

Woodstock School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109401
Local Authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	324953
Inspection date	22 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Kell

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	44
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Salter
Headteacher	Hilary Harris
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2005
School address	Rectory Gardens Henbury Bristol BS10 7AH
Telephone number	01173 772175
Fax number	01179 671474

Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

At the time of the last inspection, the school had received approval to extend its age range to include pupils in Years 1 and 2 but none was on roll at that time. Pupils of this age now attend the school. A second change that has taken place is the admission of girls since September 2006, although there are only a few on roll. The school has achieved the National Healthy School Award and the Bristol Inclusion Standard, and has been granted a Sportsmark Award.

Pupils come from the Bristol area and from a number of local authorities adjacent to Bristol. All the pupils have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools and they all have a statement of special educational needs for social, behavioural and emotional difficulties. The majority of pupils have a White British background. Over half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and a small number are in public care.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Woodstock is a good school that serves its pupils and their families well, and it is well supported by excellent links with its partners. The arrangements for pupils' pastoral care, guidance and support are excellent and the vast majority of parents show their overwhelming support for the school. They are very appreciative of the way in which the school transforms their children's lives. One parent summed this up with the comment: 'My child has made progress that I never could have imagined during the year he has been at Woodstock.' Pupils enter the school with a history of disrupted education. They leave as young people with self-confidence and able to see the value of education. Pupils are enabled to make such big strides in their learning and in their personal development because of the aspirations of the headteacher and her deputy. As a result of this leadership, the school has very high expectations of its pupils, who respond well to these challenges by re-engaging with their education and rediscovering enjoyment in learning.

Although a few pupils in some subjects work at the level expected for their age, standards are generally well below national expectations because of pupils' chequered history of non-attendance and exclusions in their previous schools. However, all pupils make good progress and achieve well irrespective of their attainment level when they enter the school. This acceleration in learning occurs because pupils' good personal development allows them to make the most of the good quality of education provided by the school. Consistent behaviour management changes pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and lively and interesting lessons spark their interest. Good teaching and a renewed hunger for learning mean that pupils love going to school and they are keen to participate in lessons. Their attendance is excellent and they behave well; as a result, and so available teaching time is used efficiently and effectively. Teachers assess their pupils' achievements regularly and they use this information to plan good learning activities. They also use it to set pupils' annual target levels. They do not, however, always share these with the pupils and so pupils do not know the goal towards which they are working. Teachers do not routinely use marking and other assessments to show pupils exactly what they need to do to move to the next level. This reduces the school's effectiveness in supporting and guiding pupils' academic progress. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities through a newly implemented curriculum. This is imaginatively planned and includes an excellent variety of enrichment activities, such as gardening and working on a city farm.

Leadership and management in the school are good overall. The headteacher and her deputy set an excellent example and their leadership and management are outstanding. They have a very sharp perception of the current status of the school, and how they wish to develop it further is based on accurate and rigorous self-evaluation. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and is in a strong position to develop further. However,, the roles of other staff with leadership and management responsibilities require further development. Subject leaders perform their role satisfactorily. They monitor some aspects of their subject across the school, such as planning, but they are not sufficiently involved in evaluating pupils' performance and this is reducing the school's rapid improvement. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are enthusiastic and committed, and they carry out some responsibilities very well, such as financial management, but they lack first hand knowledge of the school and do not participate in enough formal visits that are focused on monitoring the quality of provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the sharing of National Curriculum-level targets with pupils and show them what they need to do to progress from one level to the next so that they understand how to improve.
- Extend the role of subject leaders to include responsibility for monitoring and evaluating standards and pupils' achievements.
- Implement procedures for enabling governors to obtain better first-hand knowledge about the work of the school so that they can become more actively involved in its development.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, standards are very low, given the pupils' erratic pattern of attendance and challenging behaviour in their mainstream schools. However, some of the highest attaining pupils perform in line with expected levels in national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. Others are working at age-related levels in subjects such as art.

Pupils achieve well throughout their time in the school and they make good progress in achieving their annual targets, which are based on National Curriculum levels. Senior leaders' regular and meticulous tracking of pupils' attainments ensure that all pupils make the progress that is expected of them. They also ensure that no group of pupils, such as the small number of girls, children in public care or those from minority ethnic backgrounds are underperforming. By tracking pupils' progress regularly, leaders are quickly aware of potential underachievement and will immediately take remedial action by providing appropriate targeted intervention for those with additional learning difficulty. At the other extreme, when pupils show quicker than anticipated progress, targets are reset and staff are alerted of the need to build on this improving trend. Consequently, all pupils work towards targets that are set at the right level of challenge and they achieve them successfully.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The rate of improvement in pupils' personal development is a key factor in their good academic achievements. As the pupils are required to take responsibility for their own actions, they develop an understanding of what is expected of them and they learn how to react positively to situations that they find difficult. They are constantly required to make the right choice when their behaviour begins to slip and they are given the strategies that enable them to get themselves out of potentially confrontational situations. Consequently, they make good progress in their social awareness and moral development. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, supported by their work in the garden and on the farm, and the variety of outdoor pursuits in which they participate. They have a good appreciation of how to remain safe. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community, such as by representing their class on the school council, and they are involved in all appointments of school staff. Despite this, the school now recognises that it could use older pupils more as role models, such as by acting as a buddy or mentor. The school's very good links with partner schools and the pupils' good personal development prepare them well for moving into a larger environment when they leave Woodstock, which in some cases is a transfer back into a mainstream school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers and teaching assistants establish very good relationships with their pupils. They have a firm and consistent approach to behaviour management and well established classroom practice and procedures. Pupils understand these routines and they know that staff have very high expectations of their behaviour. They respond positively and so lessons generally proceed smoothly. Teachers plan lessons using information about pupils' prior learning and so activities are engaging and well matched to pupils' needs. As a result, pupils work with understanding and interest, and learn at a good pace. Teachers make effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a teaching tool that grabs pupils' attention. Many classroom discussions are managed well and teachers generally make good use of questions to assess pupils' understanding. These questions are structured in ways that test individual pupils' learning, making more demands of higher attaining pupils. However, on a few occasions, teachers provide too much information, rather than getting the pupils to think for themselves, or do not include all pupils enough in whole-class discussions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has a good focus on providing appropriate time for pupils to acquire the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT through discrete lessons. Science and physical education are also taught separately, while all other subjects are taught through a topic approach as part of the recently implemented new curriculum. Careful planning ensures that all subjects provide opportunities for pupils to rehearse key skills and to acquire new ones. In addition, pupils get a better picture of how different subjects and different aspects of learning fit together, and this increases their motivation. The basic curriculum is enriched extremely well by a variety of other activities. Visits and visitors into school bring learning to life and working in other environments, like the city farm, supports pupils' personal development. All pupils have the opportunity to attend a residential camp, and this makes an important contribution to their personal development as they have to work together as they face the challenge of many outdoor activities. Individual curriculum needs are catered for very well as those pupils with the necessary social and academic skills are supported in attending mainstream schools on a part-time basis.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is a safe and caring place in which to learn. All the required child protection and safeguarding procedures are securely in place and risk assessments are carried out as a matter of course. Provision for pupils' social and emotional care is outstanding. Staff are very aware of the needs of all pupils. They monitor and supervise them very well from the moment that their transport arrives at the school in the morning. The particular needs of the few girls and children who are looked after are addressed effectively. Pupils confirm that they feel safe in school and that there is always an adult who they can talk to. Individual behaviour plans are of high quality and the school's excellent links with other agencies support the guidance that it can offer. Strong links with parents and carers contribute towards a consistency of approach. Academic guidance and support, however, is not as effective. Although staff set individual target levels, these are not shared routinely with all pupils. This limits staff's ability to use them

to show pupils exactly what they need to do to progress from one level to the next. As a result, pupils do not know what they themselves can do to improve their performance and this limits independent learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the purpose of the school and of the direction in which they want to move. Robust systems for school evaluation provide them with detailed information about the school's relative strengths and areas for development, which are identified in an effective improvement plan. Consequently, resources are targeted efficiently in order to achieve the high standards. Staff share the senior leaders' expectations and are fully committed to equality of opportunity. This is evident in the good gains in academic work and personal development that all pupils make. As part of the drive towards continuing improvement, senior leaders have recently begun to develop the role of subject leaders. They are now carrying out additional roles but this has not yet extended to being more accountable for standards in their subjects. They are not yet, interrogating the assessment data that is available.

There is not a full complement of governors and this throws additional burdens on to others. Despite this, governors fulfil their statutory obligations and they maintain good oversight of the budget. Governors receive reports via the headteacher and use them to provide satisfactory challenge to senior leaders. However, they have little first-hand knowledge about the school and this limits their ability to monitor fully the school's provision.

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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 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

23 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodstock School, Bristol, BS10 7AH

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school and a special thanks to those who gave up their time to speak with us. You think that Woodstock is a good school and we agree with you. Lessons are good and you make a lot of progress in your work. The school gives you many interesting things to do and some of these are especially good, like working on the garden and at the city farm. Staff at your school look after you very well and you told us that you feel safe there.

We were very impressed with the way that you grow up as young people. You learn how to work with each other and to listen to what others have to say, and you behave well. You contribute well to the way that the school runs, such as representing your classmates on the school council. You obviously enjoy going to school and certainly Bob the dog loves being at Woodstock! You have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy and the staff prepare you well for leaving Woodstock. It is very pleasing to see that some of you manage to go on to mainstream schools.

Those who run your school are doing a good job and they want to make it even better. We have given them three ways that can help them to do this:

- Make sure that you know all of your learning targets and show you in detail exactly what you need to do to improve.
- Involve more teachers in checking how well you are doing in your work.
- Encourage governors to come into school more often so that they can see for themselves what is going on.

You, too, can help make the school even better by attending as often as you can, behaving well and by continuing to work hard.

Thank you once again and I wish all of you the best of luck in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Kell Lead inspector