

# Woodbridge Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112494
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	325615
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Helen Ranger

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	141
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs K Moss
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Justin Mash
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 November 2005
<b>School address</b>	Grange Street Alfreton Derbyshire DE55 7JA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01773 833138
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average-sized school, situated in a mixed residential and commercial area. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and almost all speak English as their first language. The number identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to most primary schools. However, a much higher than average proportion of these pupils has a statement of special educational needs. Pupils mainly join the school from two nearby infant schools, with attainment in Year 3 that is broadly in line with the levels expected nationally. In recent years, there has been a considerable amount of staff change, including long-term absences for medical reasons.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school is right in its view that it offers pupils a satisfactory education at present. Since its last inspection in 2005, the headteacher and governors have done all they can to provide pupils with stability and continuity, in spite of the considerable amount of staff change. Indications are that staffing is becoming more stable. New appointments have strengthened the school's leadership and brought a fresh impetus to the drive to raise standards.

In spite of the staffing difficulties, the academic standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 6 have risen over the past few years. This represents satisfactory achievement in relation to pupils' starting points in Year 3. In the Year 6 national tests in 2008, pupils reached average standards in English and science. Performance in mathematics remained below average and is the school's main current focus for development. Staff have identified gaps in pupils' learning in mathematics which have slowed progress. These weaknesses are being addressed as a matter of urgency, but the impact of action is yet to be fully reflected in pupils' standards. Staff have received good quality advice and support from the local authority to help their efforts and are fully aware that work in this area needs to continue.

A significant improvement in the school has been in pupils' personal development and well-being. These were judged satisfactory when the school was last inspected, but are now good. Pupils enjoy school, behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They are proud of their school and keen to take on the many responsibilities they are offered to contribute to their school community. They feel safe in school and have a good awareness of how to lead healthy lives. Staff care well for pupils on a day-to-day basis, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those with any personal difficulties. The academic support and guidance available to pupils are satisfactory and developing well, because the quality of information that class teachers collect on each individual's progress is improving. The school properly fulfils its duties to safeguard its pupils. However, some of the guidance that supports staff in this area, particularly the child protection policy and procedures, is divided over several cumbersome documents and not as easily accessible to staff and governors as it needs to be.

Inspection observations support the school's evaluation that the curriculum and the quality of teaching are satisfactory and improving. In particular, recent staff recruitment and improvements to the assessment and tracking arrangements are bearing fruit. The school is, however, right in its determination that even more lessons need to be good or better if standards are to continue to rise.

Leadership and management, including by the governors, are also satisfactory in terms of their impact on pupils in recent years. The leadership team, consisting of the headteacher, the new deputy head, the Chair of the Governing Body and the office and finance manager, are determined to achieve their vision of ensuring that pupils get a consistently good education at Woodbridge. To this end, staff are working in productive partnerships with the local authority and with other local schools, especially the main feeder infant schools. Subject leaders and staff with responsibility for other important aspects of provision are being trained well to extend their monitoring roles and to plan effectively for the future. While some of this training has happened fairly recently, rigorous self-evaluation, which used to be carried out mostly by senior managers, is increasingly part of the role of all teachers. This rightly remains on the agenda for further school development.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate progress in mathematics, ensuring that teachers fill any gaps in pupils' previous learning.
- Ensure that the moves to improve teaching and learning result in a greater proportion of lessons that are good or outstanding.
- Ensure that all teachers monitor standards and provision rigorously in their areas of responsibility.
- Review the policy for child protection to retain all necessary detail, but make it more concise and accessible to staff and governors.

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

Good attitudes to learning and improvements to teaching have ensured that day-to-day progress by pupils of all abilities and all backgrounds is at least satisfactory and, quite often, good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make sound progress, as do those from minority ethnic backgrounds. The 2008 national test results for pupils in Year 6 were the best in the school for at least six years. In English and science, for example, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and Level 5 rose over the previous year. The school met some, but not all, of its targets in core subjects. Most notably, it missed its mathematics targets, but staff have acted with urgency to remedy this situation. For example, more opportunities are being planned to enhance pupils' problem-solving and investigative skills. As a result, school records indicate that this year more pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach Level 5 in mathematics.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

School surveys show that pupils feel safe in school, enjoy their work and form productive relationships with staff and with their peers. Reported incidents of bullying or racism are rare. While a few pupils require careful attention from adults to control their behaviour difficulties, the vast majority behave well. In a literacy lesson seen, pupils' behaviour and demeanour were exemplary because they were very interested in the poem they were composing, the activity was challenging and pupils had many opportunities to share and extend their ideas. Attendance has fluctuated in recent years from average levels to below average. It is currently satisfactory and the school does a great deal to encourage regular attendance. Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They comment on how much they benefit from the themed weeks and 'Wow days' such as a recent one, entitled 'Spirit, Mind and Body'. Older pupils, in particular, play key roles in ensuring that the school community functions well, by acting as team leaders and playground leaders, for instance. All pupils are supported well by the democratically elected school council. The council is justifiably proud of its recent Christmas fund-raising activities. While the school knows that numeracy skills need to be improved, pupils' good social awareness and their generally improving academic achievements, provide a sound preparation for their transfer to secondary school.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The school's monitoring of teaching shows that most lessons range from satisfactory to good. Inadequate teaching is rare. Inspection findings mirror this picture. Classes are orderly and relationships good. Ability 'sets' are used well in literacy and numeracy. A recent focus on improving the ways teachers assess and track pupils' achievements has been effective in giving staff more detailed information on progress. Activities are generally matched to the range of pupils' needs, although occasionally more able pupils still have to complete simple tasks unnecessarily before moving on to activities that challenge them more. Teachers are committed to improving the effectiveness of numeracy lessons. Pupils welcome this and say that they think mathematics would be more interesting if activities were more practical. There is good liaison between teachers and teaching assistants, especially in supporting pupils who need extra adult help with learning.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

A systematic review of the curriculum is under way. Staff have made a good start on reviewing how they ensure that pupils acquire skills systematically, and in small steps where appropriate, while linking subjects together in interesting ways. Developments include the improvement in mathematics provision and a well-planned initiative to ensure that pupils acquire and use skills in information and communication technology across the full range of the curriculum. There is a sound programme of clubs, visits and visitors to the school which enhances the more routine activities. Pupils say lessons are more interesting as a result of such initiatives. A range of 'intervention groups' gives extra support to pupils who need it, including for any who have underachieved in the past. This is promoting more rapid progress. Good programmes of physical education, personal, social and health education and citizenship are contributing successfully to the improvements in pupils' personal development.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Good day-to-day care has helped to promote improvements in pupils' behaviour and learning. Pastoral care is supported by correct child protection arrangements but staff access to written guidance is not as straightforward as it should be. There are good links with external agencies to support pupils who need specialist help. The individual learning plans for these pupils are clear and regularly reviewed. Recent moves to forge closer links with the partner infant schools have resulted in projects to ease transition into Year 3. As a result, Key Stage 2 staff are beginning to be better informed about pupils' standards on entry and better able to support their progress. In the main, staff give pupils sound academic support and guidance, for example, through informative marking and target-setting, although practice varies considerably in quality between classes. Where practice is best, teachers expect pupils to assess their own performance and to respond directly to adults' feedback, for example, by correcting errors in previous work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Some initiatives in recent years have been slowed down by staffing problems but the headteacher in particular has retained a clear vision for the future. The school is preparing staff well for greater involvement in monitoring standards and planning improvements. The process of self-evaluation is now increasingly carried out by the entire staff working with the governing body, as a united team. The Chair of the Governing Body is active and well-informed and, while the make-up of the governing body changes quite frequently, an experienced core group of governors ensures that the school is soundly managed. For the first time this year, governors have planned a rigorous programme of monitoring which is linked very closely to the priorities of the school improvement plan. The plan indicates their understanding of what is needed for them to become 'critical friends' of the school in the fullest sense and supports the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. Parents and pupils hold positive views of the school and value how it works within the local community. The school's contribution to this wider community is satisfactory and it has a stated aim of extending pupils' experience of the wider world and their understanding of how they can play their roles as young citizens more fully.

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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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	3

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

15 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodbridge Junior School, Alfreton, DE55 7JA

Thank you all for your welcome and help when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed meeting such a pleasant group of young people and it is obvious that you are proud of your school. This letter is to tell you about some of the best things I found during my visit and a few areas where I feel your school could be improved.

I agree with the staff and governors that your school gives you a satisfactory education. The teachers are improving the ways they plan lessons and check your progress and I have asked them to keep making sure that your lessons get even better. Over the last few years, the standards of literacy have risen at your school but mathematics standards have not improved to the same extent. Your teachers want you to get better at mathematics and they are right to do so. You can help them and help yourselves by concentrating carefully in numeracy lessons and asking for help if there is something you do not understand.

The pupils I spoke to told me how much they enjoy school. I could see this for myself too in your good behaviour. I was pleased to see that you are all learning how to lead safe and healthy lives. I met your school council, team leaders and some of the 'playground pals'. They told me about the many opportunities you have to share your ideas and views with the staff and the various events you help to organise. Keep up the good work!

The staff and governors are working hard to make Woodbridge Junior School even better for you all. The teachers are using many ways to check that you learn efficiently and that your work is interesting and enjoyable. I have asked them to make sure that all the activities that happen in school help you all to reach even higher standards in all subjects.

I hope your Christmas celebrations went well and that you have a good New Year.

Yours sincerely

Helen Ranger

Lead inspector