



Woodside Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111125
LEA Halton
Inspection number 278602
Inspection dates 20 March 2006 to 21 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Mark Madeley CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Whitchurch Way
School category	Community		Halton Lodge Estate
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 5YP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01928 564031
Number on roll	207	Fax number	01928 591538
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr K Wooldridge
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2000	Headteacher	Dr I Keogh

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school which serves an area of very high social and economic deprivation. The vast majority of children are of white British heritage. More than half the children are eligible for free school meals. Attainment on entry is very low. Half of all children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is remarkably high, and the school has an exceptionally high number of children with a statement of special educational need in main school. The school also has two units for Key Stage 2 children who have a statement of special educational need for behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. A very high percentage of children join the school during Key Stage 2, all of whom have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or have been excluded from other schools. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school is valued very highly by parents and children because of its inclusive nature and very successful caring approach with all children, but particularly the most vulnerable. Children are happy in school, well behaved and keen to learn. Attendance levels are low but are rising. The school evaluates its effectiveness to be good but the inspection team judges it to be satisfactory because children make satisfactory academic progress through the school. It gives satisfactory value for money.

Provision is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. From a very low starting point, children make satisfactory progress but few reach the standards expected for their age. Good teaching in Key Stage 1 enables children to make good progress and achieve broadly average standards. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are low and progress appears slow. As a group, children who remain with the school from the Reception class maintain the pace of their learning, make satisfactory progress and reach average standards. However, many children enter school after Year 2 and all of them have experienced problems in other schools. They receive good support and achieve well compared to their capabilities but their lower attainment depresses the overall national test results to very low levels. The curriculum is suitably matched to children's needs and interests. After school clubs and visitors are a very positive feature of the school.

The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. It knows most of its strengths and weaknesses but does not make full use of available information to monitor children's progress. Effective use is made of the school's partnerships with outside agencies. The school has made satisfactory progress on most issues since the last inspection and has the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to improve attendance rates by acting upon an analysis of the attendance of different groups of children.
- Use test data more effectively to evaluate and improve children's progress and thus raise standards in English, mathematics and science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children join the school in Reception class with very low standards. They have very weak language skills and many have little experience of holding and effectively using pencils and paintbrushes. They make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage but few achieve the standards expected for their age by Year 1. Children make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because teaching is particularly effective. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in this age group benefit from the intensive support of the 'nurture' group and make good progress compared with their capabilities.

Children reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are rising in this age group.

Children who attend from Reception class to Year 6 make good progress and reach broadly average standards. English standards are better than those in mathematics because the school's initiative to improve writing skills has been successful. Standards in mathematics were very low in 2005 because the school did not manage staff absence well. Trends have been downward because the school takes in very high numbers of disadvantaged children from other schools. In 2005, for instance, 28 of the 52 Year 6 children joined the school during Key Stage 2 and 18 of these had a statement of special educational need. These children settle remarkably quickly into the routines and expectations of their new school, and their parents are delighted with their progress. However, the lack of continuity in these children's learning before they arrived has restricted their progress and heavily depressed the school's national test results. The school sets individual children challenging targets but because of the very high mobility of children, cohort targets sometimes lack accuracy.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children are very happy at school. They feel very safe because behaviour is good and they recognise that any unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with quickly. Children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties behave well in their class or when integrated into main school because they understand what is expected of them. All children are keen to learn and try hard in lessons. They have learned how to stay fit and healthy and make good use of the opportunities presented by the extensive physical education programme and the after school sports clubs.

Rates of attendance are unsatisfactory. They have risen for the last four years because the school has worked hard, along with outside agencies, to stress the importance of schooling to children and parents. The attendance rates of regular non-attenders have not been analysed to evaluate the impact on their learning or the learning of others.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show respect for each other and for adults. Older children welcome the small responsibilities given to them, such as being 'buddies' or road safety officers. The school council is active in promoting children's suggestions for improvements to their school, but is currently very teacher led. Because they have a positive attitude to school and are keen to learn, children are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage in their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and enable children to make satisfactory progress through the school. Teaching is more effective in Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 where teachers are very skilled and have good subject knowledge. The teaching

and support received by children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities from all adults are good and help these children make good progress compared with their capabilities.

In all lessons, teachers follow the behaviour code closely and it is this consistency that has helped develop a very calm learning environment in classes. Tasks usually meet the needs of the different ability groups and this helps children learn at their own pace. Teachers consistently share with the children what will be learned in the lesson but rarely give them the chance to assess their own learning at its end. In some mathematics lessons, teachers do not ask children to explain their answers fully and so miss a chance to consolidate children's understanding.

Teachers' marking is very good. It praises children's efforts and helps them improve their work. Children know their individual learning targets and how they might achieve them. Staff make very good use of assessment data to identify children who need further support in English and mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and the needs of the children. The focus on English is having a positive impact on children's progress, particularly in Key Stage 1, and writing skills have improved. The school has not fully established planned opportunities for children to develop their basic skills in other subjects. There has been satisfactory improvement in the Foundation Stage provision and learning of information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection. Children learn how to behave responsibly, stay safe and care for others through a strong programme of personal, social, health and citizenship development.

Children enjoy the extensive and exciting arts programme, as reflected in their improved attendance during 'theme weeks'. It also promotes children's awareness of other cultures well. Effective use is made of theatre groups, museums and educational visits to broaden children's awareness of the world around them. There is a good range of well attended after school clubs, which help children stay healthy and enjoy their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and support for children, particularly for the most vulnerable, are high quality; it is difficult to imagine a school that could care for its children more. The school has good procedures for safeguarding children, in its health and safety arrangements and child protection procedures. It provides very good pastoral guidance and works very closely with support agencies and parents to secure the best for its children. Parents are delighted with the school and what it does for their children's confidence and academic education. A very consistent approach to behaviour management allows even the most vulnerable child to feel safe and secure.

Satisfactory progress has been made in setting up assessment systems and children are gradually becoming more involved in assessing their learning.

Parents are happy with the information they receive about their child's progress. Induction procedures into the Reception class and for older children into secondary school are good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school is calm and runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis because the staff are totally committed to Woodside and its children. The school is highly inclusive. It welcomes children from the locality as well as from many other schools. Each child is valued as an individual. Some are very vulnerable and the consistent approach by all adults helps them settle. Well managed arrangements for teaching in small groups, like the nurture groups and the special classes, help all children learn at their own pace.

The school evaluates leadership and management as good but the inspection team judges it to be satisfactory because the impact of measures to improve standards have not been evaluated fully. The headteacher and senior staff have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths of the school and the challenges it faces to raise standards and improve children's progress further. The provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well managed. Management does not use assessment data well enough to monitor children's progress through the school and lacks evidence of the progress of different groups. The school endeavours to set challenging targets for each year group but children leave and join the school frequently. Although targets are revised every six months, it is very difficult to maintain a high degree of accuracy. The school has made a satisfactory response to the issues from the last inspection, for instance, the provision for ICT is now satisfactory and children really enjoy using computers in their school work. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further. The governing body is very supportive of the school. It is well organised and governors visit the school regularly. However, it does not fully hold the school to account for its performance.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for helping us with our recent inspection. Your views were very important to us. We think that you behave well and are keen to learn. We were delighted with the calm atmosphere in the school, especially in the Year 6 classroom. When talking to us you were polite and helpful. You showed us that you understood how to stay safe as well as remaining fit and healthy. Some of you need to attend school more often if you are to make the best of the education on offer because attendance is very low, but improving. You welcome responsibilities, like being on the school council, and we were very pleased with the councillor's PowerPoint presentation. We were especially impressed with the confident way the Year 2 children led their assembly, even though some children were absent - well done!

We agree with the school that you make satisfactory progress. Standards are improving in Key Stage 1 but are low in most classes in Key Stage 2. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Key Stage 1, in the special classes and at the top end of Key Stage 2. The school runs smoothly and all the adults are very committed to your care. We were delighted by the way you and staff welcome new children to the school even if they have had problems at other schools. These are the things we have asked the school to do to make it a better place to learn:

- improve your attendance
- make better use of information on your progress.

You can play your part by attending regularly, always trying your hardest in lessons and by following the 3Cs of 'consideration, cooperation, courtesy'. We would like to thank the staff and all of you for being so helpful during our brief visit and wish you and the school well for the future.