

Woodlands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126264
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315462
Inspection dates	16–17 July 2008
Reporting inspector	David Shears

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	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Oliver
Headteacher	Jan Paterson
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Winding Way Salisbury SP2 9DY
Telephone number	01722 335849
Fax number	01722 414117

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Woodlands is a smaller than average primary school. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average and the vast majority speak English at home. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than the national average.

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. Children arrive with skills and knowledge that are very low. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage so that by the time they enter Year 1 they are broadly below average. From Years 1 to 6, pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. Standards, however, are inadequate overall. This is because the current Year 6 pupils started school with an exceptionally low level of skills. Progress was slower during Years 1 and 2, although issues in provision have since been successfully addressed. However, they made better progress in Years 3 to 6 but not enough to catch up on lost ground. This means that standards are currently well below average.

Pupils make good progress in their personal development. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe and know what to do if they have any problems. They feel happy and enjoy school because they know that teachers care for them and plan interesting lessons. They feel safe because the school works hard to ensure that pupils behave well. Good procedures are in place to support pupils who find this difficult. Attendance is satisfactory overall, although the school has procedures in place to improve this. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils make a good contribution to the community, such as singing and playing at the local residential home at Christmas. The preparation for their future economic well-being is satisfactory.

Teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared and take into account the different learning needs of the pupils. Behaviour is managed well and pupils work hard because their relationships with adults in the school are positive. Teachers' explanations are clear, although there are not enough opportunities, through careful questioning, for pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills and to improve their reasoning skills. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and work exceptionally well with pupils, ensuring that they make good progress. This good provision extends across the whole curriculum, where pupils are given many opportunities to learn new skills and knowledge using a variety of exciting initiatives, such as when whole classes learn to play a musical instrument together. The curriculum is rich and varied, including visits out of school and special visitors to share their expertise. There are a number of extra-curricular activities for pupils to enjoy, although the range is biased towards sporting opportunities. Pupils' core skills are practised well across subjects, particularly their language development, although there is not enough support for lower ability pupils in addressing their mathematical needs in Years 1 to 3.

Pupils are well cared for by all staff. Procedures for safeguarding are in place and risk assessments are routinely completed to ensure the health and safety of all pupils. Staff are trained to deal with any medical needs, including providing first aid, and fire drills are carefully recorded. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. They have individual education plans that are reviewed three times a year with parents and progress in lessons is regularly monitored. These pupils make good progress overall. All pupils are supported well in literacy and know how to improve their work, although guidance in numeracy is not consistent across the school, limiting their progress.

Good leadership and management ensure pupils make good progress. The progress of individual pupils is carefully tracked and initiatives are implemented to support areas of need. Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Shortcomings are addressed through a clear development plan that is annotated to ensure its

successful completion. Challenging targets are set for pupils and the majority meet these. The pastoral care of pupils is excellent with leaders at all levels making this a priority. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and its provision in caring for pupils, although they do not have enough knowledge of their academic progress and the standards reached.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When children start Nursery, their skills and knowledge are very low in comparison to that expected of children of a similar age. They make good progress, particularly in their personal and social development. By learning to listen, share and take turns, they are prepared very well for their future education. Good progress continues through Reception and the majority of children join Year 1 having reached below average standards in their knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, creative and physical development. Standards in communication, language and literacy are still low, reflecting their very low starting points. Standards in their personal development are average and this shows outstanding progress. Teaching is lively and interesting and focuses strongly on language development. There is a good balance between those activities led by the teacher and those that children choose for themselves. The curriculum is good and designed to stimulate and excite the children's interest. The care and attention given to children's welfare are excellent and those with specific difficulties are particularly well provided for. Leadership and management show a very good understanding of the needs of young children and their progress is carefully monitored, allowing activities to be planned at the right level to help children develop and learn. The preparation for the Nursery and Reception to become a Foundation Stage unit has been extremely thorough and very well managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in literacy, numeracy and science.
- Ensure teachers use more open-ended questions in lessons to enable pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills and refine their reasoning skills.
- Develop effective strategies to support lower attaining pupils in numeracy, particularly in Years 1 to 3.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils arrive with skills and knowledge that are exceptionally low. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage so that they leave to enter Year 1 with standards that are broadly below average. They continue to make good progress from Years 1 to 6, although for some older age groups this means catching up as a result of underachievement during Years 1 to 2. This issue has now been successfully addressed by the school. Nevertheless, the impact has been that pupils currently in Year 6, who started school from a particularly low base, have reached standards that are well below average, despite having made good progress in Years 3 to 6. Therefore, current standards are inadequate, although set to rise next year. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school. They behave well because there are effective strategies in place to support them and this helps them to feel safe and well cared for. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy, including ensuring that they get enough sleep and know how to keep safe, for example, when they are on school trips. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although the school has identified the need to improve pupils' experience of other cultures. Attendance is satisfactory and the school is working hard to improve this. Pupils make a good contribution to the community, ranging from school needs, such as raising money for a climbing frame, to global needs, such as filling shoe boxes with gifts for needy children at Christmas. The preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Progress is good because the teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared and effectively taught and activities are carefully constructed to ensure that pupils receive work that matches their needs. Lesson objectives are clearly explained to pupils so that they know what they are going to learn. The very effective teaching assistants support pupils well and ensure that they reach their targets. They efficiently record their progress. The pace of lessons and the effective use of the interactive whiteboard, both as a teaching and a learning tool, helps to maintain pupils' interest. Good relationships exist between staff and pupils, which supports their good behaviour in lessons. There are increasingly good opportunities for both self and peer assessment. However, there are not enough opportunities, through targeted questioning, for pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills and to develop their thinking and reasoning skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum gives all pupils many opportunities to develop their skills and abilities. It is enriched by a good number of visits, including residential trips, and from people who visit to share their expertise. These have a positive impact on pupils' learning, by keeping them interested and motivated. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities on offer, although these are biased towards the sports. There is very good provision for pupils' personal and social development. The curriculum supports the practising of core skills, particularly in literacy, although there is a lack of appropriate support for lower attaining pupils in numeracy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care of pupils is excellent. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are good and risk assessments to ensure their safety are routinely carried out. The medical needs of pupils are met through the use of trained staff and care is taken to ensure that pupils know what to do in an emergency, such as during a fire drill. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Individual education plans give specific targets and teaching assistants carefully monitor these so that pupils achieve well. There are excellent links with outside

agencies, such as medical staff and the educational psychologist, who all help to improve the provision for pupils. All pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their literacy work, through targets and careful marking, although the guidance they receive in numeracy is inconsistent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leaders and managers have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have taken action that has led to improvements in pupils' progress, such as the programme for writing, established in the Foundation Stage. This demonstrates a good capacity to improve. Leaders set challenging targets for all pupils, which the vast majority meet. Leaders at all levels take their responsibilities seriously, wanting the very best provision for all pupils. The staff are well deployed and very effective in their roles. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have an understanding of the strengths of the school, although they have insufficient knowledge of pupils' academic progress and standards achieved. The headteacher and deputy headteacher promote a clear vision for the school where all pupils are welcomed and supported, both pastorally and academically. This care extends to their families, with the school working closely with parents, such as times for enjoying cooking together. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. The management of pastoral care is excellent and the school is seen to be 'at the heart of the community'.

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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?	1
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	4
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	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	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	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

18 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodlands Primary School, Salisbury. SP2 9DY

Thank you for your very warm welcome when we visited recently. We really enjoyed meeting you all and finding out about your school.

We think that you all go to a good school. It is well run and all the adults work very hard to give you a good start.

You told us that you enjoy coming to school and we can see why. Your teachers make the lessons interesting for you and there are lots of exciting activities. There are also a good number of clubs for you to enjoy.

You have some very good ideas about how to keep healthy and safe. Your teachers help you to behave really well and you are good at helping others, such as raising money for a variety of charities.

It was good to see that all of you are working hard and making good progress in your lessons. Keep working away at those targets so that you can learn even more!

There are some things we have asked the school to do to make things even better. We want your teachers to ask you more questions to improve your speaking and listening skills, your ability to solve problems and to explain your thinking. We have also asked for some of the younger pupils who find numeracy difficult, to be given extra help.

Thank you for a very special two days. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr David Shears Lead Inspector

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