

Inspection of Woodlands Primary Academy

Woodlands Primary Academy, Broadbent Road, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL1
4HU

Inspection dates: 21–22 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
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?

This is a welcoming and happy school. Leaders' expectations of pupils are high. Staff work hard to get the best out of every pupil. The school has improved considerably since the predecessor school was inspected in 2016.

The pupils that we spoke to said that they feel safe. They are well behaved and courteous. Learning is rarely disrupted because pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to help each other. Pupils listen carefully to staff, take care with their work and try hard. Bullying is rare and pupils trust adults to sort problems out if they should happen.

Parents and carers said their children are happy and settled in school. As one parent put it, 'They love it here!' They particularly appreciate the changes introduced since new leaders and teachers joined the school.

Community links are strong. Pupils enjoy helping out at the local care home for older people and value the wide range of visits and activities that their teachers provide. These include visits to the seaside, to Gallery Oldham, to the local canal for boat trips and to the mosque and synagogue. Older pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in school, such as helping younger pupils to read.

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

Leaders have developed a strong sense of teamwork across the school. Staff morale is high. Leaders help teachers to improve their teaching and leadership skills through effective training and support. This work has contributed to the improved quality of education that pupils now receive.

In most subjects, leaders have planned a curriculum that carefully sets out the key knowledge and skills that they want pupils to know, learn and be able to do. This is helping pupils to achieve well across a range of subjects. In 2019, pupils left Year 6 having made the same progress as other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. That said, the curriculum plans for a small number of subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, are not as helpful in making it clear to teachers what pupils should learn as they move through the school. This makes it difficult for pupils to remember what they have been taught.

The mathematics curriculum in key stage 2 has been well thought out and teachers deliver the curriculum well. However, in Years 1 and 2, further work is needed. This is because the organisation of the curriculum does not set out clearly enough what pupils will learn and when they will learn it.

Reading is promoted well throughout the school. Pupils are becoming increasingly confident readers. They told us that they love reading. Teachers are skilled at teaching phonics so that most pupils typically reach the expected standard in the national phonics screening check by the end of Year 1. For those pupils who join the

school part way through key stage 1 and those who fall behind, teachers help them to catch up and become confident readers. Leaders have clear plans in place to further improve the reading curriculum, with a clear focus on developing pupils' vocabulary, so that they will enjoy reading even more.

The early years curriculum is well developed to encourage children's curiosity and to help them to develop key knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. The curriculum develops children's early reading, mathematics and communication skills well. Children are encouraged to find out about the world around them. The learning environment offers a wide range of purposeful and interesting resources to capture children's desire to learn. Staff are skilled in supporting those pupils who enter the early years with limited communication skills. This helps them to catch up quickly.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support. Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained and provide effective help for these pupils. Leaders are ambitious for this group. These pupils achieve as well as others in the school.

Pupils behave well. They make sure that the school is a welcoming place. The large number of pupils who arrive part way through their primary education settle in quickly and do well. The 'New to School Buddies' make sure that new arrivals quickly become a member of the school community.

Staff make sure that all pupils benefit from wider experiences outside the classroom. These include residential visits, raising money for charity and working with authors and artists. Pupils also take responsibilities to help with the day-to-day running of school. They take their roles as lunchtime helpers and library, assembly and corridor monitors seriously.

Leaders have left no stone unturned in their efforts to improve attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism. As a result, attendance has improved considerably over the last two years. It is now in line with the national average.

Governors are highly effective and knowledgeable. They provide a good balance of challenge and support for the school's executive headteacher and head of school. Staff are proud to work at the school. They told us that leaders ensure that their workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff in the school have received high-quality training and are clear about the risks that pupils may face. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Any issues are dealt with promptly. The systems for picking up on the early signs of safeguarding issues and the school's procedures for recording information are clear.

Governors and leaders make sure that all appropriate checks have been made on adults in the school and those who visit regularly. Leaders check that staff have a good understanding of the safeguarding training that they receive and ensure that their own knowledge of potential risks is up to date.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have made sure that the school's curriculum is designed, planned and sequenced effectively in most subjects. However, in a small number of subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, the curriculum is not as well planned and delivered. The school needs to build on the work that has already started to improve these subjects further. This will ensure that pupils learn effectively across all subjects.
- In mathematics, leaders have ensured that the curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced in key stage 2. However, some pupils still have gaps in their learning in Years 1 and 2. Leaders need to review the curriculum to make sure that learning is planned and sequenced effectively so that pupils learn and remember basic mathematical concepts over time.

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	144025
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10121926
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy primary sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	309
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Dr Phil Wheeliker
Headteacher	Alison Black (executive principal) Catherine Sharpe (head of school)
Website	woodlandsprimaryacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at various points during the academic year is above the national average.
- The school joined South Pennine Academies Trust in March 2017. Since then, some new leaders and teachers have been appointed.

Information about this inspection

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

- We met with the chief executive officer of the trust, the executive headteacher, the head of school, the local governing body and members of the senior leadership team.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, and art and design. This involved a meeting with each subject leader, visits to lessons, speaking with pupils and teachers, and looking at the work in pupils' books.
- To inspect safeguarding, we looked at safeguarding and child protection policies. We reviewed the school's record of checks on the suitability of staff and

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