

Woodlands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120997
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	313828
Inspection date	15 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Sue Hall

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	408
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Susie Mason
Headteacher	Mrs Mandy Stanton
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Church Walk Bradwell Great Yarmouth Norfolk NR31 8QQ
Telephone number	01493665314
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: whether all pupils including those who are new to the school achieve as well as they can; whether the care, guidance and support of the pupils are successful in ensuring they achieve their best, and whether leadership and management ensures that all pupils, and particularly those new to the school, are provided for effectively. Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, senior staff and governor representatives. In addition, there was observation of parts of several lessons, scrutiny of school information and its self-evaluation statement, analysis of samples of pupils' work, evaluation of parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in as much detail but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized school near Great Yarmouth. It changed its character in September 2008 from a middle school, offering education from Years 4 to 7, to a primary school. An on-site nursery opened in September 2007. There are now pupils in Nursery, Reception and Years 3 to 6, with planned admission to Years 1 and 2 in the next two years. The current children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) entered with skills and knowledge that are slightly above the expectations for their age in several key areas. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Most are of White British heritage and there is a very small minority from other backgrounds, a few speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status, an Activemark for sport, and ECO schools award. There is after school care available at the end of each school day.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. This overall judgement matches the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. The headteacher, staff and governors have been successful in steering the school through significant recent changes to its character. This, combined with a major building programme, has put considerable pressure upon the staff, who have worked hard to try to ensure that the pupils' needs come first. Parents are pleased with the quality of education and care provided.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. An outstanding feature is how the school enables them to develop an excellent approach to leading a healthy lifestyle. The high quality sports teaching and exceptional out of school enrichment activities enable many pupils to develop high level skills in physical activities. This has resulted in many representing the school at local, area and national level including in girls' and boys' football. Pupils have high levels of understanding of the importance of eating healthily.

The majority of pupils behave well and like school. Many speak with pride about their sporting interests, say they feel safe in school and think there is little bullying. Should they have concerns they know there are staff to whom they can readily speak. A key feature of the school's ethos is that pupils learn that they have rights and responsibilities, which most are keen to live up to. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There is a good range of opportunities to take on roles in and around the school. There are effective links with a range of external agencies, helping to support pupils where necessary, and enabling them to develop a better understanding of their own and the wider community. Attendance is in line with national averages.

In Years 3 to 6 pupils make good progress. National tests and assessments provisional data show that standards at the age of eleven are above and sometimes well above average and that pupils do well, especially in English. Most pupils are confident speakers and use a good vocabulary to express their ideas. Many learn to read and write fluently and with confidence. Girls and boys make similar progress and sometimes boys outperform girls, partly because they have such positive attitudes to school. Pupils also do well in science where standards are slightly above national averages. Overall, they make good progress and most achieve well. This helps all pupils grow in confidence and prepares them well for the next stage of their life and learning. Some of the pupils with additional needs make very good progress because they are well supported.

Progress in mathematics is satisfactory and standards are not as high as in English and science. This is both because not as many pupils attain the expected level and slightly fewer achieve the higher levels than in other subjects. Several pupils say they do not enjoy mathematics as much as other subjects and think at times it is boring. The scrutiny of recent work and lesson observations indicate that progress is limited because pupils do not have enough opportunity to practise their skills and develop a range of strategies to solve mathematical problems.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, as is the curriculum. A major strength is the wide range of curriculum enrichment opportunities and particularly high quality sporting activities that support learning and personal development so well. The staff have worked conscientiously to ensure that planning meets the needs of the new pupils in Year 3. Across the school, most lessons are well planned and clearly identify what is to be learnt. Pupils are generally managed well so that lessons are conducted in a calm and purposeful manner. The level of challenge in

lessons is usually good. The setting of pupils by ability in English has been a successful strategy to ensure there is a good match of work to their ability. In mathematics, a similar strategy is satisfactory. At times, the reliance on text books and work sheets limits the opportunity for pupils to carry out mathematical investigations and develop confidence in their ability to tackle unfamiliar work.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. A particular strength is the very effective work of the special educational needs coordinator, which ensures that vulnerable pupils receive help that is tailored well to their needs. The school works hard to listen to pupils' concerns and wherever possible act upon these. The 'drop in' sessions by the learning mentor and school nurse are effective in supporting pupils if they are troubled. Policies and procedures for child protection and safeguarding the pupils are good. Where any concerns are identified, senior staff act quickly to address these. The school tracks and analyses the progress that pupils make well and can clearly identify trends in achievement across the subjects, year groups, genders and for different groups of ability. However, such information is not always used well enough by all staff in order to identify specific weaknesses in mathematics and thereby ensure consistently good progress is made. The marking of pupils' work is variable and does not always appear to follow a prescribed school marking policy. Provision for after school care is good; staff ensure that pupils are kept safe but at times activities are not particularly interesting and they sit inactively for too long.

Leadership and management of the school are good and the school is well placed to continue to improve. The headteacher is full of enthusiasm and commitment to the school. She is well supported by the leadership team. All staff have worked through a demanding time and have welcomed the challenge of becoming a primary school. However, the level of expertise in leading and managing provision for the younger children is a challenge and a developing feature. Some of the advice received from a range of sources has been conflicting and made it difficult for the school to meet all the regulations to provide high quality provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, the school is totally determined to meet these challenges and ensure such provision matches the high quality of that in other areas. The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is appropriate if somewhat generous. Despite the well-considered efforts of the subject coordinator, there has not always been enough rigour applied in evaluating the effectiveness of teaching in mathematics. Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and keen to develop further their programme of focused visits to the school. They are fully committed to their role in acting as a critical friend of the school and asking searching questions when discussing strategic decisions.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The quality of provision for children in the EYFS is satisfactory overall and is developing well. There is a lot of enthusiasm and potential in the EYFS team to improve provision further. The Nursery is managed by the headteacher and a group of governors as a self-financing group. Much advice was sought, staff appointed and systems set up which however do not entirely meet all current guidance for this age. Children enter the Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding that are a little above the average expected for their age. Overall, they make satisfactory progress and achieve at least satisfactorily. The provision for children's personal development and their care and guidance is good. The planning of activities in the Nursery is satisfactory, although occasionally opportunities are missed to ensure that activities the children

choose independently are always as purposeful as they might be. The learning environment is a little bland and lacks imaginative stimulus.

From this term there are now children in the two Reception classes. Provision for these children is mostly good. Planning is effective and meets the age and abilities of the children well. Some activities are very effective, including the use of a video camera to encourage the children to identify what worried them when starting school in order to help them settle. However, as in the Nursery, role-play areas do not do enough to stimulate the imagination and lead to high quality speaking and listening, social or creative development. The newly appointed Early Years leader has huge enthusiasm for the role and is working with colleagues to help develop nursery provision further and fully integrate the EYFS within the main school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the Early Years Foundation Stage is fully integrated into the life and work of the whole school.
- Raise standards in mathematics by ensuring that pupils have enough opportunities to develop the confidence and skills to solve mathematical problems.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Woodlands Primary School, Bradwell, Great Yarmouth, NR31 8QQ

Thank you very much for looking after Mr Ramsey and I when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed speaking to several of you and meeting you in lessons, at lunchtime and in assembly. Yours is a good school with lots of strengths.

These are some of the best things we found:

- there are excellent opportunities for you to become fit and develop a love of sport and exercise
- there is a great range of activities outside lessons that help you learn and develop different skills
- you enjoy coming to school and most of you behave well
- the school looks after you well and those of you who have a few problems have lots of help
- all the staff have worked hard to make sure that the recent changes have helped to improve things for you.

To help things to improve even more we have asked that:

- the activities for the youngest children are even more imaginative and they have the opportunity to be part of all the main school activities
- teachers provide you with lots of opportunities to plan activities that use your skills in solving mathematical problems.

To help your school continue to improve, please make the most of the interesting things available to you all.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector