

# Woodeaton Manor School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123329
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	292633
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Goodchild

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	40
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Hore
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Anne Pearce
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 September 2001
<b>School address</b>	Woodeaton Oxford OX3 9TS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865 558722
<b>Fax number</b>	01865 311561

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

At the time of the last inspection, the school provided for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, including behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. In 2004, it was re-designated as a school for pupils with emotional and social difficulties. Pupils have a range of additional needs, including attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, autistic spectrum disorders, moderate learning difficulties, severe learning and communication difficulties, and specific learning difficulties. A large proportion have mental health difficulties and require extended support from a range of therapeutic services. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Nearly all are boys and there are currently far more pupils in the upper year groups: almost half the pupils are due to leave in July 2008. Attainment on entry is well below average, reflecting pupils' fragmented educational history brought about by exclusion or their refusal to attend school. The school provides flexible boarding arrangements for up to ten pupils on four nights a week. The school has issued a statutory notice and proposal for change of status from a community special school to a foundation special school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. Parents are highly appreciative of its work. As one said, 'Since being at Woodeaton, my son has blossomed into the young man I always knew he would be: the nurturing environment, kindness and patience of the staff have transformed his whole approach to life and learning.'

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding and the school works in close partnership with a range of organisations and agencies to meet pupils' emotional needs. Staff involve parents very well in their children's learning and keep them well informed about their progress. The boarding provision makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' development. The school building and its surroundings provide a superb environment for pupils with emotional difficulties.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding and most have such good feelings about the school that they want to come even when they are ill. Pupils say that they are motivated and positive because the staff trust them and encourage them to express their individuality. At the same time, they are expected to take responsibility for their own actions and increasingly to control the way they behave.

Though varied, standards are below average, reflecting pupils' difficulties and their well below average attainment on entry. Nevertheless, achievement is good in response to good teaching. Pupils make good progress in most lessons and they do exceptionally well in those lessons where teachers are highly skilled at engaging their interest, and where planning is very thorough and questioning probes their thinking. However, in some lessons, pupils do not make as much progress as they could. This is because some staff are not yet as experienced in dealing with pupils with extreme emotional difficulties and are not able to connect fully with them in order to engage them with learning. The curriculum is matched exceptionally well to pupils' needs and aspirations, with good opportunities to study a number of academic subjects and gain vocational skills. An exceptional range of educational visits, including a number of residential trips, enriches pupils' learning.

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher provides very clear direction to the school's work and is passionate about meeting the needs of all pupils fully. Subject co-ordination is well established and data is used exceptionally well, for example, to identify which pupils need additional support and to set challenging targets. Future development is planned very thoroughly and senior leaders collect a wealth of information about the school's work. Self-evaluation does not contribute to school improvement as much as it should, however, because it is much too detailed and there is no clear system for identifying the main strengths and weaknesses and communicating these to staff. There has been a very recent appointment of an additional teacher in order to free up senior staff so that they can give more time to self-evaluation and support less experienced teachers. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and it has a good capacity to improve further. Governors provide good support and they have made a significant contribution to strategic development in preparing for the move to Foundation Special School status. However, they do not yet have systems in place for gathering information for themselves, such as through visits to see learning taking place or by forging linking with subjects.

## **Effectiveness of boarding provision**

### **Grade: 1**

The boarding provision is outstanding. An inspection against the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools in June 2007 judged all aspects of care to be at least good and most outstanding. It found that the school met all statutory requirements although it made a number of recommendations. The school has already addressed all of these. The boarding provision makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' understanding of healthy living, particularly through the emphasis on providing nutritious meals. It makes good provision for their safety. Liaison arrangements between care and education staff, together with the support boarders receive with their homework, promotes their achievement and enjoyment very well. Pupils have exceptionally good opportunities to contribute their ideas and opinions. The boarding provision is led and managed very well, with an experienced head of care and a suitably qualified care team.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the quality of teaching by using existing expertise within the school to model best practice, particularly in working with pupils with extreme emotional and social difficulties.
- Establish a clearer link between monitoring, self-evaluation and school improvement and increase the involvement of governors in gathering information for themselves.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The standard of most pupils' work is well below average on entry but improves over time so that by the end of Year 11 standards are closer to the average for this age group. Progress ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. Pupils make outstanding progress at Key Stage 3, where some reach Key Skills Level 1 in one or more subjects and a pupil recently gained a GCSE in science. Progress is good at Key Stage 4. In 2007, pupils all achieved at least one pass at Entry Level and many gained four or more. Most pupils also gained one or more GCSE passes. Pupils make good progress towards challenging targets in their individual education plans and often exceed expectations based on their earlier attainment. Although pupils' learning difficulties occur most often in English, a number of more able pupils have just had their poems accepted for an anthology. Many pupils make good progress in reading; those whose progress is slower receive regular support through special programmes that are enabling them to increase their skills. Girls, who are currently amongst the school's higher attainers, and pupils with autistic spectrum disorders make good progress. The school's own analysis shows that pupils who have a combination of emotional and social difficulties and moderate learning difficulties make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils all move on to further education when they leave.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils make exceptionally good progress in learning about healthy living. They adopt safe practices and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The attendance rate is outstanding and behaviour is good overall and exceptionally good in the best lessons. Pupils are increasingly able to reflect on their behaviour and develop self-control in the way they respond to people and situations. Pupils enjoy learning: they are motivated, proud of their achievements and encourage one another. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is

outstanding and pupils respond well to daily circle time, interactive assemblies, special days and religious activities. They make significant gains in their self-esteem and learn increasingly to empathise with others. Pupils respond well to opportunities to express their views, contribute to decision making and gain important skills in managing their own emotional state. They take part in charity fundraising and some contribute to the local community, for instance, by maintaining the church green and tending the garden of an elderly resident. Pupils make good progress in gaining basic skills, finding out about the world of work and in developing a renewed confidence in preparation for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers have good subject knowledge and generally high expectations. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning and information and communication technology is used well. In the relatively short time since the school's re-designation, staff have become increasingly skilled in working with pupils with severe emotional and social difficulties and mental health problems. There is some variation, however, in their ability to connect with pupils with profound emotional difficulties. This, together with some variation in the quality of lesson planning, distinguishes outstanding teaching from that which is good and occasionally satisfactory. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' individual learning needs and there are very thorough systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress. Target setting for individual pupils in English, mathematics and science is outstanding. When pupils join the school, parents and carers are included in assessing pupils' needs and setting initial targets. The school also has a well-established system for supporting parents when pupils leave, to ensure that they know how to help their children when they move on to further education.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum promotes pupils' personal, social and health education exceptionally well and there are good opportunities for them to develop their enterprise and financial skills and to work in teams. The school's involvement in a business partnership enables pupils at Key Stage 3 to work alongside their peers from six mainstream schools on a week-long project and pupils at Key Stage 4 to take part in an initiative that culminates in selling products to the public. Pupils at Key Stage 4 have good opportunities to take part in work experience and college link courses and some pupils spend part of their time in nearby secondary schools. Pupils have the opportunity to take accredited courses whenever they are ready and choose from a good range of academic and vocational courses. The school has provided a carefully tailored individual programme as part of the Oxfordshire special school 16 - 19 pilot project.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school provides an outstanding level of care, guidance and support for its pupils. It supports pupils exceptionally well when they join the school and when they move on to further education. Thorough procedures are in place for keeping pupils safe and ensuring that they are protected. Staff are extremely sensitive to pupils' personal needs and backgrounds, and carefully track

their personal development. Thorough systems are in place for checking how well they are doing academically and pupils are kept well informed about how to improve their work. Very close liaison is in place with other agencies, including therapists and mental health services, to ensure support is matched precisely to pupils' emotional and behavioural needs. The school has effective systems for promoting good behaviour, based around building constructive relationships with individual pupils, and it provides a range of rewards.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher, ably supported by an experienced senior leadership team, has been very effective in managing the changes brought about by the school's re-designation and in steering the school through a very challenging time when a large group of pupils with extreme emotional and social needs joined the school simultaneously. The school faces another major challenge when half its pupils leave in July 2008 and a large new group join the school at the beginning of the next academic year. With a stable team of staff who have very good opportunities for professional development, the school has the resources that should enable it to cope with this. Furthermore, becoming a Foundation Special School is part of a strategy to gain greater control over aspects of the school's work including the way admissions are managed. The school gathers stakeholders' views regularly and takes their views into account in development planning. It also works closely with partner special schools and has strong links with a nearby secondary school.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of boarding provision	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	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
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

31 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodeaton Manor School, Oxford, OX3 9TS

I very much enjoyed my recent visit to your school, seeing the things you do and talking to some of you. I am writing now to let you know what I found out about the school.

Woodeaton is a good school and some things about it are outstanding. I am not surprised that your parents are so pleased with the way it helps you, and it is good to hear that you feel that the staff trust you and encourage you to be yourselves fully. Your teachers and other staff care about you very much and they do everything they can to support you and help you to find ways of coping with your feelings. They are very sensitive to your emotional needs and at the same time expect you to take responsibility for your own actions, which is also important.

You are making good progress and gaining a good range of skills to prepare you for moving on to further education, training or employment. You usually make good progress in lessons because teaching is generally good and occasionally outstanding. The range of activities provided in lessons, at college, on work experience and through the many visits that you go on is matched really well to your needs.

The headteacher is passionate about making the school as good as she can and all the staff work together as strong team. They do many things behind the scenes to make sure the school runs smoothly and they are always thinking about how it could be made better. I have asked them to do this by:

- make teaching better still by letting the teachers learn more from one another
- finding an easier and more effective way to cope with sorting out what is really working well and what could be improved and involving the governors more in checking how well the school is doing.

I hope you continue to enjoy your time at Woodeaton. Keep working hard and enjoying the school's inspirational setting.

With all good wishes

Ms M J Goodchild

Lead Inspector