportion of children attaining a good level of development at the end of Reception Year in 2016 show that this figure was well below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that children made expected, rather than good, progress.
- Most of the children have entered the school's Nursery and Reception classes with skill levels below those typical for their age. In the limited time they have been in school, inspection evidence indicates that children are making at least expected progress, and some better. However, the most able children's learning is not consistently extended to the full.
- The acting headteacher is currently fulfilling the role of early years leader. The acting headteacher and acting executive headteacher have successfully brought about improvements to the accuracy of assessment and the learning environment. This contributes to children's improving rates of progress.
- Staff interact generally well in children's self-chosen learning. They usually question children well to develop their ideas, but do not always extend the most able children's thinking skills to the full. For example, staff interact with children's role play as they act

out a familiar story, but do not take chances to sustain children's involvement and to deepen and extend learning.

- The early years environment has been recently improved to provide a stimulating and inviting space for children to learn. Children enjoy the broad range of activities and resources outdoors. They happily engage in exploring the 'mud kitchen', sharing roles and cooperating well together in imaginative play.
- Staff form positive, warm relationships with children. Children in Nursery and Reception classes settle well and are secure in the established routines. Children learn to use equipment safely. They focus well on self-chosen activities.
- Children show a keen interest in their learning. The children talk excitedly to staff about which animals hibernate, and enjoy making models of hedgehogs and use developed vocabulary such as 'spikey'.
- Staff promote children's early reading skill as they encourage them to identify initial letter sounds of pictures in a catalogue, and when writing their names.
- Children learn to develop early writing skills as they write a letter to 'bear'. They develop skills in mark-making and letter formation through the range of opportunities, both indoors and out. For example, children enjoy using chalk on the outdoor ground.
- Staff form positive relationships with parents. Parents are well informed about their children's progress. They are encouraged to share information and to be involved in their child's learning at home. This has a positive effect on their progress.

## School details

Unique reference number	105007
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10019790

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	251
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Mrs Ros Free
Acting Headteacher	Mrs Caroline Williams
Telephone number	01513 341406
Website	<a href="http://woodsleeprimary.com">http://woodsleeprimary.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:schooloffice@woodslee.wirral.sch.uk">schooloffice@woodslee.wirral.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	17–18 September 2014

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements for the publication of information about the use of pupil premium on its website.
- Since the previous inspection the school has had significant changes to leadership and staffing.
- The governing body was replaced by an interim executive board in March 2015.
- The headteacher left in March 2016 and an acting executive headteacher and acting headteacher joined the school from their substantive posts at Townfield Primary school.
- The school has applied to become a sponsored academy.
- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is similar to the national average.



- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- In 2015, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has a provision for pupils who have special educational needs, catering for up to eight pupils with autism. The provision is known as the social communication inclusion base.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning throughout the school. Three observations were carried out jointly with the acting headteacher. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the interim executive board, the acting executive headteacher, acting headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors also held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information produced by the school, including information on pupil's progress and attainment, behaviour and attendance, procedures for safeguarding and the school's own evaluation of its work. They considered minutes of the interim executive board meetings and the school's plans for further improvement.
- Inspectors considered the 55 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 40 parents who expressed their views via text message to Ofsted. Inspectors also spoke to parents as they brought their children to school, and an inspector met with a small group of parents to consider their views.
- Inspectors also took account of the 20 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and the 11 responses to the online pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Elaine White, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Rigby	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Beard	Ofsted Inspector

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