

# Inspection of a good school: Woodlawn School

Drumoyne Gardens, West Monkseaton, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear NE25 9DL

---

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 May 2024

## Outcome

Woodlawn School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at Woodlawn School. Staff show great care for all pupils. All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff liaise with specialist therapists to design bespoke therapeutic programmes for individual pupils. These activities are built into the school day. The frequency of the provision supports pupils in developing their movement and communication skills well.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Strong relationships between staff and pupils secure highly positive attitudes towards learning and each other. Pupils develop reliable friendships. They are supportive and respectful of their peers. Pupils enjoy the social occasions organised by the school. Highlights for pupils include the residential visit to Kielder and the Friday Café.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. The curriculum is ambitious, purposeful, and well matched to the needs of pupils. Staff are successful in preparing pupils for their next steps in education, training, or employment. Many pupils achieve several recognised qualifications. They are supported by a high-quality careers programme. This includes work experience and making connections with local employers.

Pupils have many opportunities to showcase their talents within the region. For example, singing at the Glasshouse International Centre for Music and displaying artwork in the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art.

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

The school has coped well with the growth in pupil numbers over recent years. Changes in the leadership structure, married with a focus on developing middle leaders, have enhanced the leadership of the school. There is a keen focus on checking pupil progress and ensuring that pupils are meeting their potential. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils.

The school's curriculum is well planned and sequenced from the early years onwards. Learning builds in small steps over time with opportunities for pupils to recap on prior learning. This is especially so in mathematics. Pupils are encouraged to remember and connect their mathematical learning. In older year groups, pupils are confident in completing reasoning and problem-solving activities.

Art is a particular strength of the school. Art is taught as a discrete subject but is also entwined throughout the curriculum. Leaders exploit opportunities such as the visit to Kielder to promote creativity in photography. Pupils learn how to take stunning photographs. Art underpins many of the wider curriculum opportunities. Even the youngest children exhibit their work publicly.

Teachers are highly skilled in the teaching of reading. Pupils who are at the early stages of reading learn phonics. There are many opportunities for repetition and recall of learning. This helps pupils to remember their learning over time. Teachers modify lessons so that all pupils can join in through their chosen communication system. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and sharing and talking about books.

In the early years, staff quickly gain an understanding of the ways in which children are communicating. They use this information to develop effective communication programmes for each child. Adults model language exceptionally well. They continually talk about the learning activities to widen children's vocabulary. Children actively join in with the retelling of stories and singing nursery rhymes.

Students in the sixth form enjoy a curriculum that prepares them well for adulthood. Alongside academic courses, students learn how to look after themselves so that they can become more independent. This learning includes domestic and travel skills. Leaders work closely with students and parents to make sure that the qualifications that students study prepare them for their next step. However, some students do not attend well enough to make the most of the opportunities afforded to them.

Pupils are taught to respect one another, and they do so. In group discussions, they are eager to contribute and listen well. Some pupils do have heightened emotions. Staff expertly support them to control their feelings and behaviours.

Pupils enjoy an excellent personal development offer. They have many opportunities to make connections within the local community and further afield. The collaborative work with a nearby residential home allows pupils and residents to share their stories. As a result of this, pupils become more confident in talking to adults. Through enterprise activities, all pupils are encouraged to be creative in raising funds for school and charity. The Friday Café allows pupils to cater for parents and carers, making and selling refreshments. Linked to this is the barista qualification that pupils can be awarded. Pupils are taught about money and household expenditure.

Older pupils are knowledgeable about diversity and equality. They can recall their learning about activists, celebrities, and sports personalities from Black History Month. Pupils learn about fundamental British values and understand how the rule of law applies to them and others. Throughout school, staff pose moral dilemmas to pupils to assist them in making

well-judged choices. Pupils, in all year groups, contribute to the spiritual life of the school by preparing and presenting assemblies. These offer times of reflection on events in school and the wider world.

Leaders respect and value the contribution made by members of staff. They have taken steps to reduce workload. There is a clear pathway for continued professional development so that staff members can progress their careers. Members of the governing body are ambitious for the school and are effective in holding senior leaders to account.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has established a culture of safeguarding, and pupils are kept safe. However, some aspects relating to administrative checks on people who work in school, but are not directly employed as school staff, had not been completed. The information was corrected during the inspection.

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

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

- Although the culture of safeguarding means that pupils are kept safe, in a few instances, the administration of safeguarding arrangements lacks appropriate rigour and oversight. The school needs to ensure that those responsible for carrying out and overseeing the administration of safeguarding understand and fulfil their roles effectively. The school should consider further training for those who check that administrative processes fully support its work to maintain a culture of safeguarding.
- Strategies to improve attendance are not working as well as they should for students in the sixth form. As a result, some students miss extended periods of learning and opportunities to develop socially. The school should continue to work closely with students, parents, carers, and outside agencies to adopt further strategies to reduce persistent absence and low attendance.

## **Background**

When we have judged 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 October 2018.

## 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>	108652
<b>Local authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297257
<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Foundation special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	168
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	32
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Hilary Harrison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gill Wilson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.woodlawn.org.uk/">http://www.woodlawn.org.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of North Tyneside Learning Trust.
- The school operates a learning base on the Marden High School site, Hartington Road, West Monkseaton, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear NE25 9DL.
- All pupils at Woodlawn School have an education, health and care plan. Pupils have a physical disability, severe learning difficulties and/or other SEND.
- The school uses one alternative education provision.
- The school roll has increased significantly from 105 pupils in October 2018.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteachers. Meetings were also held with the early years leader, subject leaders, class teachers and pupils. Further meetings were held with early career teachers and some support staff.
- The lead inspector met also with representatives of the local authority and members of the local governing board.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives into early reading and communication, mathematics and personal development. For each deep dive, the inspector looked at curriculum planning, conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, spoke to pupils about their work and looked at pupils' books and samples of their work.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school. They spoke with pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- As well as speaking to parents, inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors took the views of staff into account through a number of meetings as well as their responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

## Inspection team

Mary Cook, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tricia Stevens

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024