

Woodville Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115253
Local Authority	ESSEX LA
Inspection number	311889
Inspection date	18 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	404
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Dearing
Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Middleton
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Brent Avenue South Woodham Ferrers Essex CM3 5SE
Telephone number	01245321755
Fax number	01245328418

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspection focused on:

- how the school is seeking to improve achievement in writing, particularly for boys;
- the impact of assessment and marking in helping pupils to understand the next steps in their learning;
- the contribution to school improvement of leaders at all levels.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. However, the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in the self-evaluation, were not fully justified. These self-assessments have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Woodville is larger than most primary schools. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average and relatively few pupils need additional learning support. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average, and virtually all pupils speak English as their first language.

Since its last inspection, the school has gained the Healthy School and Active Mark Awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Pupils strive for and reach high standards, and build a very firm base for success in the future at this outstanding school. Parents are delighted with the school's commitment to the education and welfare of their children. One parent reflected the views of many when writing: 'Woodville has exceeded my expectations. My daughter is blossoming there both socially and academically, and the teachers are a credit to the school.' Parents are particularly pleased with the high quality care, support and guidance their children receive. Another parent was spot on when saying, 'All of the staff are caring, confident and very supportive. They are indeed, 'Top of the Class!''

Pupils are successful because the headteacher and staff have high expectations and do all that they can to help them meet the challenging targets set for each individual. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the support they are given by their teachers, and as one pupil said, 'If you do not understand a question, a teacher will always help you.' It is a very happy place, where pupils feel safe and secure. Highly effective leadership from the headteacher, supported by a close-knit staff team, has maintained the harmonious ethos that has been established over many years.

The excellent start in Reception is built on well in the rest of the school through outstanding teaching and a rich and interesting curriculum. Achievement is outstanding and standards are very high. Pupils make rapid progress so that by the end of Year 6 virtually all reach and very many exceed the levels expected of them. Much teaching is of a high quality that moves the pupils' learning forward apace. Pupils are engrossed in lessons, highly motivated and thoroughly enjoy learning. As one pupil said, 'Teachers always teach you something new and make their lessons fun.' The school is tackling well the inconsistencies it has identified in the use of assessment. Occasionally, lesson planning does not focus sharply enough on how best to help pupils learn. Consequently, marking is not as effective at times in its guidance of pupils towards the next steps in their learning. Nevertheless, the school is raising teaching quality to high levels.

The pupils contribute immensely to the pleasant atmosphere and sense of purpose throughout the school. Their personal development and well-being are outstanding. They are confident and polite, treating each other and adults with respect at all times. Their behaviour in lessons and at break times is exemplary and they show great care for others. Older pupils take significant responsibility through their play leader scheme, and the school is seeking to extend further such opportunities. Pupils also make a significant contribution to the wider community through fund-raising and supporting local events. Pupils are very clear about what constitutes a healthy diet and the vast majority make sensible choices in their eating habits in school. Sport plays a major part in school life, supported by close ties with the local secondary school. Pupils get plenty of exercise during the school day, and participate in large numbers in other sporting activities both before and after school.

The richness of the pupils' experiences can be seen through the displays that add greatly to the environment and show how much teachers value their work. Teachers are forging stronger links between subjects so bringing learning to life and making it more relevant to the pupils. Theme weeks and specific events such as 'history off the page' are hugely enjoyable experiences and stand out in the pupils' and parents' minds. Pupils also greatly value the wide range of trips, visits and clubs. Teachers are always searching for additional opportunities to develop

writing in subjects apart from English. This is successful in engaging boys more in writing because they find the activities more suited to their interests. Consequently, the range and quality of their writing is getting even better. Pupils with particular gifts or talents are carefully identified. They benefit very considerably from links with local schools through sporting 'master classes' or problem-solving and leadership activities.

The school has a clear picture of each pupils' needs and circumstances so that support can be carefully targeted. This is particularly effective in supporting the progress of pupils who find learning difficult. High quality support and guidance greatly reduce any difficulties pupils face. The highly skilled team of teaching assistants make a valuable contribution in working with individuals and small groups to help them participate fully in class. Productive links with a wide range of agencies support the school in developing the expertise to enhance the achievement of pupils with more acute needs.

The school is very clear about where it is going. Its potential for further success is based on all members of staff continually looking for ways to improve and make the pupils' experiences even more worthwhile. Rigorous monitoring gives a very clear picture of the school's qualities. Governors are very effective in holding the school to account. However, there remains some scope for them to take more of a leading role, particularly in helping to shape the school's longer-term direction. Nevertheless, given the high quality of leadership, management and governance overall, the school has outstanding capacity to build on its successes in the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children get off to a flying start and love their experiences in the two Reception classes. Links with home and pre-school settings help to give the children a very smooth beginning to school life. Children join the school with a range of skills that are generally at least as expected for their age. They settle very quickly and make rapid progress in all areas of learning. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children's skills are higher than expected nationally. This is because the Reception team works well together, knows each child's learning needs and gives them confidence to try new experiences. One parent wrote, 'My daughter is progressing really well because she is being constantly monitored and her work adjusted to her needs.' The staff plan a wide range of tasks that interest the children. The excellent balance between adult and child initiated activities, helps children to learn, take responsibility and make sensible choices. The children are given an excellent foundation for the next stage of their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Bring even greater consistency to marking and the use of assessment by ensuring all teachers plan specifically to identify the next steps in pupils' learning.

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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?	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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 disabilities make progress	1

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	1
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 the 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

¹ 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

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 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	2
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

19 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodville Primary School, South Woodham Ferrers, CM3 5SE

I would like to thank you very much for your warm welcome when I visited your school. You were very kind, polite and helpful. You showed me how proud you are of your school. I enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. Along with your parents, carers and teachers, you are right in thinking that your school is outstanding.

You make excellent progress during your time at school. Nearly all of you reach the standards expected by the time you move on to secondary school and the majority of you do better than this. You thoroughly enjoy school, attend very regularly, work extremely hard and behave sensibly. Your teachers provide very interesting tasks to help you learn and you clearly enjoy extra activities such as clubs, trips and visits. All members of staff help to make sure you are safe and cared for outstandingly well. You take your responsibilities seriously and make a very considerable contribution to the life of the school. You have an excellent understanding of the importance of diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle.

Your headteacher, other staff and governors are working very hard to make the school even better. I think there is something in particular that they could do. I have asked your teachers to make their marking more helpful, and make better use of what they know about how well you are doing when they plan their lessons.

I am sure that you and your teachers will work hard to make this improvement. You can play your part by continuing to attend regularly and trying hard to do your best.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector