

Woolston CofE Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111366
Local Authority	Warrington
Inspection number	310580
Inspection date	27 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Ian Thompson

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	202
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Gough
Headteacher	Mrs Paula Wells
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Epping Drive Woolston Warrington Cheshire WA1 4QL

Age group	5–11
Inspection date	27 November 2008
Inspection number	310580

Telephone number
Fax number

01925 815729
01925 850252

Age group	5-11
Inspection date	27 November 2008
Inspection number	310580

© Crown copyright 2008

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 two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, the quality of teaching and learning and the effectiveness of leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data, school documents and parents' questionnaires. In addition, there were discussions with the headteacher, staff, governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This average size school is in a relatively advantaged area but draws its pupils from the full range of social and economic backgrounds. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and none is at an early stage of learning English. No pupil is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school holds the Artsmark Gold, Activemark and Healthy Schools Awards. The headteacher has been in post since January 2008.

There is an independently managed day nursery and after-school club on the school site. These provisions were inspected separately and receive a separately written report.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that provides exceptionally well for its pupils. Consequently, it has gained the support of the overwhelming majority of parents, summed up in a typical comment, 'Children are safe, secure and in a happy and stimulating environment'.

Children enter the school with broadly average standards. They get off to a flying start in the EYFS and continue to make excellent progress through the key stages. As a result, standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are particularly high in science. Pupils' work, in books and on display around the school, shows that standards are also high in art and design, and information and communication technology (ICT). Results of teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 and in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show a rising trend. Nevertheless, recent data show that targets for the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels were missed. The school's leadership has already identified why this was so and has put appropriate measures in place to tackle the issue. Efforts to improve boys' writing and to close the gap between boys' and girls' performance are working well and show that there is no complacency in the school. Detailed assessment and tracking information is analysed carefully, areas for improvement identified and appropriate action taken. The effectiveness of actions taken to secure improvement is also carefully evaluated.

A number of strands bind together to make this an outstanding school with, as a typical note from a parent said, 'a brilliant community spirit'. Principal among these are the school's leadership and management. In the relatively short time since her appointment, the headteacher has established a clear direction for the school in a continuous search for improvement. She is very well supported in this by the governing body and senior staff. Governors play a full part in setting the strategic direction of the school and, because they know the school so well, they are able to hold it rigorously to account for its performance. Middle managers are given considerable independence in the practical implementation of the school's improvement planning. The clear accountability that accompanies this has led to middle managers extending their professional skills and expertise. In turn, this has contributed strongly to rising standards and the maintenance of excellent achievement across the curriculum. The overall result is an environment in which pupils' thrive.

All staff contribute to the excellent care and support that pupils receive. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Pupils say that they feel safe and know who to turn to if in difficulty. Consequently, personal development is outstanding and underpins how well pupils do as they move up through the school. Pupils are pleasant, polite and behave exceptionally well. The attitudes shown by the great majority are admirable. They have an excellent understanding of the principles of healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe as a result of the school's thoughtful approach to promoting their well-being. For example, the school's internet safety policy is made crystal clear to pupils but also involves parents in its implementation. Pupils take on responsibility eagerly and many show their awareness of the needs of others by the support they provide for each other. A key factor in pupils' progress is the way in which they work so well together. This, together with high standards of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, prepares them exceptionally well for the future. Above all, pupils enjoy coming to this school as their above average attendance shows.

Pupils' excellent learning is the result of outstanding teaching of an exemplary curriculum. The curriculum is well designed to support pupils' personal development. A strong element of

practical and creative activities helps bring learning alive with a consequent very positive impact on progress. A good example is the scripted and filmed animations of modelling clay figures created by pupils. These are part of a range of measures designed to improve boys' standards further by giving an imaginative point to writing. Teachers plan work carefully to meet the range of pupils' needs. Activities capture and maintain pupils' interest and, as pupils say, 'lessons are fun'. Classroom management is excellent, based on strong relationships and mutual respect so that no time is wasted. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' progress in both whole class and small group activities. They, and teachers, are active in providing sensitive, well timed interventions to enable all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to make excellent progress.

Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Because of the way that the school's leadership has brought about improvement by involving all staff in the process of evaluating performance and managing innovation, the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children are happy, settled and really enjoy coming to school because of the high levels of care and support that staff provide and the strong links that they establish with parents. Children enter the EYFS from a variety of settings with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age, with some having skills above those that are typical. All children make very good progress in relation to their starting points and, as a result, they exceed the expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they are ready to join Year 1. The school has identified communication, language and literacy skills as being weaker than other areas of learning on children's entry to the school. Consequently, the curriculum has been adapted well to ensure that the needs of all children are met. Staff are particularly good at extending language and learning through daily letters and sounds sessions and outstanding teaching. For example, in one lesson, children were spellbound by a teachers' journey on a 'magic bed' and all were involved in eagerly sharing thoughts and ideas. A major strength of teaching can be seen in the excellent progress children make in their personal, social and emotional development so that their behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent. This is well supported by highly effective teaching assistants who work closely with teaching staff to ensure that children get off to an excellent start in school. Children take part in a wide range of activities that stimulate their curiosity and enhance their personal development. They are encouraged to make choices and to take responsibility in ways that help them to become independent learners. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. However, the facilities of the outdoor provision are not as good as the rest of the EYFS provision and restrict opportunities to maximise outdoor learning and play. Highly effective systems are in place to track and record children's progress so that the needs of every child are identified and met. The leadership and management of the EYFS are outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision for outdoor learning and play in the EYFS.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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 learners' needs?	1
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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	1
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**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed being able to talk to so many of you and hearing how proud you are of your school. You will be pleased to know that we agree with your view that your school is outstanding. Your achievement is excellent and you reach high standards because the school is run exceptionally well and everyone helps you to do your best. You know that you will get help if you need it and we admired the way that you support each other. It was good to see your excellent behaviour and how well you get on together because this helps you to make rapid progress. At the end of the inspection, we told your staff that you had done them proud because you play a big part in making the school such a happy place in which to learn. You told us that you enjoy learning because your teachers make lessons interesting and fun. When we visited classrooms, we could see that you are right. The work on display around the school shows the wide variety of activities that you enjoy. There is a lot of excellent art work but I was particularly impressed by the models that were made for animations because they are so imaginative and well constructed.

Part of our job is to suggest things that will help to make the school an even better place to learn. We have asked the school to improve the outdoor facilities for younger children.

Thank you again for helping us with our work. We wish you well for the future and hope that you will all continue to play your part in making your school an excellent place to learn.