

# Inspection of a good school: Woodmancote School

Station Road, Woodmancote, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 9HN

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Inspection dates:

19 and 20 September 2023

## **Outcome**

Woodmancote School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Woodmancote is a welcoming school where everyone gets along. Pupils flourish because they learn in a caring and nurturing environment. The school's values of 'belong, aspire and achieve' shine through in all pupils do. They help pupils get off to a strong start in their education.

Staff take the time to form respectful and positive relationships with pupils. This gives pupils the confidence to share with adults any worries they have. They trust that adults will sort out any issues sensitively and effectively. All of this contributes to a harmonious environment where pupils feel safe.

Pupils behave well and make the right choices. Older pupils influence what happens in the school. They proudly take on responsibilities, such as being lunchtime ambassadors. Younger children look up to them for guidance and support.

The school weaves memorable experiences throughout the curriculum to enrich pupils' learning. These include fundraising for charity, growing vegetables and camping at school. Pupils enthuse about the wide range of clubs. They say that there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They report that their children 'belong' and 'thrive socially and emotionally'.

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

Reading is a top priority. Staff develop a passion for reading in their pupils. The school has chosen a rich set of books to capture pupils' interests and introduce them to a range of social issues. For example, pupils use their class texts to learn about racism, poverty and disability. Regular visits from authors help generate a love of reading. By the time pupils leave Woodmancote, they are avid readers.

From the start of pre-school, staff use songs and rhymes to develop children's speaking and listening skills. Children listen intently to their favourite stories and join in with actions and phrases. The school has implemented a phonics programme that starts in the Reception Year. Staff are well trained to spot pupils who fall behind. However, for the weakest readers, staff do not routinely develop pupils' fluency when they listen to them read. This means that a minority of pupils do not become fluent readers quickly enough.

A carefully constructed and ambitious curriculum is in place. Staff have set out the knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to learn. Teachers have thought about how they develop pupils' knowledge and skills over time. For example, in history, they help pupils understand more by building on concepts they have learned before, such as change and invasion. Similarly, in mathematics, pupils confidently recall number facts and times tables through daily practice. However, in a few subjects, improvements to the curriculum are recent. In these subjects, pupils do not develop the same depth of knowledge as they do in others.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the right help. Teachers adapt their teaching to support these pupils to achieve well. Pupils who access 'The NEST' benefit from highly effective strategies to help them with their emotional well-being. Staff work in close partnership with parents to meet pupils' individual needs. Parents value the range of information-sharing workshops available to them so they can provide support at home.

The provision for personal development is a strength. The school broadens pupils' horizons in many ways. For example, the school arranges for inspirational visitors to speak to pupils about future aspirations. Pupils visit places of worship and have celebration days to enhance their understanding of faiths and cultures. They learn how to stand up for themselves and challenge inequality. Pupils say, 'We welcome everyone and treat each other with kindness.'

Pupils' conduct across the school is positive. Consistent routines begin in the early years. Children learn how to listen and follow instructions straight away. This continues in other year groups. Pupils hold doors open for visitors, line up sensibly and move around the school calmly.

The headteacher leads the school with passion and a determination that every child succeeds. He has cultivated a strong spirit of teamwork and camaraderie. Staff are proud to work at the school. Many describe Woodmancote as 'one happy family'. Governors share the ambition of leaders. They have the right skills to hold the school to account effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For the weakest readers, staff do not routinely develop pupils' fluency when they listen to them read. As a result, these pupils do not become fluent readers quickly enough. The school should ensure that agreed systems are put in place when staff listen to pupils read so that pupils develop their reading fluency.
- In a few of the wider curriculum subjects, changes to the curriculum are recent and need time to embed. In these subjects, pupils do not yet develop the same depth of knowledge as they do in others. The school needs to continue to develop the curriculum so that pupils have the same depth of knowledge across all subjects.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2012.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

## Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years,

looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115576
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268623
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	416
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jane Erving
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gary Tucker
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.woodmancoteschool.co.uk">www.woodmancoteschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has an on-site pre-school that caters for three-year-old children. It is managed by the governing body.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the school improvement team and other school staff. The inspector also met with governors and held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. He spoke with pupils and staff about behaviour.
- The inspector spoke with a range of staff to discuss how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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