



Wood Farm Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123074
LEA Oxfordshire LEA
Inspection number 281396
Inspection dates 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mike Thirkell HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Titup Hall Drive
School category	Community		Headington
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Oxford OX3 8QQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01865 762575
Number on roll	244	Fax number	01865 762575
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Rhian Siefers
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr David Lewin

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Wood Farm is a community primary school situated in the Headington area of Oxford. The school shares the building with the local community. It currently provides education for 240 boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 11 years of age. Rising five pupils in the foundation stage attend classes through a formal arrangement at the Slade Nursery Unit which is established in the same building. The school underwent major changes two years ago when the number of children catered for rose considerably with the addition of a Year 6. A considerably higher number of children than the national average are eligible for free school meals. Over a quarter of pupils are registered as experiencing special educational needs and a further quarter are recorded as having English as a second language. Figures indicating mobility are significantly high.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Wood Farm Primary School has a number of strengths, particularly in the care and guidance provided for learners. Support for the personal well-being of pupils is good, they are well cared for and enjoy being at the school. The school has the capacity to improve despite current standards being too low. Although standards are low, progress is overall satisfactory at all levels. Despite the satisfactory teaching seen during the inspection, more needs to be done to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged. In information provided before the inspection the school judged that its overall effectiveness was good. This differs from the inspectors who judge it to be satisfactory. Management and staff work hard to support the pupils. Recent changes, including the new management structure are well placed to support further improvements at the school, but they need more time to become fully embedded. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning seen during the inspection were good, although the school still has to deal with instances of challenging behaviour. This is a significant improvement from the previous Ofsted report which highlighted them as weaknesses. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

* raise standards for pupils of all abilities particularly in mathematics and writing;* implement fully procedures which make use of effective assessment, pupil tracking and target setting;* raise the overall quality of teaching to the level of the best practice and ensure that teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils, including the most able.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Most of the children start at the school with very low standards in many areas of learning. Some have little or no English or very limited social skills. They get off to a good start due to the exciting learning environment and well planned provision in the nursery unit. Despite this, the majority are still achieving at lower than national expectations and a high percentage do not achieve the early learning goals when they leave the reception class. Standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2005 were exceptionally low, particularly in writing and mathematics. National assessment results at the end of KS2 in 2005 were also well below national expectations; the school did not achieve its targets. Very few children achieved the higher levels at either Key stage. The progress pupils make is low compared to similar pupils elsewhere and has not good enough to ensure that they achieve the best results possible. Progress nevertheless shows improvement this term, notably at the end of Key Stage 2. In the lessons seen and from the pupils' books, it is clear that, particularly in the older year groups, pupils are beginning to make much faster progress and the quality and standard of their work is rapidly improving. Good learning was seen in lessons but the progress, particularly of the more able, still requires further improvement. This is reflected in

the samples of pupils' work seen by inspectors where much was pitched at average or below average standards. Until now the systems to assess, track pupil progress and set targets have not been good enough to support teachers in raising standards. The school has correctly identified that the improvement of these systems is vital if standards are to be raised, particularly for the more able and particularly in mathematics and writing. A great deal of action has already taken place this term to make sure that systems are improved, expectations raised and progress speeded up. Although at an early stage, developments are beginning to have an impact and improvement in the progress of pupils is beginning to take place.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are also good. The school ensures that procedures to ensure the safety of pupils are met. The school's involvement in the Family Links programme has led to notable improvements in the pupils' behaviour and social skills. Parents have been successfully recruited for school-based courses to help them support this programme. The pupils know what is expected of them. As a result, behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and sometimes exemplary, as are the children's social skills. The pupils respond well, sometimes with great enthusiasm, to engaging teaching and quickly comply with gentle prompts, such as to sit quietly. They know how to gain rewards for good conduct and what may happen if they misbehave. Those who need to improve their behaviour know their targets and usually work towards achieving them. Teachers work hard to stimulate the pupils' interest and encourage their self-motivation with the result that the pupils' attitudes to learning are mostly good and sometimes better. Even so, some lose concentration easily when the teaching is insufficiently demanding or engaging. The pupils' contribution to the school community is strong. Pupils, such as members of the school council or those supervising playtimes, are well informed and suitably proud of their responsibilities. Pupils talk politely to each other, even when they are annoyed, and voluntarily care for others when they are upset. While the social skills of a few are limited, these pupils respond well to thoughtfully planned support, such as that provided by the learning mentor. Pupils are aware of the need to eat healthily. Although some take advantage of the fruit provided in classes and available at the 'Fruit Bar', a lot of them do not follow what they have been taught. The pupils participate in an increasingly varied range of sports activities. They work keenly in pairs and larger groups and learn from doing so. As one Year 6 pupil explained, 'On our residential trip we worked in teams and had to trust each other'. Attendance is now near to the national average and shows considerable improvement since the previous inspection.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen during the inspection the quality of teaching ranged from good to unsatisfactory. A majority of the lessons seen were good. The management of the school has given appropriate priority to improving the quality of teaching in its drive to improve standards and the rate of progress made by pupils. Improving the quality of teaching is a central focus for school development which is already showing positive signs. The school should build on existing good practice to make the quality of teaching more consistent. Pupils on the whole respond very well to their teachers. Most are willing to work hard. This response was best in lessons where teaching was good. Poor behaviour was not an issue during the inspection and pupils clearly demonstrated their willingness to learn. Teachers generally employ good classroom management skills and this encourages pupils to behave well. Effective planning and organisation in the best lessons ensured good pace and maintained pupils' attention throughout. Good lessons used a range of teaching strategies which engaged the attention of pupils of all abilities and ensure that they maintain interest in their work. For example, in a Year 5 lesson where good organisation supported a very good pace and where effective questioning by the teacher ensured that pupils of all abilities were drawn into the learning. The good questioning supported the teacher's assessment of individual pupils understanding and progress. In the Foundation stage the children were encouraged to contribute through good questioning which supported the development of language and social skills. In less successful lessons teachers' planning was insufficiently detailed and did not give sufficient attention to the needs of individual pupils. Most teachers understand the importance of setting clear learning objectives at the beginning of lessons to explain to pupils what they are going to learn. There are examples of very thorough marking of pupils' work with feedback that has the potential to help them to improve, although the school needs to ensure that good practice is more consistently applied. Targets are now set, for example in writing and mathematics. Nevertheless expectations of pupils are generally too low and teachers frequently underestimate pupils' ability to improve. The school has established systems for monitoring the quality of the teaching and learning which, as a result, are being improved.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and special events. The school has identified the importance of developing the curriculum in order to strengthen the links between learning across different subjects. A review of schemes of work has been recently undertaken and monitoring by subject co-ordinators, as well as senior management, aims to ensure consistency and progression in the curriculum. Although all the subjects are covered appropriately by the curriculum, class time-tables indicate that sometimes there can be inconsistency

in the balance of the curriculum within a class. The school is addressing the need to improve short term planning. Children learning English as an additional language and those with learning needs receive carefully planned support. There are a number of strengths in the curriculum. For example, personal, social, health and citizenship education are good and have had a very positive impact on behaviour and attitudes. Some very good singing was enjoyed during the inspection. Information, communication and technology (ICT) and religious education were identified in the last inspection as areas where improvement was needed. Action has been taken to improve provision in both subjects. The school has a dedicated room for ICT and interactive white boards were effectively used to enrich the learning observed in a year 5 literacy lesson and year 6 numeracy lesson. However, there is still an important need to update the resources for ICT in the school in order to serve the needs of the pupils fully. The school provides a satisfactory range of out of school activities which varies throughout the year. During the inspection the after school football club was well attended despite the frosty weather and the early onset of darkness. There is good provision for the health and safety of pupils in outdoor activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The pupils are well looked after by the staff who have made sure they understand what is expected of them. As a result, the pupils trust staff, they feel safe and their behaviour has improved. They express confidence that they will receive help should they need it and know who to turn to if they do. They play happily and safely at playtimes because they are carefully supervised and have access to well chosen resources. They are keen for their class to be awarded 'Teddy' because their attendance is highest. One pupil said his class didn't win because one of his classmates was on holiday. They know what to do if they arrive late to school. Pupils in need of help receive well-targeted support in and out of class. Carefully crafted support plans and regular reviews enable pupils to achieve their targets for improved behaviour. Other groups of pupils, such as those with limited social skills, also benefit from effective support. Improving assessment procedures is a key area for improvement identified by the school to support the raising of standards, including the use of more precise targeting of support for individuals. Nevertheless, pupils are clear that teachers help them improve their work: one of the oldest explained how the teacher's notes in her book set targets to aim at for the future. This quality of marking, however, is not consistent across the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Recent updating of the school's self-evaluation documentation clearly highlights the key areas for development and leadership and management provide the good capacity to carry through improvements. The school has recently undergone a significant amount of change in its leadership team and the style of management. The recently appointed headteacher

has a clear vision for the development of the school and demonstrates significant strengths. He has the confidence of senior managers, the staff and the governing body. Management structures now established provide a good basis for improving standards, improving the quality of teaching and learning and ensuring that pupils' individual learning needs are met. This includes those with special educational needs. Priorities and strategies established for the development of the school are showing early signs of having a positive impact, but are not yet fully embedded. The delegation of responsibility has brought senior staff into key support roles in the process of improving standards and ensuring that pupils of all abilities receive the appropriate support to help them to make progress. Developments at the school have been well supported by the local authority, for example in developing good practice in behaviour management. The school works hard to maintain good links with parents, including the use of bi-annual questionnaires. Of those parents who responded to the inspectors questionnaire, a clear majority expressed their support for the school. The headteacher has led the development of a new school improvement plan which has involved a range of staff and governors. It clearly focuses on the appropriate priorities and is supported by clear plans of action. The school development plan would benefit from greater precision in time scales and success criteria. There are established procedures for monitoring teaching. These provide considerable detail, but have not been sufficiently successful in ensuring that all teachers receive adequate support in developing their teaching skills and to enable them to set sufficiently high learning goals for children. Developments in monitoring strategies, driven by the new headteacher and introduced this year, have been different in emphasis and consequently are already proving to be more effective. Similarly the school is implementing good systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils. The governing body is fully involved with the life of the school. They play an important role in contributing to its development. Recent changes in the management of the school have ensured that governors now have a much better view of issues and consequently have become much clearer about their role in supporting the school in moving forward and raising standards. The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis.

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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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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	3	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	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	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?	3	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	3	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

It was a great pleasure for our inspection team to meet so many of you when we visited your school recently. It was clear from what you told us that you enjoy your time at school and feel well looked after.

Your school has had some very important changes in the last two years. First the school grew a great deal and now you have a new headteacher. He has already made some important changes which the inspectors noticed were already beginning to help you improve your work. Your teachers work very hard for you and I know that you appreciate this. However, they need to expect you to do much better work than always is the case. We think that your teachers need to keep a much closer check on the progress that each of you make. This is called 'tracking' your progress. Often they need to expect you to do harder work! Although the standards that pupils achieve at the school have been too low, we were pleased to see that most of you are now making better progress. Particular attention needs to be given to improving standards in writing and maths. We heard that sometimes a few pupils do not always behave very well at school. During the inspection this was not the case. We noticed that you are well behaved and learn to be polite to one another and to adults as you move round the school. In classrooms most of you listen carefully to your teachers, especially when they make lessons interesting. We think that you work best when you've got lots of things to do. I'm sure that you all realise that when your behaviour is good teachers have the opportunity to give more of their attention to each of you as you are learning. We noticed how well the school looks after you and you told us that you appreciated this. You told us that as well as your teachers, you liked the way you were helped by lunchtime supervisors, especially when you had a problem to sort out.

Your school understands very well what must now be done to improve standards. If you work hard at your lessons this will help your teachers to support you progress.