

Woodlands Infant and Nursery School

Whitethorn Grove, Birchwood, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN6 0PF

Inspection dates

21–22 May 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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is now good in all areas.
- Senior and middle leaders are effective in their roles. There is strong capacity to ensure sustained improvement.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use questions effectively to encourage pupils to reflect on, and explain, their learning.
- Pupils have frequent opportunities to edit and improve their work. As a result, they are becoming increasingly resilient, independent learners.
- The high standard of work in pupils' English, phonics and mathematics books reflects their positive attitudes to learning. However, work in topic books shows that pupils do not consistently apply their skills across a wide range of subjects.
- Leadership and teaching in the early years are strong. Children make good progress and are well prepared for the transition to Year 1.
- Leaders and staff have ensured that behaviour has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils' conduct around school and in lessons is calm and orderly.
- Leaders and staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, through the well-designed curriculum. This is a strength of the school's provision.
- Attainment at the expected standard has improved considerably in reading, writing and mathematics. This applies equally to disadvantaged pupils.
- The proportion of pupils who attain at greater depth has been consistently below average. No disadvantaged pupil attained at greater depth in reading or mathematics in 2018.
- The most able pupils are not consistently given work that is sufficiently challenging. Consequently, this sometimes limits their learning and progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers consistently provide work that challenges the most able pupils, so that a larger proportion attain at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics
 - teachers' expectations of pupils are equally high across the curriculum, so that pupils can consistently apply their skills and knowledge to a high standard across a range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has taken swift and decisive action in response to the recommendations from the last inspection. This has resulted in significant improvements in the quality of teaching, behaviour and attendance. Standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics have risen, across the school.
- Middle leadership is strong, as a result of raised expectations and a successful programme of staff training and development. In discussion, subject leaders explained their roles with confidence and enthusiasm, expressing a clear focus on raising standards for pupils. All middle leaders are involved in drawing up plans for action, which include regular monitoring checks on the quality of teaching and learning. This enables them to have an accurate overview of their respective subjects, across the school.
- In discussion, and in response to Ofsted's online surveys, staff and parents expressed positive views about the school. Typical comments from parents were, 'The school has made massive improvements' and 'The staff are approachable and supportive'. All staff stated they are proud to work at the school and believe it has improved significantly.
- Leaders have ensured that the school is outward-looking, through partnerships with a range of other local schools. The close association with the other schools in the Birchwood Federation gives a range of opportunities for sharing good practice, staff training and checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments across the federation. The positive links with the junior school ensure a smooth transition for pupils at the end of key stage 1.
- The deputy headteacher provides effective leadership of the school's provision for disadvantaged pupils. She made sure that the recommendations from the external review of pupil premium were enacted promptly. The additional funding for pupil premium is used effectively, based on the accurate identification of pupils' barriers to learning. As a result, standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics have risen.
- The leader with responsibility for coordinating provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is highly effective in her role. She makes sure that pupils' additional needs are identified quickly and accurately, so that she can steer the provision of appropriate teaching and support. Regular checks enable her to have a precise overview of pupils' progress from their starting points. She has established a thorough training programme for staff and has regular interactions with parents and carers.
- Leaders have ensured that the school's curriculum is broad and balanced, underpinned by a clear understanding of the importance of early reading, writing and mathematics. The effective promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the curriculum. For example, leaders and staff take every opportunity to broaden pupils' horizons through the 'Woodlands way' community links. Pupils have a growing awareness of fundamental British values through their school council and

regular celebrations of a range of festivals and cultures, and 'choose kindness' activities to promote respect and tolerance.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a clear and accurate overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Curriculum links, discussions with staff and pupils, and regular visits to school enable them to check for themselves how well pupils are learning and progressing.
- Minutes of their meetings show evidence of governors asking frequent, challenging questions as they hold leaders to account for the school's performance.
- Governors make sure that they request regular, precise information from leaders regarding the additional funding for pupils with SEND, the pupil premium and the physical education and sport premium. This assures them that the spending is having the desired impact on standards.
- Governors use the skills and experience acquired through their oversight of the three schools in the federation to ensure consistency of standards for pupils.
- Governors have made sure that their training is up to date, including that relating to safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders take a well-coordinated approach to safeguarding, effectively harnessing the skills and experience of the school's family support worker and the coordinator for pupils with SEND. The school's strong culture of care and safety is upheld by all staff. This means that any welfare concerns are handled quickly, with appropriate actions taken.
- The executive headteacher has ensured that staff receive frequent safeguarding briefings and regular training. Employment checks meet statutory requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils across the school show positive attitudes to learning. They support each other well and work with good cooperation. Teachers foster positive relationships which promote learning effectively.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together to support pupils effectively. They use questioning to assess what pupils know and can do, so that pupils develop and consolidate a range of knowledge and skills.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. During the inspection, this was seen in action in relation to English, mathematics and the teaching of art.
- Pupils are continually encouraged to edit and improve their work. They are developing positive attitudes to errors as they become increasingly resilient and independent learners. Consequently, pupils can learn from their mistakes, addressing them swiftly.

- The teaching of reading, including phonics, is strong across both Years 1 and 2. Pupils who read to the inspector used their phonics knowledge accurately to read unfamiliar words. The reading books are carefully chosen to match pupils' abilities. The leader for phonics keeps precise records of pupils' progress and the leader with responsibility for English gave a precise account of the positive impact on standards in reading of the school's involvement in a 'Year of Reading' during 2017/18.
- The work in pupils' phonics and writing books is well presented, showing pupils' pride in their work. Many pupils say they enjoy writing, and the quality of their work shows that they are developing strong skills in grammar, punctuation, spelling and cursive handwriting.
- Work in topic books is sometimes of a lesser standard than in English and mathematics. Teachers do not tackle pupils' misconceptions as quickly as elsewhere. As a result, pupils do not apply their skills consistently well across the curriculum.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Pupils have regular opportunities to consolidate their knowledge by working independently and improving their mathematical reasoning through problem-solving. Pupils' work is accurate and well presented. However, the most able pupils are not always given enough challenge in the work set for them. Sometimes, they repeat what can already do.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils of all ages show a clear sense of pride in their school. They were excited to talk about the recent improvements to the outdoor play areas and their part in designing the key features.
- The outdoor environment is especially rich in opportunities for pupils to play, learn and take part in moments of quiet or strenuous exercise. Activities include 'shapes trails', number hopscotch, the percussion wall, well-planted garden areas, with a den, and a storytelling zone. Over the lunchtime period, pupils were seen using all of these areas respectfully and enthusiastically.
- In discussion, pupils were keen to talk about their learning, saying that they enjoy subjects such as mathematics 'because you have to work things out', and writing 'because the vocab walls help you to think about the words and spelling'.
- Pupils stated clearly that they feel safe in school. All parents and staff who spoke with the inspector agreed with this view. Pupils showed an age-appropriate understanding of bullying and what to do if concerns arise. During the inspection, pupils were consistently observed to treat others with kindness and respect.
- The school offers a daily breakfast club, providing healthy food choices and an opportunity for positive social interactions.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders and staff have created a calm and positive atmosphere across the school, with clear, consistent expectations for pupils' behaviour. Consequently, pupils' conduct is typically calm and orderly, in lessons and at other times of the day.
- During the spring term 2019, the coordinator of provision for pupils with SEND established a six-week nurture provision for a group of pupils in Year 2 with challenging behaviours. As a result of this successful piece of work, rates of fixed-term exclusions and instances of physical restraint have reduced significantly. Pupils are now fully integrated into their classes and are able to access learning alongside their classmates.
- Leaders record and carefully monitor patterns of absence. The latest figures show that rates of absence and persistent absence have reduced over time and are consistently below national figures. Leaders and staff promote attendance and punctuality by means of initiatives such as the breakfast club, a class attendance reward system and the popular 'Monday bagels' scheme.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school's latest assessment information shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In the current Year 2, there is a higher than average proportion of pupils with SEND and social, emotional and mental health needs which act as barriers to learning. As a result of the effective support provided for these pupils, they are beginning to make increasingly strong progress from their starting points.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. The proportion of current pupils who are on track to achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved significantly.
- Standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 improved considerably in 2018, at the expected standard. Disadvantaged pupils attained at least as well as their peers in school and other pupils nationally, at the expected standard.
- Standards of attainment at greater depth are typically below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Although there was some improvement in writing, in 2018, the figures for reading and mathematics at greater depth declined from 2017.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership and teaching in the early years are strong. Leaders use assessment accurately to closely analyse children's progress from their entry to the school and use the findings to build on strengths and target areas of weakness. Children make good progress from starting points which are often well below that which is typical for their

age. By the end of the Reception Year, an increasing proportion achieve a good level of development and are well prepared for Year 1.

- In the Nursery and Reception classes, staff plan and provide a range of activities, based on the children's interests, which promote children's learning and development effectively across all areas of learning.
- Adults use the indoor and outdoor learning areas equally effectively to promote children's acquisition of language and mathematics skills. During the inspection, children were enthusiastically absorbed in a range of activities related to the topic of minibeasts. For example, adults had created a giant spider's web across the outdoor sandpit. This was used as a stimulus for a series of number-related activities in which children placed paper spiders on the web, supported by careful questioning and discussion from adults. Also outside, children had used large soft-play shapes to create a beehive which they had decorated with handwritten sticky notes describing facts about bees.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years is effective, as in Years 1 and 2. Staff have received effective training and, as a result, all members of the team have good subject knowledge and are confident in guiding pupils to become early skilled readers and writers.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Staff training is up to date and procedures are in place to make sure that children are safe and well cared for.
- Parents who spoke with the inspector and who responded to Ofsted's online survey were highly positive about the care and teaching in the early years. Staff take regular opportunities to involve parents in their children's learning. Home-school relationships are strong.

School details

Unique reference number	120436
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10087355

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Main
Executive headteacher	Tracey Bowman
Telephone number	0152 268 3557
Website	www.woodlands-infants.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@woodlands.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 February 2017

Information about this school

- Woodlands Infant and Nursery School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The school receives support from the Kyra Teaching School Alliance and works in partnership with the local cluster of schools.
- In January 2019, the school became part of the Birchwood Federation of schools, joining Birchwood Junior School and The Lancaster School. The executive headteacher holds her post across all three schools. There is a single governing body that has responsibility for all three schools.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in 14 lessons or part lessons, most jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspector looked at work across an extensive range of pupils' books and considered the school's assessment information on the progress and standards achieved by current pupils.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and talked with them about their reading.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils from Year 2 and spoke with pupils informally, in lessons and around school.
- The inspector observed a whole-school assembly.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher and leaders with responsibility for mathematics, English, phonics, science, the early years and pupils with SEND. The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, bullying and exclusions, the curriculum, disadvantaged pupils and the physical education and sport premium. The inspector also spoke with a range of other teachers and support staff.
- The inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair and vice-chair.
- The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector met with parents at the start of the school day. The inspector considered the 18 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the responses to the online staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector considered a wide range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation summary, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's current information on pupils' attainment and progress, attendance records, behaviour and bullying logs, external reports on the work of the school, monitoring and evaluation records and a range of documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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