

Woodford Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122005
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	314186
Inspection date	16 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Capper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	71
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Compertz
Headteacher	Arlette Harvey
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2004
School address	High Street Woodford Kettering NN14 4HF
Telephone number	01832 733221
Fax number	01832 733221

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small rural primary school takes most of its pupils from the village of Woodford, with some travelling from other local communities. The proportion identified as having learning difficulties is broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that supports pupils' personal development especially well. Members of staff make learning interesting by providing a rich and exciting curriculum. The school's commitment to teaching pupils about the world beyond Woodford is exemplary. There are excellent links with schools in the United Kingdom and abroad and these make a very strong contribution to pupils' very good cultural awareness.

Satisfactory teaching means that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children settle quickly in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year), where they make steady progress from their different starting points. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in the rest of the school and, by the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average overall. Pupils do slightly better in English than in mathematics. Over the last 18 months, the school has been focusing on improving progress in English and this has had a beneficial effect on learning. In mathematics, academic support such as target setting and marking is less effective in helping pupils understand how to improve. There are also fewer opportunities for pupils to use numeracy rather than literacy skills across the curriculum.

There are good features to teaching across the school. Teachers are hard-working and enthusiastic and, as one pupil rightly said, 'They make learning fun.' Teachers get on very well with pupils. They plan carefully for lessons, but do not always pitch work at the right level for all pupils and this sometimes slows the pace of learning. Teachers foster creativity very imaginatively through lessons and clubs. Pupils produce high quality work in design and technology and in art, such as the superb sculptures based on the work of Alberto Giacometti currently displayed in the entrance hall.

Pupils are proud of the school and are rightly pleased with the good care provided by members of staff. As one pupil commented, 'There is always someone to turn to if we have a worry.' Consequently, pupils feel happy and safe at school. They become eager and happy learners who are at ease when talking to adults. They behave well and thoroughly enjoy school, especially the exciting range of visits and visitors. These activities help to bring subjects alive. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and they do so well. There are regular 'house meetings' that give pupils a good say in the running of the school. Activities such as these, as well as pupils' high levels of confidence and self-esteem, prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's infectious enthusiasm transmits itself to other members of staff and pupils, and is reflected strongly in the vibrant school environment. There is a clear understanding that standards could be higher still. The school has rightly identified that monitoring by senior managers, subject leaders and governors now needs to focus more sharply on pupils' progress to ensure that they are all doing well enough. Nevertheless, senior leaders are moving the school forward and recent improvements in English demonstrate that there is a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Members of staff have forged a strong partnership with parents, with other local schools and with outside agencies. Parents are very pleased with the school, typically saying things like, 'The range of experiences, including extra-curricular, is remarkable for a school of this size' and 'All the children benefit from the extended family the school offers.' Comments such as these successfully capture the main strengths of this happy school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children's attainment on entry varies significantly from year to year due to the small number in each intake. In the current year, children started school with skills that were broadly in line with the levels expected for their age and they are on target to reach broadly average standards by the start of Year 1. Enthusiastic and friendly adults support the small group of Reception Year children effectively and provide them with a range of interesting activities both indoors and outdoors. There is a happy, purposeful atmosphere throughout the day, although there are some missed opportunities to extend children's learning when they are working independently. Leadership of provision is satisfactory. Leaders have rightly identified that progress from when children start school needs to be tracked more closely so that they can check that all are doing well enough.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give pupils more opportunities to practise and improve their numeracy skills in different subjects and make better use of targets and marking in mathematics to help them understand how to improve their work.
- Ensure that teachers always pitch work at the right level for all pupils.
- Strengthen monitoring at all levels so that it focuses more sharply on ensuring that all pupils are doing well enough.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are broadly average overall by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science and most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils do slightly better in English than in mathematics. In English, pupils get good opportunities to write across the curriculum, and target setting and marking help pupils understand how to improve. These aspects of provision are less well developed in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' thorough enjoyment of school is evident in their good attendance and the enthusiastic way in which they take part in lessons and clubs. Pupils especially enjoy practical activities in design and technology and art. At these times, pupils show particularly good concentration. Pupils are polite and courteous and behave well in and out of lessons. They work hard most of the time, although they do not always take enough care with their recorded work, leading to them making occasional avoidable errors.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with their understanding of different cultures being especially strong. Throughout the school, pupils are polite and friendly and they contribute well to the community by helping others and taking part in village events

such as the May Day festival. Regular visits from ministers of different faiths contribute well to pupils' good spiritual awareness.

Pupils are happy to adopt healthy lifestyles. They take frequent exercise and usually make healthy choices of food and drink. Pupils have a good understanding of the dangers they face in their everyday lives and they know how to avoid them. Children in the Reception Year show a commendable understanding of the importance of not talking to strangers. Visits from the emergency services help older pupils to learn about the dangers of substance abuse and the need to stay safe when going about their everyday lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Throughout the school, teachers are enthusiastic and they manage pupils' behaviour well. They plan interesting activities and engage the pupils' interest successfully by using interactive whiteboards to demonstrate what they expect them to learn. Teaching assistants provide valuable support for groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties. However, teachers do not always ensure that work provides the right levels of challenge for all pupils. This means that there are occasions when work is either too hard or too easy for some pupils. Teachers mark pupils' work frequently but they do not always give them clear enough guidance by identifying how they could improve, especially in mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

In the last two years, the school has made great strides in improving the way that basic skills are introduced across the school. This has been most effective in literacy where strong links are now being made between different subjects. In numeracy, pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise and improve their skills across the curriculum. This slows the pace at which these skills can improve. Computing skills are used particularly well in cross curriculum projects as was evident when pupils produced interesting animations of owls.

Enrichment of the curriculum is very strong and this contributes greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school. Every child benefits from an extremely wide range of experiences, especially in the arts. There are regular special theme days ('Wow Factor Days') that help to make learning purposeful. Residential visits are also greatly appreciated by parents and pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

In this small school, members of staff know all the pupils and give them good quality pastoral support. Parents are especially positive about the help given to pupils with medical needs. They rightly identify the sensitive and effective way that these pupils are helped to take a full part in school life. When necessary, the school works closely with parents and outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being.

Academic support is satisfactory. The school has suitable assessment procedures in English and mathematics but not yet in science. The use of targets to help pupils understand how to improve is not yet consistent, which means that pupils are not always clear about how to improve their

work in mathematics. The school identifies and supports pupils with learning difficulties satisfactorily and sets them carefully targeted individual education plans.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leaders are hard-working and enthusiastic and they are steadily moving the school in the right direction. There are satisfactory systems for checking how well the school is doing, although some evaluations are overgenerous. This is because monitoring does not focus sharply enough on pupils' progress from their different starting points. As a result, it is difficult to establish a clear enough picture of their overall achievement and to ensure that all are fulfilling their potential. The school has gathered a wealth of data about pupils' progress and is beginning to use this information carefully to identify those who might need extra support. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' performance in national tests and these are generally met, reflecting satisfactory progress over time for most pupils.

Subject leaders are keen and their role has been strengthened since the last inspection. They have made a good start to improving provision, especially in English. Governors are supportive and they are beginning to ask challenging questions to hold the school to account.

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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	2
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?	3
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?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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**

17 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Woodford Church of England Primary School, Kettering NN14 4HF

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were very polite and friendly. We found that at the moment your school is providing a satisfactory education, which means that there are some good things and also some areas that could still be improved. Some of the things we found out about your school.

- Satisfactory teaching means that you make steady progress as you move through the school. At the moment, you do slightly better in English than in mathematics.
- You behave very well, thoroughly enjoy school and take responsibility very sensibly. We were particularly impressed with the way that you work together on art and computer projects; many of the paintings, drawing and sculptures on display around school are superb.
- Adults are very kind and take good care of you.
- You are taught all the subjects you should be and there are lots of interesting clubs, visits and visitors.
- The school successfully teaches you about the importance of staying safe and healthy and helps you to learn about other countries. It is great that you are so willing to share your holidays with 'Owlbert'.
- Senior leaders and governors know what needs to be done to make sure that you learn even more quickly.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Give you more opportunities to use your numeracy skills in different subjects and make better use of marking and targets to help you understand the next step in learning in mathematics.
- Make sure that teachers always expect enough of you in lessons.
- Check that you are all learning quickly enough.

You can help your teachers by trying to present your work more neatly. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn, and wish you well for the future.

Mr Mike Capper Lead inspector

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