

Woodhall Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124560
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	314964
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Robert Greatrex

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Angela Jarvis
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Sharp
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2004
School address	Mayflower Way Sudbury Suffolk CO10 1ST
Telephone number	01787 373661
Fax number	01787 379682

Age group	3–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Woodhall Primary is an average sized school. Most pupils live nearby. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The percentage eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils with additional learning needs is above average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational need is below. Children's attainments on entry to the Nursery are well below those normally expected of three-year-olds in all areas of learning.

The school has received the Healthy Schools Award and has Football Association chartered status. It has also received a Suffolk Innovation Award for its Activate scheme.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, where pupils particularly enjoy their learning. Close and trusting relationships, and the strong community feel, give pupils a sense of belonging to a school family. Pastoral care of pupils is outstanding. Parents are supportive of the school and what it offers, as indicated in the following comment typical of parents' views: 'I find it a real pleasure when I pick my child up and he is buzzing with excitement from something he has learnt.'

Pupils' enthusiasm for school is outstanding and they look forward each day to all it offers. The good quality curriculum provides a broad range of interesting activities that bring learning to life and stimulate pupils' enjoyment and curiosity. A particular strength is the provision for the arts, which gives pupils opportunities to develop both skills and self-esteem through performances within school and in the local community. Cultural development is strong because the school's outstanding provision gives pupils an excellent understanding of cultural traditions and faiths other than their own and prepares them very well for life in a culturally diverse society. Pupils' develop excellent self-confidence because of their active involvement in the life of the school and the opportunities to have a real say in how it develops. Pupils engage enthusiastically in the many vigorous physical activities offered and understand healthy eating well. They say they feel safe in school, because they are well cared for and know that adults will listen to any concerns they may have.

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. They make good progress so that, by the end of Year 4, standards are broadly in line with national expectations for pupils of this age. National test results at the end of Year 2 have improved recently and are now close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Boys, in particular, achieve much better than previously. Results improved because teaching and learning are predominantly good. Even so, inconsistencies in some teachers' use of targets and marking mean that pupils do not always receive the guidance they need about how to improve their work. In-class support is particularly strong for those who find learning more difficult. These pupils thrive because tasks are accurately matched to their needs and group work is used to give the right help when they need it. The school provides less well for the relatively small number of higher attaining pupils some of whom have insufficient challenge in their lessons.

Leadership and management are good. There is a real sense of cohesion because management responsibilities are delegated through the staff and so everyone feels they contribute. Consequently, decisions are better understood and supported. The school uses staff skills and expertise effectively because the right people are in the right roles. Key governors support the school well and their satisfactory role as critical friend is improving. The issues raised at the last inspection were resolved quickly and since then the school has generally identified the right development priorities, leading to further improvement. The exception is in the use of performance information to accelerate pupils' progress. Data collected is not analysed sufficiently to make it a useful tool for setting challenging targets. Based on improvements made since the last inspection and a collective determination to improve standards the school has a good capacity to improve further. Overall, the school is effective and gives good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children settle quickly and happily into Nursery because links between home, school and pre-school are good. They become more confident because they quickly learn what is expected and class routines are clear. Transition to Reception is smooth and the good start continues. Staff have a good understanding of how young children learn and use this effectively to plan a wide range of interesting activities across all areas of learning. The stimulating outdoor environment promotes learning and motivates children. Staff have a good understanding of what children know and achieve so that tasks are well matched to their abilities. Staff's high aspirations are evident in the consistently good practice. When they enter Year 1, children have made good progress but most remain below the level expected for their age. The school has rightly identified the need to track children's progress more closely and accurately.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the ways in which performance data is used to set challenging targets for all pupils and especially for those with the potential to reach the higher levels of attainment.
- Ensure that individual targets and teachers' marking give pupils clear guidance on their next steps in learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good achievement from their below average starting points in Year 1 and is a considerable improvement on the previous two years, when standards were much lower. Standards in Year 4, given the low starting point of these pupils at the end of Year 2, show that they have done well during the intervening two years. Pupils who find learning more difficult do well. While most pupils attain the expected standard for their age, relatively few exceed it because, in some lessons, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged to make the progress they could.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Most pupils behave well during lessons, but a few need help to manage their behaviour, especially in younger classes. Most pupils enjoy school enormously and their attendance is broadly average. Their good understanding of the importance of safe and healthy lifestyles reflects in their enthusiasm for healthy snacks and physical education. Pupils make an excellent contribution to school and the wider community, for example by participating in staff appointments and by taking their ukulele orchestra into town. Their sound skills in literacy, numeracy and information communication technology, along with positive attitudes to learning, provide a satisfactory preparation for the future. Spiritual, moral and social development is good, cultural awareness is outstanding. By the time they leave, pupils are mature and sensible. They respond sensitively to works of art, music and to cultures other than their own, captured in their impressive performance of an African folk tale in drama, music, song and dance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good relationships between staff and pupils and the supportive atmosphere in lessons create a positive environment for learning. As a result, pupils feel confident to put forward their views or ask for help and their concentration is generally good. At its best, teaching is lively and engaging. Teachers use questioning well to challenge pupils' thinking and understanding. Thorough planning means teachers have a clear understanding of what they want pupils to learn. Usually work matches pupils' capabilities; although evidence from lessons and pupils' work shows that, a few higher attaining pupils do not receive sufficient challenge to achieve their potential. Teaching assistants give sensitive support to pupils who find learning difficult and enable most to progress well. However, there are times when support staff are not fully engaged in lesson because they are not deployed well enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum places a consistent emphasis on promoting basic skills and a strong focus on personal, social, health and citizenship education, resulting in satisfactory academic standards and good levels of personal development. Staff are beginning to organise topics which link subjects creatively and make learning more relevant. A good range of visits, visitors and special events, such as Arts Week, bring learning to life and add much to pupils' enjoyment of it. French lessons provide further enhancement for Years 3 and 4. The school modifies its curriculum effectively to meet the needs of those who find learning difficult, although provision for pupils who have special talents is at a relatively early stage of development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils thrive in the school's caring atmosphere. They feel safe because all staff attend to their needs and readily provide effective guidance in personal matters. Support for vulnerable pupils and their families is a strength of the school's care. The school meets current requirements for safeguarding its pupils. Risk assessments are detailed and health and safety policies adhered to. Training for staff and governors is up to date. The few serious behavioural or racist incidents are handled firmly. Academic guidance is satisfactory. While many older pupils know their targets and are increasingly involved with staff in setting them, this is not the case across the school. As a result, many pupils are left uncertain of the next steps in their learning. Close links with other schools enhance provision such as the holiday club.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Governors and staff work together effectively to determine each year's priorities. Self-evaluation is largely accurate and enables the school to identify the right priorities for improvement in most areas of its work. However, assessment information is not used effectively enough in the drive to raise standards. Beneficial to the provision provided for pupils is the extent to which the school staff work together. For example, a good level of consistency in teaching, which

means pupils know what to expect in all lessons, is the result of close staff collaboration. The school listens closely to parents and pupils. Parents are involved in changes that affect them such as changes to the report format to make it more useful.

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	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	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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

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	3
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	3
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

11 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodhall Community Primary School, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 1ST

You may remember that two inspectors recently visited your school and talked to you about your work. We enjoyed our visit and we would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome. You and your parents feel Woodhall is a good school and we agree with you. If you read on you will see some of the things, we found out.

- You work hard and make good progress throughout your school.
- You really enjoy school and behave well because you like the lessons you are given, and other wonderful activities such as the African folk tale.
- You take an active part in your local community and in helping your school get better by having good attitudes to learning.
- You get on well with each other, and enjoy working and playing together.
- Most of you come to school regularly and on time. Please keep it up!
- You know how to keep safe and healthy.
- You know staff care about you and that they will always help you, so you feel confident and able to try new things.
- Those of you who find some work difficult are helped a lot, so you do well.

We have asked your staff and governors to look at some things that we hope will make your school even better. We asked them to improve these things.

- The ways that you are provided with challenge in lessons, so that work is not too hard and not too easy for all of you.
- How they mark your work so you always know what you have done well and what you need to think about next.

Your teachers are also going to look at the results of the tests you do to make sure that you all do as well as you can, especially when you are good at a subject. You can help by making sure you listen to what they say and do as they suggest.

We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Robert Greatrex Lead inspector