

Inspection of Woodside Primary School and Nursery

Highgate Road, Woodside, Dudley, West Midlands DY2 0SN

Inspection dates: 14–15 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They say: 'we are a Woodside family.' Central to the school's work are leaders' ambitions for pupils to succeed in a safe and encouraging environment.

Pupils enjoy the school, behave well and support each other. Woodside is a welcoming and inclusive family school. The staff are particularly good at supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged families.

Pupils work hard but should be doing better. Many learn to read from an early age, but some struggle to use their phonics skills when reading new or unfamiliar words. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get good support to help them learn to read. Reading is a high priority, but pupils are not reading enough as they move up the school. Pupils are doing better in mathematics but are not challenged enough to work out harder problems. In other subjects, such as science and history, pupils do not always remember what they have learned before.

There is strong pastoral support and welfare. Pupils are very well cared for and safe. Pupils say they can share their worries if they feel anxious. Bullying is rare, and pupils trust that adults will deal with any unkind behaviour.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders and the Hales Valley Trust have done a great deal since the school became an academy. They have transformed the school but also recognise that there is still a lot to do to raise standards.

This is an improving school. Leaders and staff at all levels of responsibility can take credit for this. Before becoming an academy, leaders and governors dealt with many weaknesses, such as pupils' behaviour and teaching. Strong leadership has enabled the staff to take effective action to address these weaknesses.

Children in the early years do well, improving their language, communication and personal skills. Indoor and outdoor activities are stimulating for all children. Two-year-old children settle into routines and engage with adults well. Children in Woodside Nursery and Reception classes improve their communication and mathematics skills well.

Reading and early phonics are, rightly, current priorities. There are signs of improvement in the early years and key stage 1. Pupils' achievements in the phonics check are improving well. But some pupils still struggle to blend letter sounds when reading or writing in key stage 1.

Pupils in key stage 2 enjoy reading. The new library 'Henry's Hideaway' has the potential to raise the profile of reading and literature. Pupils who are confident, fluent readers could still be doing better. Pupils are not reading often or widely enough. They do not experience a broad enough range of genres and authors or choose more complex texts to develop their vocabulary.

There are signs of improvement to pupils' achievement in mathematics. There are occasions though when pupils are not challenged enough by the planned curriculum. Pupils are provided with warm-up number problems to solve before going on to harder work. In some classes, this is too repetitive, so that pupils miss opportunities to tackle more challenging problems.

Parental confidence is increasing. Leaders and staff are very good at engaging with parents and carers. For example, family learning projects enable pupils to share their learning with parents. In history, for example, pupils used their historical knowledge to make models of Tudor houses and produced a wealth of information in their 'fact files'.

Improvements to curriculum planning are ongoing. A good start has been made using 'progression plans'. These help teachers plan a sequence of work to help pupils learn by building on what they have learned before. There are still weaknesses though, including in teachers' subject knowledge. In subjects such as history and science, there are inconsistent expectations across classes. Some teachers have not thought carefully enough about how to make sure that the challenges in the curriculum are met in the classroom, and some tasks do not build on what has been covered before.

Pupils are well behaved. The school is orderly, inclusive and positive. Pupils, including those with SEND, are treated with dignity and respect. Pupils feel valued, because adults care about their work and contributions.

The school makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. The 'postcards of kindness' initiative is a wonderful experience for pupils. On 'mindful Mondays', pupils in Year 6 send and receive postcards from elderly or vulnerable people living in care homes. The pupils are delighted with these correspondences, including those from as far as Northern Ireland and Australia. Special visits, themes and visitors are used well to raise aspirations. For example, awareness of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) is raised when visiting speakers from STEM professions work with pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The staff really care about the pupils and are vigilant in keeping pupils safe. Leaders and the trust are very good at training staff, so they know how to report concerns about a child's welfare. Leaders provide excellent support for disadvantaged and

vulnerable families. They are very skilled at working with hard-to-reach families and with other agencies, such as health and social services.

The school has highly effective pastoral and family support teams. They work closely with other agencies to protect pupils and families from any risks of harm. Pupils are well taught to keep safe when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils should be doing better at learning to read independently. They learn to use their phonics skills quite well in the early years and key stage 1. But some pupils struggle to blend letter sounds together when reading independently. In key stage 2, pupils are not reading widely or often enough to broaden their experience of different authors and genres. Leaders should now consider building on the good start made in improving reading resources and the school's library. Teachers should also consider focusing even more on the school's current priority of improving pupils' vocabulary and language skills in lessons. This is to help pupils read more challenging texts with greater understanding.
- More pupils should be doing better in mathematics. Some teachers have not thought carefully enough about how to implement the challenging curriculum. There are occasions when pupils do number tasks that are too easy or repeat too much what they have learned before. Some pupils do not learn to apply their number skills to learn in greater depth. This is because they do not fully understand the concepts being taught, or struggle to apply these when solving problems. Leaders and staff should consider doing more to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding when questioning and planning problems for pupils to solve.
- Despite some significant improvements to teachers' planning across the wider curriculum, there is still more that needs to be done. The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently planned or sequenced in, for example, science and history. Leaders have started to address this by developing 'progression plans' for each subject. They should now ensure that teachers acquire the necessary subject knowledge to be able to use these plans better. In some subjects, such as history and science, lessons do not always build on previous learning. Leaders and staff should now consider planning work that helps pupils do more, remember more and learn more in every subject.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	143821
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10122435
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	387
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Simpson
Headteacher	Sally Bloomer
Website	www.woodside.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Woodside became an academy in April 2017. The school joined a multi-academy trust (Hales Valley Trust). This is the school's first inspection since becoming an academy. The predecessor school, maintained by Dudley local authority, was inspected in April 2015 and judged to be inadequate.
- Since becoming an academy, the school has increased early years provision and now includes 13 two-year-old children. In addition, the school's early years comprises Woodside Nursery for three- and four-year-olds, who attend either full or part time and two Reception classes for four- and five-year-old children, who all attend full time.
- The school runs before- and after-school clubs for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held discussions with the chair and vice-chair of the board of trustees; the chair of governors; the trust's director of school improvement and chief executive

officer; the headteacher, acting headteacher and assistant headteachers; and teachers who manage different subjects.

- The lead inspector spoke with the headteacher to check staff vetting and safeguarding records. We held a meeting with the four designated safeguarding leaders and the leaders of the school's pastoral team, as well as the teacher responsible for managing SEND provision.
- We spoke with some parents to seek their views about the school and analysed responses and comments from some parents using the online survey Parent View. We spoke with staff to discuss their views about the support they receive and their workload. The lead inspector also considered staff responses to an online survey.
- We focused on reading and the teaching of phonics, as well as in-depth investigations into mathematics, science and history.
- We visited parts of lessons in classes. We made many of these visits jointly with the headteacher, acting deputy headteacher or the early years leader. We looked at samples of pupils' work and heard two groups of pupils read. We also met with groups of pupils, both formally and informally at break and lunchtimes, to discuss their work and views about behaviour, bullying and how safe they feel.
- We considered a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness, the school's improvement and subject action plans, the trust's scheme of delegation, and some headteacher reports to the board of trustees and governors.

Inspection team

Charalambos Loizou, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Benjamin Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Karen O'Keefe	Ofsted Inspector

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