

Woodford Halse Church of England Primary Academy

High Street, Woodford Halse, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 3RQ

Inspection dates

4-5 July 2017

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders and subject leaders do not rigorously check and evaluate that professional training is being used effectively.
- Checks on teachers' performance are not rigorous or robust enough. Teachers' targets are not closely linked to the school's priorities for improvement.
- Governors have not been rigorous enough in holding leaders to account for pupils' progress.
- Leaders at all levels do not use the information that they gather from the checks on the quality of teaching and learning to bring about consistent improvement needed in these key areas.
- Pupils do not have opportunities to practise and apply their writing skills consistently across the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The provision for disadvantaged pupils is effective. These pupils make good progress.
- Children in the early years have their needs met well and make good progress.
- Pupils' phonics skills are developed well. They apply their skills effectively in their writing.
- The support that teaching assistants give to those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective.

- In mathematics, teachers do not always plan and set tasks to match pupils' specific needs, particularly those of the most able. Overall, problem solving and reasoning are not taught well and, as a result, many pupils' skills in these aspects of mathematics are limited.
- Subject leaders do not use pupils' assessment information as well as they could to closely monitor the progress of different groups.
- Teachers do not check pupils' reading books regularly to ensure that what they read matches appropriately pupils' ability.
- Some pupils do not attend school often enough. The number of fixed-term exclusions is above the national average.
- Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop their sporting skills and interests.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are effective. Pupils feel safe and staff care for the pupils very well. Pupils behave well in lessons.
- Leaders have introduced new English initiatives to support the improvement of pupils' writing skills.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the impact of leaders' work to improve pupils' attainment and progress by ensuring that:
 - senior and subject leaders routinely evaluate the effectiveness of professional training on both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement
 - governors and senior leaders robustly link the management of teachers' performance closely to the school's priorities and make sure that any targets set for teachers are regularly reviewed
 - leaders, including subject leaders, incisively link the outcomes of their checks on the quality of pupils' learning to any weaknesses in teaching, and take quick and effective action to eliminate these weaknesses.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good or better, and thus accelerates pupils' progress, by all teachers:
 - having high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - checking that pupils have books that closely match their reading ability, so that they make greater progress in reading
 - planning and setting mathematics tasks to match consistently pupils' individual needs, including those of the most able, so that all pupils make greater progress
 - consistently providing opportunities for pupils to use and apply their problemsolving and reasoning skills in mathematics
 - providing regular opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their writing skills.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - increasing pupils' overall attendance and reducing the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school
 - reducing the number of fixed-term exclusions.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- Leaders and governors have not yet ensured that teachers have consistently adapted their practice to meet the specific needs of pupils, especially in reading and mathematics. Difficulties with recruiting teachers have hampered leaders' efforts to ensure that there is consistency in teaching, learning and assessment in these particular areas. Pupils' progress in these subjects is not yet rapid enough.
- Senior leaders and subject leaders do not regularly check the effectiveness of professional training. Once training is delivered, leaders do not know if it is improving the quality of teaching and learning as well as it should.
- The governing body and leaders do not robustly link the school's priorities to the management of teachers' performance. For example, targets do not refer to the school's development plan priorities, particularly to improve the achievement of those groups of pupils who are underperforming, such as the most able pupils. This means that leaders do not hold teachers to account for pupils' progress as well as they could.
- Subject leaders do not consistently use information about pupils' achievement well enough to develop an accurate overview of pupils' performance. This means that subject leaders are unable to provide teachers with an accurate overview of pupils' performance and thus provide the necessary feedback so teachers can help pupils progress more rapidly.
- Leaders acknowledge that improvements in writing are a priority for the school. They have recently introduced new English programmes to support the development of pupils' writing skills. Early signs show that this is developing well pupils' knowledge and understanding in grammar, punctuation and spelling. More time is necessary to embed these new approaches to improve pupils' achievements in writing further.
- Subject leaders are not using information from their checks on learning incisively enough to address inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers do not consistently receive appropriate feedback so they can improve the quality of teaching and learning. This means that pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- Where leaders' feedback to teachers is effective, teachers' skills have improved and progress is evident in pupils' books, particularly in mathematics books.
- The school provides well for disadvantaged pupils by allocating the pupil premium funding effectively. Leaders have organised a range of academic and social activities to meet these pupils' specific needs. For example, disadvantaged pupils have received additional tuition in English and mathematics. They have also had opportunities to develop their social and communication skills, while learning in the school's woodland area. School performance information shows that disadvantaged pupils have made good progress this year.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is complemented well by a range of extracurricular activities and school visits. The curriculum is particularly effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils enjoy dodgeball, street dance and a gardening club. Pupils enjoy learning about

Requires improvement



different religions and cultures. They have had opportunities to study aspects of different parts of the world, such as South America and Africa. These opportunities enable them to recognise Britain's place in the global community.

- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used effectively. Pupils enjoy high-quality PE lessons because teachers are well trained by sports coaches. The extensive school grounds enable pupils to participate in a wide range of sports and after-school clubs. Pupils understand the importance of being healthy and keeping fit.
- Pupils understand British values well. For example, they understand the principles of democracy and representation through voting each year for members of the school council. Pupils have opportunities to help each other as 'helping hands' in class. They understand the importance of tolerance and respect, which they display through their positive attitudes towards each other. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Senior leaders use the additional funding and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well. Teaching assistants provide effective support for these pupils as they know them well. The school provides a lunchtime club for those pupils who need a quieter space. The school has a trained counsellor who is able to offer bespoke support for these pupils, as well as a family support worker who liaises well with families.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is passionate about supporting whole-school development and raising pupils' achievements. However, governors do not challenge leaders robustly enough to ensure that pupils' outcomes are improving. For example, governors are unclear about the progress of different groups of pupils or whether the school's actions are enabling pupils to make at least good progress.
- Members of the governing body attend training regularly. They view this as an important part of developing the skills of the governing body so they are able to keep up to date with broader issues, particularly safeguarding. They have received training on the safe recruitment of staff, radicalisation and child exploitation. Governors are knowledgeable about, and are effective in, their roles and responsibilities to keep pupils and adults safe.
- The support that Innovate Multi-Academy Trust has provided to the school has not yet resulted in improved pupils' outcomes. The trust acknowledges that its actions have not been swift enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The headteacher ensures that all staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding, and are aware of the risks to pupils posed by radicalisation and extremism. Staff know that they have a duty to be vigilant and know well the different forms of abuse.
- The headteacher is tenacious in his approach to the management of child protection. He keeps detailed and accurate records of those pupils about whom staff have a



concern. Actions taken by outside agencies and staff are diligently recorded on pupils' records to ensure that the needs of the pupils are being met in a timely manner.

- All of the checks to help keep children safe are carried out thoroughly. For example, the recruitment checks on staff's suitability to work with children are thorough.
- The school's single central record of staff and visitor checks is kept in order. Staff training is kept up to date and staff have a clear understanding of what to do in the event of any concerns they may have about pupils' welfare.
- The school works effectively with outside agencies to safeguard pupils. Leaders respond promptly to concerns and ensure that there is early support in place for vulnerable pupils. Action is prompt, with effective guidance to support families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistent throughout the school. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Often, the most able pupils are completing work that lacks sufficient challenge. This means the most able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in mathematics and English.
- Teachers do not skilfully match reading books to pupils' levels of ability as well as they could. Often, pupils are reading books that are too easy or too difficult. This means that many pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in reading.
- Teachers do not consistently develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics. They provide tasks that are often too difficult and do not support pupils to build on their skills. For example, they struggle to complete tasks and are confused about the methods that they should use. This means that pupils do not make as much progress as they could in their mathematics lessons.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to practise and apply their writing skills. They do not have regular opportunities to apply their knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling in sustained writing activities. Leaders recognise that this is a key area of development for the school.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Where teaching assistants support pupils who need to catch up, they provide appropriate support and resources so that pupils can make good progress. The younger most able pupils are given opportunities to sound out, spell and write words into sentences, often using capital letters and full stops. This means that pupils are able to quickly recognise letters that make different sounds and use this knowledge when reading.
- Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to practise letter joins and support pupils well to develop a consistent handwriting style. Pupils apply well their handwriting skills in their written tasks. They have legible handwriting and clear letter formation, particularly in key stage 1.
- Leaders have introduced a programme to develop pupils' technical understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Pupils' current workbooks show that this is working well to develop their knowledge and understanding.
- Where teaching is effective, teachers provide fun-filled and stimulating lessons. For example, one class enjoyed learning about the Anglo-Saxon gods. The teacher made



effective links between the gods' names and the days of the week. Pupils had opportunities to apply their writing skills in their topic work. Pupils worked together well and shared their ideas with their writing partners.

- Teachers plan and provide tasks that meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils well. School assessment information shows these pupils are making good progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in their classrooms. Teachers provide additional resources so these pupils are able to make progress. Teaching assistants work well with teachers to support these pupils and those who need to catch up.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors explained the importance of perseverance as an important quality to make them effective learners. During a recent school visit, an inspirational athlete shared with the pupils the importance of perseverance. This quality was echoed by some teachers in their classrooms to engage pupils effectively in their learning.
- Those pupils who spoke with inspectors said bullying is rare, including prejudice-based behaviour. Pupils feel safe and are confident they could go to any member of staff to report a concern.
- The school has worked effectively with vulnerable pupils and their families to ensure that their specific needs are met. For example, the school's family support worker liaises with families and external agencies to ensure that families receive the support that they need through early help assessments.
- The 'Happy Club' provides pupils with a calm and safe space during lunchtimes. Pupils can select a range of activities, while adults support pupils so that they can have a calm start to the afternoon.
- The school has a range of activities to develop pupils' social and communication skills. For example, pupils have opportunities to work with the local stable yard to build their self-esteem and confidence. All staff have received training to help those pupils who have specific emotional needs.
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe online. They confidently told inspectors that they must not share personal information about themselves to someone that they do not know on the internet. Pupils have created posters about the importance of being safe online.
- Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons tackle important issues to help pupils understand themselves and the society in which they live.

Behaviour

■ The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.



- Attendance is below the national average for the third consecutive year. Leaders acknowledge that this is an area that they must swiftly address, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders meet regularly with parents when their child's attendance falls below the national average. The school responds quickly when a pupil is absent. However, leaders recognise that securing regular attendance of some pupils needs to have a higher profile.
- Although reducing, the number of fixed-term exclusions is above the national average for the second year. The leaders have trained staff to ensure that they meet the emotional and behavioural needs of pupils, and build confidence and self-esteem. Leaders acknowledge that more work is needed to ensure that the number of fixedterm exclusions reduces rapidly.
- Most pupils are polite and helpful and conduct themselves very well in and out of class.
- Pupils enjoy learning and are highly respectful of their teachers and each other.
- Staff skilfully support the pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. Because of this support, vulnerable pupils, who have specific behavioural needs, have their needs skilfully met by teachers and teaching assistants. Staff use their training well to support the particular needs of those pupils' who have acute behavioural needs. Staff work well with external agencies to ensure that provision is matched well to pupils' needs. The strong focus on improving behaviour has meant a reduction in the number of incidents.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2016, reading progress was below average. Progress is hampered in reading because not all pupils have reading books that are appropriately matched to their ability.
- School information for 2017 shows that the proportion of pupils in key stage 1 who attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with last year's national average. Pupils' workbooks in key stage 1 show an inconsistent picture of progress. Pupils do not make rapid progress.
- Pupils' progress in writing at the end of 2016 was average. Current pupils' workbooks show that there are early signs of improvement in 2017. Leaders recognise that this is an area of improvement and have put English programmes in place to ensure that progress is sustained over time.
- At the end of 2016, progress in mathematics was significantly below the national average by the end of key stage 2. Current pupils' workbooks show that the mathematics leader's recent training on problem solving and reasoning is beginning to improve pupils' outcomes. More time is needed to embed these new initiatives.
- The most able pupils do not attain as well as they should nor make the progress of which they are capable in reading and mathematics. For example, in 2017, no pupils attained the higher standards in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. Attainment at the higher standard in 2017 in writing was broadly in line with the national average of 2016.



- In 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was above the national average of 2016. Pupils apply their phonic skills effectively and are able to read unfamiliar words well.
- School performance information for current disadvantaged pupils shows that attainment across all subjects by the end of key stage 2 has improved significantly as compared to 2016. Those books that inspectors looked at confirm this to be the case.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make consistently good progress. This is due to the close support that these pupils receive.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader and her staff have fostered positive relationships where every child is valued, nurtured and encouraged to try their best. Children are absorbed in their learning and play well with each other.
- The proportion of children attaining a good level of development in 2017 was above the national average of 2016. Teachers closely check and track children's learning so they are able to provide the breadth of activities to meet children's specific needs and make the progress of which they are capable across the curriculum. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1 and make good progress.
- Adults create fun and stimulating learning activities to develop children's knowledge and skills well. The summer term topic is based on the children's story book about the adventures of 'Superworm'. Children apply their numeracy skills through measuring 'worms' of varying lengths. Other children use their literacy skills to write instructions about making a home for a worm, competently using capital letters and full stops.
- The adults use questioning skills proficiently to deepen and extend children's learning. For example, the class teacher enables children to explain what they are doing, skilfully supporting children to use appropriate vocabulary. Disadvantaged children and the most able make good progress because they are well supported in their learning.
- The children's workbooks show the breadth of activities over time. The Reception class space is used well to ensure that children have access to all areas of learning. For example, the outdoor space has writing, reading and number activities.
- Children also have the opportunity to develop their communication skills and their understanding of the world because activities are sufficiently demanding, engaging and fun.
- Children are well supported to develop their personal, social and emotional skills. They play and learn together well by sharing resources and activities. Children know how to play with each other because adults have embedded routines and have ensured that children know how to be effective learners.
- The classroom and outdoor spaces are safe, organised and well resourced. Adults have received appropriate safeguarding and first-aid training.
- Parents reported positively about information that they receive from the school to help their child settle well in the early years. This includes information on pre-visits to the school, where children have opportunities to play in the classrooms and meet their new teacher.



School details

Unique reference number	141073
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10031201

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	Academy converter	
Age range of pupils	3 to 11	
Gender of pupils	Mixed	
Number of pupils on the school roll	242	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	
Chair	Terry Lifford	
Headteacher	Mike Wills	
Telephone number	01327 265900	
Website	www.woodfordhalseacademy.net	
Email address	enquiries@woodfordhalseacademy.net	
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected	

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.



- The school joined Innovate Multi-Academy Trust in July 2014.
- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.



Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in all key stages and in most classes. One of the observations took place accompanied by the headteacher. In total, 24 lessons, or parts of lessons, were observed. The inspectors also scrutinised many examples of pupils' work.
- The inspection team held meetings with senior leaders, subject leaders, representatives of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors also met with directors of the trust and the chief executive officer. They looked at the views of 25 parents who had responded to the school's most recent questionnaire and listened to pupils read.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's development plan and self-evaluation, policies and records related to safeguarding, records of pupils' behaviour, the school's information about pupils' outcomes and attendance, and records of meetings of the governing body.

Inspection team

Emma Nuttall, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Debbie Beeston	Ofsted Inspector
Dorothy Stenson	Ofsted Inspector



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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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