

Woodcot Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116166
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312197
Inspection dates	27–28 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Beryl Richmond

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	155
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brian Morris
Headteacher	Mrs June Kershaw
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2003
School address	Tukes Avenue Bridgemary Gosport PO13 0SG
Telephone number	01329 234 381
Fax number	01329 823 911

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Woodcot is a smaller than average primary school. The number of pupils on roll has fallen by almost half since the last inspection. Most pupils are of White British heritage. There is an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school serves a community with areas of social deprivation and the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. There has been instability in leadership and management over recent years. The headteacher took up her post in September 2006 and there is an acting deputy headteacher. There is a Hearing Impaired Unit with five pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

Woodcot Primary is currently providing an inadequate quality of education because pupils are not acquiring new skills and knowledge at a fast enough rate and their progress over time is unsatisfactory. Standards in English and mathematics remain exceptionally low in Year 6, as they have been for the past four years. This represents unsatisfactory improvement since the time of the last inspection. In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The headteacher has successfully led improvements in pupils' personal development and well-being. As a result, behaviour is now good and the school has a calm and welcoming atmosphere. Attendance is good and pupils say that they enjoy school. They contribute well to their own community, for example, as play leaders, as eco team members and as school council members. The school listens to pupils' views and these have been taken into account when planning for improvements in playground markings and in developing school rules. Links with parents, through initiatives like 'Friends of Woodcot' and Family Learning, mean that some parents are becoming more actively involved in their children's learning. Several parents said that they find the staff friendly and welcoming. However, despite these signs of improvement, school leaders have been ineffective in improving pupils' achievement.

Children start in the Foundation Stage with a range of experiences and skills, but their starting points overall are below those found nationally. They make good progress so that when they end their time in the Reception class, standards are broadly in line with nationally expected levels. This good progress is not maintained in the rest of the school. Too many pupils do not have the necessary skills and knowledge in English and mathematics to ensure that they will do well when they leave school. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are not catching up because support for them has not been well planned. Recently staff have been trained to deliver 'catch-up' programmes and these pupils now have more specific targets for improvement. Pupils in the Hearing Impaired Unit are well supported by highly experienced staff who ensure pupils enjoy their work and are well integrated in school activities.

Improvement in standards and achievement is hampered because the school does not have an accurate view of its performance. Monitoring and evaluation are not carried out with sufficient rigour to allow for urgent action to be taken to bring about improvement. Pupils are not making sufficient gains in learning year on year because teaching and learning are inadequate. Expectations about what pupils can achieve are not high enough. In lessons, adults do not intervene sufficiently to make sure that pupils are progressing well and opportunities are lost to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. Although the school's leaders gather information about areas of weakness from test results and assessments, they make insufficient use of this information to adjust planning to address pupils' specific needs. The school recognises that urgent improvements are needed in the curricula for English and mathematics so that pupils have appropriate experiences to gain knowledge and to develop their skills. The school is beginning to use the extensive outdoor environment to make lessons more practical and interesting. Because of doubts about the accuracy of assessment information, tracking of pupils' progress lacks rigour, as does the setting of personal targets to improve their rate of progress in English.

Pastoral care is good. Adults and pupils enjoy good relationships. There are satisfactory links with a range of specialist agencies, other schools and business organisations to provide appropriate support and broaden pupils' range of experiences. For example, local shops help promote healthy eating.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start to school life in the Foundation Stage and achieve well. Strong links with pre-school providers and good induction procedures help children settle happily. Good relationships are established with children and their parents.

A knowledgeable teacher manages this stage of learning well. Adults provide good routines and children are developing independence through the use of good classroom systems. Interesting indoor areas provide a relevant focus on personal development and basic skills, as well as the wider curriculum. Whilst the outdoor area is secure, the school has already identified that it does not provide the same level of challenge or stimulation and lacks a cover so that children can work and play outside whatever the weather.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, by raising teachers' expectations.
- Improve pupils' achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, through the better use of tracking and assessment to set more challenging work.
- Improve the quality and rigour of monitoring and evaluation at all levels so that improvement is more rapid and sustained.
- Ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all groups of pupils, particularly in English and mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards in English have improved slightly, but not sufficiently, in Year 6 bearing in mind where pupils started from in Year 2. Standards at the end of Year 2 have fluctuated over the past four years. Recently they have been exceptionally low, particularly in mathematics. Too few pupils achieve the higher levels. Pupils with learning difficulties are achieving in line with other pupils and are not catching up because the support they receive has not been effective until recently.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' behaviour is good at break times and in most lessons because the school has clear procedures. As one pupil said, 'Behaviour has got better because we all know what to do if there is any bullying and the teachers deal with it'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are polite, enjoy good relationships and have a clear understanding of right and wrong but their understanding of other cultures is limited.

Pupils make good choices in following healthy lifestyles. At break times and after school most pupils enthusiastically take part in the range of exciting physical activities that the school makes available. They enjoy healthy break-time snacks. The enterprise team has developed useful

skills through their running of a healthy tuck shop. Pupils support a range of charities and participate in Bridgemaury carnival. They have a satisfactory understanding of their personal safety and feel safe at school. Pupils are developing good personal skills that will help them be successful in their adult lives, but because their academic skills are inadequate, their preparation overall for adult life is unsatisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Relationships between staff and pupils are good. There is brisk, lively teaching in a few classes but this is not consistent throughout the school. Although all lessons observed during the inspection were at least satisfactory, over time, there are too many weaknesses in the quality of teaching to ensure that pupils make sound or better progress and planning is not closely matched to their needs. Teachers do not have a clear picture of where to pitch the levels of difficulty of work in order to stretch pupils, including the more able. This often leads to pupils lacking enthusiasm for their work although their behaviour is normally good. Teachers do not always explain the purpose of lessons well enough so that pupils can make judgements about how well they are learning. Some teachers have insufficient knowledge of how to teach some subjects, particularly mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

All subjects are covered but pupils do not receive a suitable balance of teaching time in each subject. The curriculum does not include sequences of learning that lead to pupils making enough progress, notably, in English and mathematics. The school has begun to remedy these weaknesses but this work is at an early stage of development. There are no systems for regularly reviewing and monitoring the curriculum and no suitable action plans for improving provision as a whole. Subjects are not linked together well to make learning meaningful for pupils. There is good enrichment from a wide range of clubs, including skipping, water polo and basketball, which pupils enjoy. The impact of the curriculum for personal, social and health education is seen in pupils' good personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Generally the school takes good care of its pupils but support for pupils has not been effective and academic guidance is inadequate. Procedures for child protection and safe recruitment are robust and meet government guidelines. Individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities were not well focussed but this has now been remedied and learning support assistants have been given training to help them be more effective. Tracking of pupils' progress lacks rigour because assessment information is not accurate. Pupils do not have useful targets to enable them to make systematic and quick progress and to develop as independent learners. Consequently, they cannot make judgements about how well they are progressing and discuss effectively with their friends and teachers how work could be improved.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The headteacher is working closely with the local authority and improvements have been made, particularly in pupils' personal development and well-being. The impact of this continuing collaborative work is yet to be seen in improved standards and achievement in English and mathematics. Teaching and learning have been monitored regularly and areas for development identified. Some issues have been resolved but the overall outcomes from the monitoring have not yet been pursued rigorously enough to ensure that all pupils' needs are being met. School development planning, including subject action plans, is not sufficiently targeted to improve the overall achievement of different groups of pupils. Targets for improvement at all levels, from those for individual pupils to those for the whole school, are not challenging enough to ensure that pupils make more systematic and rapid progress.

The Governing Body is not fully effective. Although it provides satisfactory support for the school, it has failed to challenge the school rigorously enough over a period of years when both achievement and standards have been inadequate.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

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?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

25 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodcot Primary School, Gosport, PO13 0SG

Thank you very much for helping Mr. Dukes and myself during the inspection, especially by talking to us about your work and the opportunities that your school provides for you. Although there are successful aspects to your school, overall it is not doing well enough and we have decided that it needs special measures. This means that other inspectors will visit your school to check on how well it is improving.

Here are the things that we liked best about your school:

- your school gives you many opportunities to take on responsibility so that you can be a member of the school council or the eco team, a play leader or help in many other ways
- you enjoy school and you have improved your attendance and behaviour well
- you have good relationships with adults in school and they care for you well
- your headteacher has successfully made some good links with your parents so they can be more fully involved in your learning and your parents appreciate the warm and friendly welcome they receive from your teachers.
- you have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and enjoy all the physical activities that the school provides during and after school.

We have asked your school to improve your achievement and standards in English and mathematics by setting you harder work and by checking up on how you are getting on more regularly. We have asked your teachers to keep a closer check on everything in school so that if it needs to be improved, it can be dealt with more quickly and effectively. We have asked teachers to use information that they have about what you are not sure about to adapt lessons, especially in mathematics and English and to give you more opportunities to develop your English and mathematics skills and knowledge.

I would like to send you my very best wishes for your future success.

Beryl Richmond

Lead inspector