

# Woodlane High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100379
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hammersmith and Fulham
<b>Inspection number</b>	307375
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Charlesworth

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
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	57
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs A Harrison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr P Harwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Du Cane Road Hammersmith London W12 0TN
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8743 5668
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8743 9138

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<b>Age group</b>	11-16
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Woodlane High school caters for pupils who have wide ranging special needs which prevent them from thriving in mainstream education. These include severe emotional difficulties including challenging behaviour and school phobia, sensory impairment and medical difficulties such as cystic fibrosis. Most have learning and/or communication difficulties associated with their condition or past school experiences. The number of pupils is increasing as planned, and there are now two classes in both Years 7 and 8. The school manages a special support service for pupils experiencing exceptional medical difficulties, such as mental health issues and cancer, and some of these pupils attend a special unit at the school for prolonged periods of time. A number of specialist support teams and therapists work in the school. Woodlane has received several awards in the last five years including ArtsMark and the Healthy Schools award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Woodlane High is a good school with some outstanding features. It successfully combines outstanding, nurturing care and support with good quality educational provision. Teaching and the curriculum are good, and enriched by an excellent range of links, partnerships and community-based opportunities. As a result of this combined provision, pupils' personal development is outstanding and they achieve well academically. This prepares them very well for their future lives and the world of work. By the time pupils leave Woodlane, almost all have a number of GCSEs with broadly average grades for their age. All go on to further education or training, unless their health prevents it. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Comments on the Ofsted questionnaires include 'I am extremely happy with my daughter's school. I feel that communication between home and school is excellent. Any concerns I may have are always responded to promptly and appropriately.' Another parent wrote 'My son has been so happy at Woodlane school, and has made tremendous progress educationally and socially.'

Woodlane was judged to be a good school in its last inspection. Since then, the leadership team has completely changed and the new headteacher, although a long-standing member of staff, has only been in post for a few months. For the previous eighteen months, the school's leaders were in post in an acting capacity. Systems and practices were maintained rather than developed while the substantive leadership and future of the school were clarified. This was a good decision. It effectively ensured stability for the pupils and maintained their standards; however, few developments took place during this time.

The staff and governors have an accurate and realistic picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses based on various self-evaluation processes. However, the school is moving from being small to medium-sized, and some of the long-established and informal practices no longer work as effectively as previously. This is now being addressed. The new headteacher has a very clear vision for school improvement and his ideas are accepted positively by the staff and governing body. The new leadership team has recognised that more robust systems are needed to strengthen and assure the quality of the school's work further. Staff and governors say they are looking forward to taking more responsibility for the school's quality, and the school's capacity for improvement is good. Some changes to working practices have already been successfully implemented, and further improvements are to be introduced in a logical order in the near future. For example, one of the most important improvements has been the introduction of a new commercial computerised system to assess and track pupils' attainment and progress more closely. Once this is fully operational, improvements will be made to curriculum and lesson planning to incorporate the new detailed information.

Woodlane prides itself on being a small school with a warm family atmosphere in which every pupil matters. Each individual is very well known to staff, and their complex needs are met very well. The school places a great emphasis on teaching pupils how to make safe and healthy choices, and relevant reference to this is made in most lessons. Visitors and parents comment on the calm, purposeful ethos of the school. The pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work and to each other are usually outstanding. The pupils greatly enjoy school. They were keen to make sure the inspector fully understood this by requesting a special meeting in which they explained and illustrated their positive views. Considering the nature of their difficulties, their attendance is good and the school is vigilant in following up any unnecessary or unexplained absence.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Develop and implement the planned systems and practices needed to further promote pupils' achievement and support the staff and governors in taking more responsibility for the quality of the school's work.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils' needs on entry are becoming more complex and increasingly, they attain at levels considerably below those expected for their age. Woodlane's first priority is to support pupils' personal and emotional needs so that they become open and receptive to learning. The school is very successful in this. Data show that pupils make rapid gains in key skills such as reading and in subjects of the curriculum. Standards are currently broadly average by the time pupils leave the school and national value-added data puts Woodlane High's results in the top five percent of schools nationally. Woodlane considers provision in English and the creative arts to be strengths of the school, and pupils' achievement in these subjects is particularly good. Pupils under the remit of the special service for those with medical needs achieve equally well. The current trend is for younger pupils to have more complex needs on entry than in past years. The previous system for assessing and tracking attainment and progress was insufficiently fine-tuned to show these pupils' small steps of progress. A new system has just been introduced which will help the school to track and support the progress of these and other groups of pupils more accurately.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, well-being and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are all outstanding. Pupils benefit greatly from the school's safe family atmosphere, which strongly promotes their spiritual development, self-esteem and confidence. They told the inspector that there was no bullying at the school, and said 'if there were, people would join up with the bullied.' Pupils say they can turn to anyone for help and they have outstanding relationships with adults and each other. They say how many friends they have made at Woodlane in comparison to their previous schools. Pupils' behaviour is good, and usually excellent, although a few individuals' particular difficulties mean that their behaviour can be challenging at times. They respect their environment, and the numerous displays of pottery and artwork are in perfect condition. The school council is active, has status, and has influenced various school improvements such as playground facilities. Pupils have an outstanding sense of community, and when individuals described improvements they would like, they were all for the good of the whole school community. Examples include a mixed-age school camp and name badges so supply teachers could call them by name. The school's outstanding range of enrichment activities helps pupils gain confidence in, and give back to, the world outside school. They understand and appreciate the reward and sanctions systems ('I love the megamerits!') and clearly know right from wrong in the school and wider contexts.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The good teaching is reflected in pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and their good achievement. Central to the most effective teaching are: very clear direction for pupils so they know exactly what they are doing; interesting activities that pupils enjoy; and all-round support for learning, for example on the walls in the form of subject key words and the good use of well-chosen resources. Behaviour management is almost invisible, and largely effected through high expectations and simple reminders. In most lessons work is well matched to individuals' needs because of teachers' detailed knowledge of each pupil's skills. However, in a small minority of lessons there is not enough clarity about what each pupil should learn and consequently some do not learn as much as they could. The reasons are because the very brief lesson plans do not always spell out learning objectives suitable for pupils of differing ability, and some staff are inexperienced. The senior managers are aware of this, and are giving good support where needed. In general, though, pupils' educational needs are catered for well by teaching.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is enriched by an outstanding range of activities that take place within school, such as visitors and after school clubs, and in the community where pupils take part is a very wide range of arts-related, sporting and work-related activities and events. All subjects of the National Curriculum are included for the 11 - 14 year olds, and the school offers a developing range of accredited courses for the 14 - 16 year olds. Throughout the school there is a good emphasis on the development of key skills such as information and communication technology and reading, and personal, social and health education. Provision for pupils' personal development is threaded through all aspects of the curriculum. For example, teachers take every opportunity to reinforce health and safety in lessons, such as reminding pupils to be aware of the dangers of surfing the Internet. Physical education, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection, has improved substantially. Pupils now have a well-planned curriculum which includes elements of health education, and provides numerous opportunities to participate in sport and community-based events. Curriculum planning is long-standing and generally effective although it does not always support lesson planning to meet the differing needs of the pupils.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

This area of the school's work is outstanding. Woodlane provides exceptionally successfully for the pupils' social and emotional needs. It offers a safe, enriching extended day through the breakfast and after-school clubs and its various enhancement activities. Parents appreciate the support given to them and their children. They feel confident in approaching the school with concerns of any nature and say freely what a difference the school has made to them. Parents are very well informed about their children's progress through daily reports, comprehensive annual reports and various face-to-face events. The staff show a genuine concern for each pupil's welfare, and robust arrangements are in place to protect and safeguard them. Woodlane provides an excellent context for the service for pupils with medical needs, both when they attend the unit and if they join the main school. In turn, the school benefits from this, and links

with other schools, services and agencies. Pupils are provided with good academic support and guidance throughout their time at the school. Until recently, this has been based on staff's personal knowledge of the pupils' skills. The school does not prepare individual education plans for pupils. However, the new leadership team recognised that personalised target setting should be introduced to help pupils understand how to improve. Consequently, an effective new system has been put into place in which pupils are set termly personal and literacy targets following a detailed discussion with their class tutor. This now forms part of a developing 'pupil profile' that incorporates wide-ranging assessments of academic and personal development.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good and the school has provided well for pupils for a number of years. Nevertheless, the new headteacher has a very clear vision of how the school should develop and improve. He is fully supported by the leadership team and staff, and the school plan reflects his drive for a collaborative approach to school management and improvement. The staff and governors are becoming increasingly empowered to take responsibility for the school's work and pupils' achievement. Effective new systems and practices are being implemented to help them do so, although they have not yet had time to be fully effective. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body does not have its full complement of governors and until recently, although very supportive, has neither contributed sufficiently to the school's strategic direction nor held it sufficiently to account for the quality of its work. Nevertheless, governors, too, are now proactive and have already begun to develop their role. The Local Authority is keen to support governor recruitment. The staff and governing body have a realistic view of the school's strengths and areas for development. This knowledge is based on the outcome of a number of evaluation processes and the 'small school' ethos where ideas are shared freely. The senior managers acknowledge that these processes should now be drawn together into a robust system of school self-evaluation that is informed by detailed analysis of pupils' progress in their personal and academic development.

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## 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 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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	1

### 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?	2
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	3
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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

15 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodlane High School, London, W12 0TN

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited school last week. I particularly appreciated the meeting you requested, and really enjoyed hearing about all the things you like so much about your school.

I came to the school to see how it was working and how well you are all doing, and I was very pleased with what I found. I think that Woodlane High is a good school with some outstanding aspects, and I know your parents agree with this. The headteacher and staff know each of you very well, and making sure that you feel safe and happy is of great importance to them. Your personal development and the relationships you have with staff and each other are excellent. Lessons are well taught and the staff give you an interesting range of things to do, both in and out of school. The activities you do in the community through sport and the creative arts are great, and the artwork and pottery displayed around the school are really good. Altogether, the school helps you make good academic progress, and I am very impressed with the results you get in your national exams at the end of Year 11. Well done!

As you know, Woodlane High School is getting bigger as more pupils are being admitted. I have asked the school to develop some of its management systems to help the staff and governors make sure that you all continue to make good progress - and hopefully do even better! At the moment because the school has been relatively small, some of this has been achieved through informal means, but now that needs to change. I know that the headteacher has already started this process, for example, by setting up the termly discussions with your form tutors which lead to targets for each of you, and by assessing your progress more closely.

Thank you once again for your help. I wish you all the best for your futures.

Yours faithfully

Judith Charlesworth

Lead inspector