

# Wood End First School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110368
<b>Local Authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	310274
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Goodchild

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	82
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	28
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs S Kennedy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Baron
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 June 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Redbridge Stantonbury I Milton Keynes MK14 6BB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 316424
<b>Fax number</b>	01908 316424

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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school is smaller than most other schools of its type. The percentage of pupils of minority ethnic heritage is above average. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals and who speak English as an additional language have increased since the last inspection and are now very high. More pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual time than in most schools. The school provides for four to five year olds in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) within its Reception class. The school lost two long-serving classroom teachers from the Reception class and Year 1 over the last two years and had difficulty replacing them. It is now fully staffed in Years 1 and 2 and has an experienced primary teacher and manager seconded from another school in the EYFS. Onsite provision is made for children under four through a pre-school, and a newly opened children's centre provides services for parents and children from birth to five. The school's governing body does not manage the pre-school or the children's centre. The school has Investors in People status, Activemark and the Healthy Schools Bronze Award.

## 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 and parents who responded to the parental questionnaire expressed satisfaction with its work. One parent noted how 'the staff are very approachable and my child is always happy to go to school'.

Children join the school with attainment that is below national expectations for their age and well below in speaking and listening and social development. From this low starting point, pupils achieve well to reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 1. The school's national test results rose steadily following the last inspection and they were average in 2006 and 2007. However, standards dipped in 2008 as a direct result of staffing difficulties. With only three classes in all, the loss of two teachers had an adverse effect on pupils' learning. Teaching is now good throughout the school and pupils are again making good progress.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and the school provides good quality care, guidance and support. Pupils say that they enjoy school and one said that the school is 'a place where people can learn so that when they grow up, they can be the people they really want to be'. Pupils are well known as individuals and the school has a strong family atmosphere.

The school is led and managed well. Good emphasis is placed on raising standards and the headteacher is clear about the school's existing strengths and what needs to be improved. Data is used well to evaluate the school's effectiveness and to track pupils' progress. The school is active in identifying pupils who need extra help or who have the potential to reach high standards with the right support. Governance has improved since the last inspection though it remains satisfactory overall.

There are close links with other schools, including the middle school to which pupils transfer and the local high school, and with the pre-school which shares the same site. The school makes good use of outside providers, such as artists in residence, and has good links with other agencies. It seeks and acts upon parents' views, and has established some links with the local community. The school makes good use of facilities in the local area, and it is extending its involvement in the Forest Schools initiative. This initiative helps pupils to learn through taking part in a range of outdoor activities, most typically in a wooded area. Although the school has tried a range of methods for involving parents, take-up has not been as good as it had hoped. The headteacher embraced the opportunity to have a children's centre on the school site, knowing that this would bring increased openings to develop the school's work with parents, families and the community. At present, community cohesion is satisfactory. The school recognises that developing stronger links with parents and the community is an essential part of its efforts to raise standards and ensure all pupils reach their potential.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Provision in the EYFS is improving. Staffing difficulties had an adverse effect on the learning and progress of children who reached the end of the Reception year in 2008. Children did best in personal, social and emotional development and physical development and least well in calculating, reading and creative development. The school has not been able to appoint an early years specialist, but the teacher who has been seconded to the role has made a good start in identifying what needs to be done. Visits to other schools and close working with the local authority are being used well to bring about improvement. The outdoor area makes a good

contribution to children's learning but the indoor area does not promote learning as well as it should. Children's academic achievement and the curriculum are therefore satisfactory despite good teaching and very effective teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistants. Staff are particularly good at promoting children's communication and language skills, and ensure that the children are well cared for. As a result, children settle in well and play happily. Satisfactory assessment procedures are in place and staff are currently observing children in readiness for identifying the next steps in learning for each individual. Partnership with parents is satisfactory. The teacher has been in post for less than a month: leadership of the EYFS is satisfactory and improving.

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

- Raise achievement in the EYFS by improving the indoor learning environment to provide a greater stimulus for learning.
- In collaboration with the new children's centre, develop a closer partnership with parents and families and with the local community.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Test results in 2007 were average in reading, writing and mathematics. The percentage of pupils who reached the higher level (Level 3) in writing and mathematics was above average. Pupils of minority ethnic heritage performed in line with similar groups nationally. The 2008 end of key stage scores were average in mathematics but below average in writing and well below average in reading. These are yet to be validated. Now that there is stable, good quality teaching in Years 1 and 2, pupils are making good progress and building systematically on their existing skills. The introduction of writers' workshops and daily phonics sessions is having a very positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress in English. Pupils continue to make good progress in mathematics. Standards in Year 1 are below average because of staffing difficulties when these pupils were in Reception, but they are now making good progress. As a result of good teaching with some outstanding features, pupils in Year 2 are now working close to the national average. Data shows that pupils across Key Stage 1 are making good progress towards their targets.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and speak with enthusiasm about what they most enjoy in school. Behaviour is generally good, especially in lessons. However, a minority of pupils, mostly boys, lack self-control and do not always show enough consideration for others. Most pupils, however, relate well with one another and work well together in pairs and groups. They have a good understanding of healthy living. They readily take part in after-school clubs, such as those in gymnastics and multi-skills, and they have been involved in dance performances. Pupils feel safe in school and say that they are confident there is an adult they could turn to if they needed help. Most pupils' attendance is good; however, the less regular attendance of a small minority of pupils pulls the school's overall rate to satisfactory. Pupils contribute to the local community well through visiting local elderly people and singing at the church. They are actively involved in fundraising for a number of charities and older pupils take responsibility for younger ones through the playground 'buddy' system. Pupils make good progress in developing a range of skills, including in literacy and numeracy and satisfactory skills in

information and communication technology (ICT). The school prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. This ensures that pupils make good progress and it is enabling them to cover some lost ground. Lessons are well planned, and teachers are particularly good at matching work to the needs of different groups of pupils. They deploy their teaching assistants well to work with small groups of pupils who need additional support. Teachers' expectations are high and more able pupils are well challenged. For example, two pupils in Year 2 are being encouraged to work towards Level 4 in writing, a level normally achieved by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6. Behaviour is managed well in class and lessons are purposeful. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning and teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to demonstrate new concepts and make learning interesting for pupils. Teaching is good in individual support sessions for pupils learning English as an additional language. Practical and visual resources are not always used as much as they should be, however, when these pupils are supported in small groups. Good procedures are in place for assessing what pupils know, understand and can do and for setting targets.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is matched well to pupils' needs, with good emphasis on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. The school has increased its focus on speaking and listening, which is beginning to improve pupils' confidence. Daily phonics sessions are well organised with mixed-age groups from the Reception year to Year 2. The involvement of a large number of teaching assistants in this initiative enables the school to match the sessions closely to the needs of different groups of pupils. Specialist language support is provided for pupils with English as an additional language and support programmes are in place for pupils who need extra help. The school identifies pupils who are gifted and talented as well as those who are more able, and it seeks out satisfactory ways of supporting their development. Enrichment is good. Links with the local high school and the use of artists in residence particularly enrich pupils' experience in the arts. The school also provides some special events and clubs that are popular with pupils. The school makes good use of the local environment and it has begun to make use of its grounds to support its involvement in the Forest Schools programme. The EYFS curriculum is satisfactory and developing: improving the indoor area is key to extending children's learning.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Staff are warmly supportive of pupils and show them that they matter as individuals. The school has effective procedures for safeguarding and protecting pupils. Good support systems are in place for when pupils join and leave the school. Ample support is provided by teaching assistants for pupils who need extra help. Teachers are skilled in managing pupils' behaviour in lessons. At other times, supervision and expectations

for behaviour are not always as good as they should be. As a result, a small amount of inappropriate behaviour goes unchecked. The school liaises well with a range of other agencies. A language assistant, with help from a network of parents, provides a translation service for parents who speak little or no English. Pupils have individual targets in listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science, and their progress against these is tracked on a termly basis. Helpful marking and explanations by teachers ensure that pupils are clear about how to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides good direction to the school's work and self-evaluation is accurate. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory because staffing difficulties temporarily slowed the rate of development. However, the school is well placed now to improve further. The headteacher and the leaders of literacy and numeracy regularly monitor aspects of the school's work. They do this by observing teaching and learning, sampling pupils' books, checking teachers' planning and making sure that everyone is assessing to the same standard. Performance management is closely linked to school development planning. There is a strong focus on improving teaching and learning, and staff have good opportunities to undertake training. Teamwork and morale amongst the staff is good. Since the last inspection, governors have begun to challenge school leaders more. Governors are linked to particular aspects of the school's work and some make regular visits. However, the governing body is not working to full capacity: the school has difficulty in recruiting parents to its governing body and there are currently four governor vacancies.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### 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/or disabilities make progress	2

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

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

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## 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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wood End First School, Milton Keynes, MK14 6BB

Thank you for making me feel welcome when I visited your school, and a special thank you to those pupils who talked to me and told me what they thought about the school. I am writing now to tell you what I found out about your school.

It is a good school and some of your mums, dads and carers wrote to say that they are pleased with the opportunities it provides for you. The school provides you with some interesting things to do, such as working with artists and taking part in clubs. You told me that you enjoy learning, especially writing, and playing with your friends. Those of you in Years 1 and 2 are making good progress with your work, especially in improving your reading, writing and mathematics. Teaching is good in all the classes and all the adults work well together to help you. They are particularly good at giving you work that is just right, not too easy and not too difficult. Those of you in the Reception class have only just joined the school but you are settling in well. Most of you behave well but a few of you can be a bit silly in the playground and assembly and forget how this makes other people feel.

The headteacher and other teachers lead the school well. They carefully check how well you are doing, and they want to make the school even better for you. I have asked them to:

- make the indoor area in the Reception class more exciting so that it helps you to learn better
- think of more ways of getting your mums, dads and carers involved with the school because this would help with your learning.

You can help by always trying hard with your work, being kind to each other and remembering to behave well all the time.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Goodchild

Lead Inspector