

Woodside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117321
Local Authority	HERTFORDSHIRE LA
Inspection number	312569
Inspection dates	21–22 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Penny Holden

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Tessa Terry and Mr Ian Rudd
Headteacher	Mr Don Round
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2004
School address	Jones Road Goffs Oak Cheshunt Hertfordshire EN7 5JS
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Woodside Primary is an average sized school in Goff's Oak, Hertfordshire. The majority of pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment although a sizable proportion has below average skills in aspects of communication and literacy. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils are predominantly from White British backgrounds. A smaller number of pupils than average have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning disabilities or difficulties is slightly below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Overall, Woodside is a good school. There is good practice in all aspects of school life. The school is well lead. It is organised efficiently and functions smoothly. Pupils are happy and keen to learn. As a parent writes, 'My daughter is devouring information and coming home happy each day. She has no fears about asking questions - a positive endorsement of all the staff.' Pupils are keen to learn and understand why they come to school. This is because teaching is consistently good. The skills, expertise and talents of all adults at the school are used effectively to make work interesting for pupils. Consequently, the curriculum offered to pupils is rich and varied. The leadership team, including the governing body, constantly push for further improvement and development. The issues raised in the last inspection have been dealt with effectively although standards in writing have been stubbornly resistant to change. In the time between inspections much work developing skills in punctuation, spelling and grammar have put in place the building blocks for better writing. The latest innovation, planning in two-week blocks, helps pupils develop their ideas and gives them time to write. This has improved their understanding, raised their motivation and has already had a good impact on writing standards.

The morning-only Nursery gives children a secure, positive start to school life. Pupils make good progress throughout their time in the school. Their positive attitudes and attainment in basic skills prepares them well for secondary school. The vast majority of pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6. Standards are above average.

Pupils receive a well rounded education; they have good opportunities to be responsible, participate fully, help one another and enjoy school. They become confident and sensible learners with a strong sense of what is right and fair. Woodside is a 'healthy school', and pupils are particularly knowledgeable about what it means to be healthy and they successfully act on this knowledge. They eat sensibly and keep active. Pupils enthusiastically take every opportunity to try new activities, visit new places or meet new people.

Staff know their pupils well and this helps them to provide effective levels of care and support for their pupils. As a result, pupils' personal development is good. Academic targets are set at individual, group and class level to help pupils focus on what they need to learn. In Key Stage 2 pupils have the targets explained very clearly in language they can understand and these are often recorded in their books. Good verbal information is given to pupils about how well they are doing and how to improve their work. At Key Stage 2 marking supports this verbal feedback effectively. At Key Stage 1 marking is not used quite so well. The school has rightly recognised that setting even more defined and accurate targets for individuals would help consolidate and strengthen the progress made by pupils.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Nursery and Reception make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. Early assessment shows a significant group of children lack self-confidence and independence. Some have limited vocabularies and find it difficult to communicate clearly. Other children are very confident, happy to give an opinion and to organise themselves and others. This wide variety of need is catered for well. An interesting range of activities and play opportunities both indoors and out develop children's skills and understanding effectively. Adult intervention is thoughtful and sensitive. Visitors to the Foundation Stage and visits made outside school

enrich the children's experience of the world. Few children select mark making activities independently, which is the early start of writing, whilst these are readily available. Children make good gains in developing their language but the low starting point for some has an impact on developing good literacy skills during their time at Woodside. There is a good transition from the half-day Nursery to Reception and the children settle into the new routines quickly. Foundation Stage staff have identified the need for a more defined and relentless focus on developing language and communication skills to improve the progress made by the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Personalise and define more sharply the learning and achievement targets given to pupils to help them make faster progress.
- Link work to these targets and provide pupils with suitable feedback so that they understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, achievement is good. Children enter the school with a wide range of skills but this varies from year to year. Standards of the current intake are slightly below average. Progress in the Foundation Stage is good. There is notable success for children in relation to gaining knowledge of the world and in their personal and social development.

In 2007 attainment overall in English, mathematics and science was broadly average. Progress from pupils' starting points was satisfactory. The national target for pupils gaining Level 4 in Year 6 was reached in English and mathematics but not science. However, more pupils reached the higher levels in all subjects than expected. From the analysis of work in school and the school's tracking of progress, pupils are currently working at above average standards, especially in reading. Progress and standards in writing are relatively weaker and the school is implementing strategies that are already helping standards to improve. Although there was some variation in 2007 the inspection evidence shows there is currently very little difference in the progress performance of boys and girls. Pupils who are on the school's special educational needs register make good progress because of the effective support that they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall although there are limited opportunities to prepare pupils for living in a multicultural world. Pupils are very happy at the school, have very positive attitudes towards their work and are keen to do as well as they can. They are motivated and enthusiastic, for example, they willingly participate in class discussion. The very good relationships between pupils and adults contribute a great deal to the good progress that pupils make. Behaviour overall, in lessons and outside, is good and any unsatisfactory behaviour is dealt with well by the school. Pupils enjoyment of education is demonstrated by their above average attendance and punctuality.

Pupils' appreciation of the importance of a healthy lifestyle is outstanding. They value the healthy options for lunch and both parents and pupils know that healthy packed lunches are expected. Physical education is very popular and many belong to after-school sports clubs, as one pupil stated, 'Woodside is known for its success in sport'. Pupils feel safe in the school and

are generally aware of potential danger, as the school is very careful to promote a safe environment. There is a good sense of community in this school. Pupils are supportive of each other and the democratically elected school council provides an opportunity for pupils to take on responsibility. All pupils actively contribute to supporting charities. They develop good skills to help in later life, for example, as citizens in the Junior Citizens Day and through frequent teamwork in lessons. They gain a good level of skill in using information and communication technology (ICT) and basic numeracy and literacy skills, although a number of pupils find writing difficult.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

When two pupils were asked what they liked most about Woodside one said, 'the teachers' and the other 'learning'. This exemplifies the positive relationships and understanding of roles between pupils and adults. Teaching is universally good and all adults support pupils' learning and progress effectively. Teachers use technology well to capture the pupils' interest and focus them on important facts. The 'must, should and could' levels for targets in literacy in Key Stage 2 are giving pupils a clear understanding of what they aspire to achieve. This is one of the new approaches having an impact on pupils' written work. The other strategy that is improving writing skills is the teachers' use of a two week planning cycle that is used to develop pupils' understanding before offering them opportunities for extended writing. Targets are set in English and mathematics, although sometimes especially in Key Stage 1 these are group or class targets. These broad targets do not always give enough help and guidance for each pupil because they are not precise enough. Marking is generally careful and regular. Teachers give good oral feedback to pupils but this sometimes makes it hard for younger pupils to remember what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is rich and varied. Interesting topics successfully combine subjects, such as history and art. Increasingly, teachers are using opportunities provided through the topic work to develop pupils' numeracy and literacy skills well. Pupils are motivated and enthused by these topics. They work hard and this is driving up standards, especially in writing. All Key Stage 2 pupils learn either French or Spanish and pupils visit France early in Year 6. This allows those learning French to use the language in real situations. It also gives pupils good opportunities to improve their social and team work skills. This is good preparation for the work ahead and for transfer to secondary school. Provision in and out of lessons contributes extremely effectively to pupils' understanding of being healthy. There are plenty of after-school clubs; many linked to sports and life skills. Cookery, for example, is so popular that there are three shifts in order to fit everyone in. Visits, visitors, and special events such as science assemblies and book days all successfully enrich the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good level of care and support ensures a happy and secure environment in which pupils achieve well. Governors are fully involved in regular risk assessments to ensure health and

safety requirements are met fully. Procedures for safeguarding pupils and child protection are fully in place and understood by all staff. Several teaching assistants are trained in first aid and are able to deal with emergencies. Pupils feel safe and are aware of an adult they can turn to if a problem arises. Staff are very caring in their dealing with the children. Support for pupils on the school's special educational needs register and the few who speak English as a second language is good; enabling them to achieve appropriately. Pupils who are gifted and talented are given support but this is an area the school rightly wishes to promote further. Good liaison with parents and support from external agencies enhances the quality of care provided for pupils. The school is not complacent and is keen to ensure the health and well-being of pupils. As a result, the school has recently launched a new system that alerts parents to problems using text-messaging facilities. The school has a simple but effective procedure for tracking pupils' progress and teachers are clear about who is making the progress expected. Verbal feedback and support in lessons is good, but guidance is not always written in their books so pupils can easily remember how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership team of the school led by the headteacher have the well-being and achievement of the pupils at the forefront of all they do. There is a constant desire to improve and make the school experience of pupils better. The work currently underway by governors to redefine the vision for Woodside and what is on offer for pupils is shaping the improvements needed to make the school outstanding. This is indicative of the school's good capacity to improve and the accuracy of its robust self-evaluation. The vast majority of parents were positive about all aspects of Woodside and the inspection team concur with these views. Where there were minor 'niggles' the school has either already addressed the issues or has plans to do so, for example, the leaders and managers are tackling issues raised by parents about improving facilities. There is a strong feeling of team work amongst all adults in the school and all support its caring ethos. This is fostered by senior colleagues who understand their roles and responsibilities and ensure that staff are well-managed and have a good professional development programme. Half the teaching staff changed in the last two years and effective induction and mentoring for new staff has resulted in good teaching in all classes.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	2

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?	2

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?	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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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	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

23 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodside Primary School, Goff's Oak, EN7 5JS

Thank you so much for telling us about the work you are doing at school and what helps you do well. We enjoyed meeting so many of you including the school council and some of you who take part in after school clubs.

Mr Round, the governors, the teachers and the other adults are always trying to make the school even better. Your school council plays its part in helping with these improvements as some of the good ideas come from you. We are pleased that you vote for your councillors and that so many of you like to be involved in helping run the school.

We believe the topics you study give you good ideas for writing and are helping you improve your writing skills. You work hard in English, mathematics and science and other subjects. By the time you leave for secondary school most of you will be able to read, write, use ICT and work in mathematics and science well.

You have lots of interesting things to do, people to meet and places to visit during your time at Woodside. You take part in all these things with enthusiasm. We saw what a healthy school yours is and how sensibly you eat and keep active and healthy. You love the after school clubs.

We agree with you and your parents, that Woodside is a good school and that you work hard and do well. One of the reasons why you are happy and keen to learn is because you like your teachers who are good at making your work interesting. All the adults who work with you are caring and help you to do your best. Most of you have targets to help you know how to improve your work but we are asking your teachers to make sure you have your own individual ones in English and mathematics. This should help you learn even better.

I hope you and Woodside Primary School continue to be happy and successful.

Best wishes Penny Holden Lead inspector