

Woodlea Primary School

Fence Houses, Houghton le Spring, Tyne and Wear DH4 6AR

Inspection dates

9–10 January 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders instil strong values of pride, trust and respect within the whole school community.
- Leaders understand where the strengths are. They take effective action to improve weaker aspects. However, improvements take longer to bring about when leaders do not evaluate precisely enough the impact of their work.
- Teaching and learning are good. This is because teachers make effective use of assessment to plan suitable activities for pupils of different abilities.
- The progress pupils make compared with pupils nationally is not as strong as it was at the time of the last inspection. Nevertheless, pupils leave Year 6 well prepared for secondary school and current pupils make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils generally make progress in line with their peers in school. Too many do not make the additional progress that would substantially diminish the difference in attainment between them and other pupils nationally.
- The most able pupils sustain good progress to achieve high standards. However, there is potential for increasing the proportion of pupils who achieve greater depth in their learning in all key stages.
- Effective leadership helps adults to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- The quality of education in the early years has improved over the last few years. However, it is not yet good. The capable leader responsible for the early years has other substantial responsibilities that hamper her capacity to concentrate on this aspect of her work.
- The curriculum is planned and implemented so pupils acquire substantial knowledge in a wide range of subjects. Middle leaders make sure that subjects are taught well. There is scope for refining the sequencing of content to ensure more systematic coverage and progression.
- Leaders strongly promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Enrichment activities make a strong contribution to pupils' development. Open-minded, respectful pupils are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The governing body holds leaders to account increasingly effectively. Leaders' strategic planning is not always sufficiently precise about the intended outcomes. This has limited the ability of leaders and governors to measure effectively the impact of some actions.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance by:
 - setting more precise success criteria in strategic plans, so that the precise impact of leaders' actions can be more effectively evaluated by leaders and governors
 - further developing middle leaders so that some of the responsibilities of senior leaders can be distributed to others, helping senior leaders to prioritise more effectively
 - honing the checks that leaders make on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, so that improvements are more rapid.
- Increase the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and the most able by:
 - sharpening the pupil premium strategy, so more of the disadvantaged pupils make greater than average progress to catch up with their peers
 - identifying and helping more middle-prior-attaining pupils in all year groups to reach above-average standards by the end of each key stage.
- Improve the curriculum by:
 - reviewing the sequencing of content across the foundation subjects to ensure that pupils' knowledge builds more progressively over time
 - reviewing the religious education (RE) curriculum to ensure coverage of Judaism and Islam.
- Improve provision in the early years by:
 - ensuring that the leader has time to devote to routinely checking the quality of provision and supporting staff
 - making sure that the activities children access independently make greater demands on them, and help them to develop the characteristics of effective learning
 - increasing the proportion of children who exceed early learning goals, especially in reading, writing and numeracy.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have maintained a positive culture, rooted in strong values. As a result, pupils enjoy school and develop well personally, socially and academically.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of education. They identify the right priorities and largely take effective action. For example, in the last two years, leaders have successfully tackled weaknesses in teaching. They have brought about improvements in pupils' writing and improved the mathematics curriculum. They have raised pupils' attendance and enhanced the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching. They keep a track of each pupil's progress. This has resulted in consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and good rates of progress in pupils' learning. However, the checks are not always concentrated on the greatest areas of need. As a result, improvement is not always as rapid as it could be.
- All teachers carry out leadership responsibilities. This has contributed to good achievement across the full range of subjects. Nevertheless, senior leaders are sometimes overstretched. This results in some weaknesses not being addressed with enough urgency, for example in the early years. There is scope for further distribution of responsibility to middle leaders.
- Provision for pupils with SEND is expertly managed. As a result, teachers and teaching assistants are well supported in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. These pupils largely make good progress, including those for whom there is additional funding.
- Leaders make generally effective use of pupil premium funding. Most of this is used to ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive support from additional adults in whole-class lessons. Good teaching and support mean that these pupils make good progress. However, leaders do not precisely identify barriers to learning. Consequently, not enough of these pupils make the more rapid progress needed to catch up with other pupils from similar starting points nationally.
- Leaders have planned a stimulating, broad and balanced curriculum. They ensure that all teachers give attention to all the subjects of the national curriculum. Consequently, pupils of all abilities acquire considerable knowledge across a wide range of subjects. Subject content is not always sequenced in a way that would help pupils to acquire knowledge more progressively and systematically.
- Leaders have ensured a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities, including visits to places of interest, visitors to school and themed days. This enhances pupils' enjoyment and broadens their experiences.
- The contribution the curriculum makes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is evident in their tolerance, open-mindedness and respect for each other. Pupils have insight into democracy through the effective working of the school council and learning about British government. They develop empathy through active involvement in such events as Remembrance Day. Pupils learn about a range of cultures and faiths across the curriculum, in assemblies and through special events.

However, the RE curriculum does not give pupils enough insight into Judaism and Islam.

- Leaders make effective use of the government sports and physical education (PE) funding to increase pupils' participation in sports, including inter-school events, and to secure quality PE teaching and coaching.
- Leaders responded well to priority support and challenge from the local authority to increase the proportion of children reaching a good level of development in the early years. Leaders' collaboration with local schools contributes mutually to improvement and enhanced opportunities for pupils.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has subjected itself to external evaluation and audited the skills of governors. In addition to training and the appointment of some new governors, this has resulted in substantial improvements in governance.
- Leaders share appropriate information with the governing body that helps governors to see clearly where the strengths and weaknesses are. Governors ask astute, relevant questions that challenge leaders and hold them to account with increasing effectiveness.
- Some governors tend to be a little overly generous in their evaluations. Furthermore, governors occasionally place too much emphasis on pupils' attainment and insufficient emphasis on pupils' progress from their various starting points. Consequently, the governing body has not recognised how achievement is no longer outstanding.
- Leaders do not identify sharply enough the intended outcomes of their actions in their improvement plans. Because of this, leaders and governors are too often inclined to measure impact in terms of the accomplishment of actions than in terms of pupils' progress and learning.
- The governing body stays on top of its many statutory responsibilities such as reviewing policies and keeping a close eye on the budget.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safer recruitment procedures are effective. The record of recruitment checks is accurate and complete. Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained in their duties, including the 'Prevent' duty. Staff report their concerns to the designated leaders and record these concerns in a timely way. Records show that leaders refer to the local authority those pupils who are at risk of harm.
- However, records of meetings and discussions are not always as meticulous as they might be. A few minor follow-up actions have not been recorded at all. Furthermore, the child protection policy had not been brought fully up to date with statutory requirements at the time of the inspection.
- The governing body considers safeguarding matters in all its meetings. The safeguarding governor has carried out an audit of site safety with leaders. This resulted in further

improvements to the perimeter security. However, governors were not aware of minor weaknesses that inspectors identified in written policy and recording of concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Effective leadership maintains a quality of teaching that is largely consistently good. A little teaching is exceptionally strong. This results in pupils making good progress across a wide range of subjects.
- Teachers are adept at identifying what pupils already know and can do. Consequently, teachers plan activities that are well suited to the needs of groups of pupils. Across the curriculum, teachers generally plan activities that help the least able pupils to learn, and which deepen the thinking of the most able pupils. This variation in challenge and support is largely, but not entirely, consistent across subjects and year groups.
- Teachers challenge the most able pupils so that most maintain a good rate of progress and achieve above average standards. However, given pupils' starting points, teachers and leaders do not identify all those pupils who, despite average attainment so far in their schooling, ought to be capable of achieving greater depth in their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants, with the help of the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), identify the specific needs of those pupils who need additional support. Effective support, and adaptation of activities, help most of these pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers do not manage to help the majority of disadvantaged pupils to make substantially better than average progress. As a result, despite generally good progress for this group, the difference in attainment between this group and other pupils nationally remains.
- The teaching of early reading is effective, so most pupils meet the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year 1. Most pupils, by the time they leave school, understand what they read. They are prepared well for secondary school. Teachers read appealing texts to pupils throughout the school, so many pupils develop an interest in, and enthusiasm for, reading. However, many of the books available do not inspire pupils. Furthermore, there are insufficient numbers of challenging books from which the most able readers can select.
- Teachers teach writing well. Pupils develop stamina because they get to write often for a range of purposes. Teachers ensure that pupils sustain the standard of their writing across subjects, not just in English lessons. Most learn to write accurately and neatly in a fluent, cursive script. Improvements in the mathematics curriculum, and in the teaching of mathematics, have resulted in high attainment in this subject by the end of key stage 2.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Pupils learn to develop empathy for each other. They demonstrate open-minded attitudes to gender differences and an understanding of disability. Some pupils took part in a sleepover at school to help them to begin to understand homelessness. Pupils organised a collection of winter clothing for a homeless charity and raised funds for the People's Kitchen in Newcastle. Pupils engage in several fundraising events each year.
- Leaders and teachers plan and implement an extensive range of activities across the curriculum. These develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. However, leaders do not evaluate the impact of these many activities particularly well. Leaders are too inclined to judge this aspect by the quantity and quality of what has been done, rather than its effect. A newly purchased scheme is helping leaders to identify weaknesses in provision. Pupils learn about current affairs. Teachers, however, do not exploit opportunities sufficiently well to engage pupils in debate.
- Pupils learn how to stay safe. For example, they understand the risks associated with use of the internet for gaming and social networking. They understand the potential impact on individuals of online bullying.
- Most pupils have a well-developed understanding of bullying and say that incidents are not frequent. They are satisfied that adults deal with bullying and other forms of conflict well.
- Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to engage in sports and physical activity and are actively encouraged to eat a balanced diet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well, not least because of the strong relationships fostered between adults and pupils. Pupils respect their teachers. They are attentive in lessons, complete their tasks and work well with each other.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school, for example, in the hall as they eat their lunch, and in the playground. Despite the playground being a little crowded, pupils are generally respectful of each other's space and tolerant of each other. 'Buddies' are trained to organise games in the playground.
- Though the behaviour of many pupils is excellent, inspectors observed a few pupils disrupting their own and others' learning in lessons and engaging in inappropriate play in the playground. Pupils confirmed to inspectors that this is typical. Nevertheless, adults manage incidents of weaker behaviour well when they notice it.
- Parents value the 'dojo' reward system that keeps them informed of their children's behaviour and pupils are motivated by this.
- Effective leadership has sustained and further improved attendance. As a result, the overall rate is above the national average. Few pupils are persistently absent, and no group is over-represented in the absence figures.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Across the age range, pupils currently in the school make good progress in a wide range of subjects. This is a result of the good teaching they receive and their positive attitudes to learning.

- Pupils make at least average progress in Year 1. Progress accelerates in Year 2 because of exceptionally strong teaching. This helps a good proportion of pupils, who have fallen behind due to historically weak outcomes by the end of Reception, to catch up by the end of key stage 1. However, given pupils' starting points, there is scope for further improving attainment by the end of key stage 1.
- Pupils sustain good progress through key stage 2, in a wide range of subjects, not just reading, writing and mathematics. The progress of a minority accelerates, resulting in generally above-average attainment by the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils reaching a high standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 has been generally in line with national figures. A smaller proportion of pupils who attained an average standard by the end of key stage 1 go on to reach a high standard by the end of Year 6 than do nationally.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress. The progress of disadvantaged pupils, over time, helps many to be ready for secondary school. However, the difference in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally remains.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has improved from the low levels of a few years ago. This is now broadly in line with the national average. Given children's largely typical starting points, this does not always represent good progress. Furthermore, too few children exceed the early learning goals and so do not enter Year 1 ready to make the rapid progress they otherwise might.
- Provision has improved over time with help from the local authority. However, improvements plateaued, so provision is not yet good. Leaders understand where the strengths and weaknesses are. The early years leader is clearly very accomplished. However, other substantial responsibilities have hampered her work to improve the provision. Even before inspectors left the school, leaders had already begun to act to sharpen practice. This resulted in the demonstration of some capable teaching. However, provision over time has not typically been strong.
- The quality of provision over time has been inconsistent. Much of the direct teaching of children has been effective in helping most children to meet most of the early learning goals. However, the planning of resources and activities that children access independently has been variable in its effectiveness. Too few activities make sufficient demands on children and do not absorb their concentration. Furthermore, adults' interactions with children's play and exploration is variable in quality. The questioning of children does not consistently enhance the quality of learning, particularly for the most able children.
- Children learn to behave well and develop well socially and emotionally because adults prioritise this. Adults encourage children to say 'please', 'thank you' and 'excuse me' and show them how to look after themselves.
- Adults assess children's development across all areas of learning. However, assessment is not always entirely accurate. Furthermore, some assessments are more descriptive of what children do than evaluative of what they learn.
- Adults involve parents and carers well on entry to school. This helps them to assess the

children and to identify children's interests. Throughout children's time in the early years, staff involve parents in assessment and learning. The assessment records, however, are not presented in a way that makes them particularly accessible or especially useful to parents.

- All of the early years welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	114009
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10059205

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Reed
Headteacher	Philip Adamson
Telephone number	01913 852675
Website	www.woodlea.durham.sch.uk
Email address	woodleaprimary@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	30 April 2009

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than average-sized primary school with provision for nursery children.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes at least once. Most of these observations took place with school leaders present.
- Inspectors, with school leaders, scrutinised a sample of workbooks, covering all curriculum subjects, alongside pupils' assessment information.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, both formally and informally, to find out what it is like to be a pupil in the school. The lead inspector listened as several pupils read aloud.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders to discuss the impact of their work. The lead inspector met with several members of the governing body and separately with a representative from the local authority.
- A range of documents were scrutinised, including the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation statement, governing body minutes, notes of visits from the local authority, and notes of leaders' checks on the quality of teaching. Inspectors also scrutinised safeguarding records and pupils' assessment information.
- Inspectors listened to the views of parents as they dropped their children off at school. They took note of 27 responses of parents to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

Philip Riozzi, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mark Nugent

Ofsted Inspector

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