



The Woodroffe School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113901
LEA Dorset
Inspection number 279277
Inspection dates 23 November 2005 to 24 November 2005
Reporting inspector Wiola Hola HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Uplyme Road
School category	Foundation		Lyme Regis
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		Dorset DT7 3LX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01297 442232
Number on roll	970	Fax number	01297 444762
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	23 November 2005	Headteacher	Mr Richard Stewart

Age group 11 to 18	Inspection dates 23 November 2005 - 24 November 2005	Inspection number 279277
------------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Woodroffe School is of average size, with 160 students in the sixth form. Most local children attend the school but about 10% go to the nearby grammar school. Students' attainment on entry is above average overall. The local area is very mixed and includes pockets of deprivation. Most students have White British backgrounds. The proportion of students claiming free school meals is below average and the proportion with special educational needs is broadly average. There are a few students who speak English as an additional language. The school is in its third year as a specialist Arts College.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good education for its students and has some outstanding features. It says of itself 'We believe that the school is moving from good to outstanding' and inspectors agree. Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. The way in which staff and governors build the school improvement plan and support its aims and strategies is impressive. Partnerships with other schools and outside agencies are excellent. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school's capacity to improve is very good.

Students' achievements are good and standards are well above average. Students develop their personal qualities extremely well. Teaching is good overall. It includes some excellent work but is occasionally unsatisfactory. The curriculum is also good and has many outstanding elements but provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is just satisfactory. Provision for the arts is exceptional and the school's specialist status as an Arts College is highly visible and influential across the curriculum. Guidance provided to students about how to maximise their academic achievements is generally satisfactory, and very good in the sixth form, but needs to be more finely tuned through improved use and management of assessment data. Students enjoy school greatly and value the many opportunities provided in lessons and beyond. Their behaviour is exemplary and they are courteous, considerate and cooperative. Staff enjoy working at the school and strive for the best for students. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

Standards in the sixth form are well above average and students achieve well. Students benefit from an excellent programme for personal development which broadens their outlook, gives them responsibilities and prepares them well for the future. They are excellent role models for younger students. Teaching is good with specialist teachers in all subjects. Staff build very positive relationships with the students, who enjoy being in the sixth form. The increasing numbers of students and the good retention rates are a result of the outstanding care, guidance and support given by staff and teachers. The leadership and management of the sixth form are good and there is a clear vision for the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- In order to raise standards further, the school should:
- improve the management and use of assessment data so that teachers' expectations of what students can achieve are suitably high and students are given the best possible guidance on how to improve their work
- improve achievement in ICT and elsewhere by ensuring that students have regular planned opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum, and that teachers have adequate training in ICT

- improve teaching further by sharing the good practice that exists in many parts of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students' attainment on entry to the school is above average overall. Students achieve well because of good teaching and a well planned curriculum. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve as well as their peers. Students' skills in and use of ICT are generally average, and further progress is held back because there are too few planned opportunities for using ICT across the curriculum.

Standards in the Year 9 national tests and in GCSE examinations have been significantly above average since the last inspection and are rising. In 2005, test and examination results were close to the targets set, and targets were suitably challenging. In Year 9, national test results in 2005 in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science were similarly high. GCSE results rose markedly in 2005 from 2004. In 2005, students performed particularly well in GCSE science, business studies and textiles. GCSE performance in a few areas of design and technology was relatively low.

In the sixth form, results were well above average in 2004. In 2005, they fell slightly but were still good in relation to the students' starting points with many students exceeding their targets. The best results were in art, biology, drama, textiles and general studies reflecting high quality teaching in these areas. Results in chemistry, history and media studies were less good.

The standard of art displayed around the school is exceptionally high. The school buildings are full of lovely pieces of students' work and these contribute greatly to the celebration of achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' personal development is extremely good and the school's ethos is outstanding. Opportunities for such development are provided frequently within religious education, history, personal, social and health education lessons, and in assemblies. Students talk knowledgeably of multicultural issues, for example. Attitudes and behaviour are excellent, both within lessons and at break times. Attendance, which is broadly average, is improving owing to the school's effective strategies for promoting it.

Students enjoy school greatly and speak of their learning experiences with much appreciation. They display outstanding regard for the safety and well-being of others. Bullying is rare. There were no permanent exclusions in 2005. Excellent relationships exist between students and adults. The school council is effective in many ways, in promoting healthy living, for example. Students show a great deal of initiative for fund raising. They participate in many activities outside lessons. Students are prepared very well for each next stage of their lives. They develop confidence in many ways, such as

being asked to express their views, working in teams and through work experience. Take-up of education and training after age 16 is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and result in students' good achievement and their great enjoyment of school. Some very good strategies exist for identifying and teaching students with learning difficulties or disabilities. These students are supported well through the excellent deployment of teaching assistants. Those who show particular gifts or talents are also encouraged well in many subjects.

Instances of outstanding teaching were seen in several subjects. In physical education, some excellent teaching contributes significantly to students' outstanding attitudes. Occasionally, teachers do not provide sufficient pace or challenge to engage learners fully. Raising students' ability to work independently is rightly on the school's development plan for improvement. Assessment of students' work is sometimes done very well so that students understand the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve. However, it is not undertaken consistently well across the school. Little use is made of ICT for teaching and learning other than in ICT lessons. Some teachers clearly have a good understanding of how to use ICT in their work but others lack skill or confidence. The impact of the school's specialist status as a Visual Arts College can be seen in many lessons because teachers have become adept at making use of pictures, diagrams, artefacts, videos and displays to enhance learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good overall. Provision for ICT, however, is satisfactory rather than good because students are not given enough opportunity to use their ICT skills in all other subjects. The school provides well for students with learning difficulties or disabilities and for students with particular gifts or talents. For example, talented artists are identified from Year 7 and entered for art GCSE in Year 9. The vocational courses in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form are suitable for the students taking them. Students in the sixth form have a good choice of A-level subjects.

The school's provision for extra curricular activities is excellent. It includes art, sport, music, drama, the cadet force and many trips and visits. It enhances greatly students' learning experiences and their self-confidence. The school drama and music productions are highly acclaimed.

Good emphasis is given to promoting healthy living through the high quality provision in physical education and personal and social education. Students are prepared well for their future economic well-being through the good careers and enterprise programmes.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Care for students is outstanding, and guidance and support are good. Students feel safe. They know who to go to if in difficulties and feel confident in the help they receive. Sixth form students, trained as mentors, are available to support students in Year 7. Students value the very good careers guidance they receive.

The school has exceptional arrangements to guide and support vulnerable students and those with special educational needs. These students are very carefully checked to ensure that their personal and academic needs are met, and this results in them making good progress. Very good liaison between staff and external agencies strengthens further the support for specific groups of students, including those few who speak English as an additional language. Arrangements for child protection are very thorough.

In Years 7 to 11, the use of assessment data to support students' learning is satisfactory but with some inconsistencies. This results in some students not knowing how to improve their work.

In the sixth form, assessment data are used very well. Sixth form students are aware of their targets in each subject and how to improve because teachers share this with them regularly. They receive excellent guidance about preparing for their next stages in work and education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and emphasises that teaching and learning must be at the heart of everything the school does. The headteacher finds creative solutions to problems, takes account of others' views, and seeks constantly to develop staff. His clear vision for the school is well supported by senior staff and governors. The senior managers work very well together and provide very good role models.

The school knows its strengths and weaknesses accurately. The process for building the high quality school improvement plan is excellent. It ensures that everyone shares the same goals, and that energy is directed where it matters most. The process has also been instrumental in developing leadership and management across the school. Roles and responsibilities are clear. However, leadership of ICT is only satisfactory at present, although steps to improve it are under way.

Management of assessment data has been strengthened recently. The school has correctly identified the need to develop teaching so that assessment is used more effectively to increase further the rate of students' progress.

New staff and student teachers are carefully inducted and supported. Staff have many good opportunities for professional development, but the school does not yet have a

fully effective way of sharing good practice as part of a strategy to improve the overall quality of teaching. Resources are well managed although finances are tight. Accommodation is pleasant but there is limited social space for students.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	1
The behaviour of learners	1	1
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	1

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

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	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

The Woodroffe School Uplyme Road Lyme Regis Dorset DT7 3LX

30 November 2005

Dear Students

As you know we visited the school recently. Thank you for the welcome you showed us. We appreciate the help many of you gave us by talking about your work and sharing your views. You clearly enjoy being at this good school that is constantly improving.

We think that the following are the best features about your school:

Your attitudes and behaviour are excellent, and you are very courteous, considerate and cooperative. The school helps you extremely well to mature.

Teaching is good so that you make good progress in your studies.

Standards at the school are above average and rising.

The school provides many excellent extra activities that add greatly to your learning and enjoyment of school.

The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. He, his senior team and governors have a very clear vision for the future development of the school.

Staff take exceptionally good care of you and you get very good guidance about how to stay safe, live healthy lifestyles and how to prepare for the future.

The school council works well and gives you a chance to have your say about what can be improved.

The art work displayed around the school is outstanding.

We have asked the school to do the following things:

Ensure that all teachers are thoroughly clear about what you are capable of achieving, how well you make progress, and give you even better guidance on how to improve your work.

Increase the opportunities for you to use your ICT skills in all other subjects, and support teachers in using ICT in lessons.

Ensure that there is more of the good or excellent teaching that we have seen in some lessons.

Many of you and your parents or carers told us that you value greatly what the school provides. We know that staff enjoy their work and want you to succeed. We wish you all the very best for your own futures and for the future of the school.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Wiola Hola, Her Majesty's Inspector