

Woodthorpe CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112857
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325701
Inspection date	28 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Raymond Jardine

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	124
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Keith Taylor Nobbs
Headteacher	Mr Ross Griffin
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Seymour Lane Woodthorpe Mastin Moor Chesterfield Derbyshire S43 3DA
Telephone number	01246 472584

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	28 April 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- The progress that pupils make, particularly in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- The consistency of teaching quality.
- The effectiveness of arrangements for monitoring and improving the school's performance.

Inspectors gathered evidence from parents' questionnaires and school documentation, observed lessons and held discussions with two governors, including the chair of governors, senior leaders, other staff and with pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school that serves the village of Woodthorpe and the surrounding rural areas. Almost all pupils are of White British ethnicity and all have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils assessed as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities has risen significantly in recent years. Almost a third of pupils are registered, mainly with speech and language and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Currently, four have statements of special educational need. Children's attainment on entry to Reception Year covers a wide range but overall is below that expected for this age. The school has achieved a number of national awards, including Basic Skills Quality Mark, Artsmark, ECO and Health promoting School awards. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2007 and a deputy headteacher in September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Woodthorpe Primary is an improving school that provides a good education for its pupils. They achieve well, both academically and in their personal development. The school's Christian character guides its aims and values; it successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development so that they are prepared well for their next stage in education and adult life. Parents are very positive about the school's work, particularly their children's enjoyment of school life and the good progress that they make. A key driving force is the headteacher, who provides very good leadership and direction for the school, ably supported by his deputy. Parents, staff and governors hold him in high regard, particularly in the way that he has successfully steered the school through a difficult period of staffing changes. With some good new staff appointments and the return of other key staff, teamwork and a determination to improve further pervade the school. Teaching is now more consistent in quality. This is showing through in promoting pupils' good progress in every year group, and demonstrates the school's good potential to improve further.

Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 have typically been average to a little above average since the last inspection, with science a relatively stronger subject by Year 6. In 2008, there was a dip in the proportion of higher attaining pupils achieving Level 5 in mathematics and too few pupils have also been gaining this level in their writing compared to reading. The school is rigorous in its analysis of patterns in standards such as these and the headteacher's perceptive diagnosis of their cause has ensured that the school's efforts to improve are focused accurately. A key strategy has been to raise the expectation of all staff of what pupils can do as they progress from year to year. Adjustments have been made to the curriculum to enable pupils to acquire skills and knowledge more quickly lower down in the school, particularly in mathematics, and this is now showing through in higher standards. There is also a continuing focus on improving skills in extended writing which is proving successful. Consequently, pupils are making good progress, with more attaining above the expected levels in Years 5 and 6. Even so, the school is not complacent and is rightly working to increase the proportion of higher attaining pupils reaching Level 5, particularly in mathematics and writing, to meet its 2010 targets.

The good curriculum is enriched by extensive use of the local and wider community through memorable visits, including some residential, and many visitors to school. A recent investment in new computer resources is making a good contribution to pupils' learning in many subjects. Information and communication technology is used well by teachers to illustrate, explain ideas and challenge pupils during class discussions. Pupils who have learning difficulties are guided and supported well and consequently they make good progress. Some have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Despite some accommodation constraints, the school has this year established a dedicated nurture group, led by two teaching assistants, which is contributing much to meeting these pupils' specific needs. Their needs are assessed carefully and a variety of strategies employed within a calm and supportive environment. A small number of parents expressed concern that some pupils can show challenging behaviour. Inspectors found that staff manage such pupils well.

The great majority of pupils behave very well and clearly enjoy their time at school. They are taught how to stay safe and to live healthily and most demonstrate a good understanding of these aspects. Pupils report that they feel secure from harassment and bullying at school. Attendance rates are consistently above average. The very attractive school grounds are a distinctive feature that adds much to pupils' enjoyment. Here, play areas include a variety of

large play equipment which the school council has helped to choose. Pupils also contribute by planting trees and shrubs. There are many other ways in which they take responsibility, such as peer tutors helping younger pupils with their learning and ensuring that everyone is included in games at playtime. Pupils raise funds for a variety of charities, demonstrating their care and concern for others. They also contribute to the wider community through drama performance, involvement in community events and competitions. The school is extending its international links as part of its plan to further promote community cohesion. For example, pupils communicate with and support an Indonesian schoolboy, who is giving them an insight into his way of life. Working with the local business community, pupils also take part in projects and competitions that provide them with insights into workplace skills that contribute much to their future economic well-being.

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Two good new appointments, including that of the deputy headteacher, and greater staffing stability this year have enabled the school to move forward more quickly to achieve consistency in teaching quality. Targets for the school and for individual pupils have been raised to reflect the school's ambitions for its improvement. Lessons are guided by clear objectives and tasks are matched well to the range of pupils' abilities in these mixed age classes. Pupils enjoy the variety of activities provided and they are encouraged to discuss together and think for themselves. All pupils have next step targets to guide their work but this initiative is relatively recent. They find these targets useful and each is reviewed with their teacher. Pupils are not yet adept at using their targets to regularly review and improve their own work independently; this is a key initiative for the school to help raise standards further.

Leadership and management are good. Staff and governors work well together to promote high standards of care and support for pupils. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are fully in place and meet current requirements. Arrangements for monitoring and improving the school's performance are good and their impact evident in improvements to teaching quality and pupils' achievements. Pupils are assessed regularly and their progress in literacy and numeracy monitored and reviewed with staff termly. This helps to ensure that additional support is deployed effectively to avoid pupils underachieving. The central assessment database is relatively new and is not yet fully embedded into the school's management at all levels. It is being extended to other subjects, initially in science. Senior leaders are most involved in monitoring provision, particularly teaching quality, and pupils' progress. Their work is rigorous, consultative, and provides a sound basis for determining priorities in the school's detailed development plan. Governors are also much involved in shaping the school's development and in monitoring its work. The headteacher has distributed management responsibilities more fully as staffing changes have stabilised, including subject leadership. Consequently middle leaders are now exerting more influence on the quality of education that pupils receive. Their monitoring role is being extended to include more direct observation of lessons to help build on the best practice.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Because they are taught well, the children make good progress in their learning. They start in the Reception class with attainment that is below that expected for their age, but the good progress they make leads to most reaching the expected goals by the time they start in Year 1. Boys' attainment is below that of the girls though the small number of boys in each group means that the data are not

fully reliable. Throughout the day the children are challenged well in most aspects of their work. However, on a few occasions when the activities are arranged to give children freedom of choice they do not enhance their learning well enough. Overall the teacher's plans are effective in ensuring that the children develop skills well and that their learning moves forward at a fast rate. The staff use assessment information well to ensure that learning is based on what children know and understand. The children enjoy school and actively participate in activities both indoors and when given the opportunities to use the outdoor area.

Welfare arrangements for the children are good, with all requirements being met. The quality of leadership and management for the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The leader and the supportive teaching assistant work very well together in planning and evaluating the success of their work. The results of this evaluation are used well to plan for developing the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage still further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievements of higher attaining pupils in mathematics and writing.
- Encourage pupils to use their curriculum targets to help review and improve their own work and so learn more independently.

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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	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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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 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	2
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**

29 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodthorpe Primary School, S43 3DA

Thank you for the polite and warm welcome that we received when we visited your school recently. We spoke with many of you and visited all of your classes. I am now writing to share with you what we found out about the education that you receive at Woodthorpe Primary. We think that you go to a good school where you are looked after well by all the dedicated staff and governors. We could see how much you enjoy school life when we visited your lessons and joined you in the playground. You work and play very well together. We were impressed by the many ways in which you contribute to your school, helping as peer tutors, making sure children are joining in at playtime and making decisions through the school council. You know how to lead safe and healthy lives. You treat each other with respect, behave well and attend regularly - well done!

Your teachers plan interesting and challenging lessons in which you are encouraged to learn through a variety of activities. Consequently you are progressing well. We noticed that you all have some targets for your writing and mathematics. These have been introduced quite recently and you find them helpful when reviewing your progress with your teachers. We have agreed with Mr Griffin that you should be encouraged to use these regularly to check and review your own work so that you can help to improve it for yourselves. In this way you will be helping your teachers too.

Mr Griffin leads the school well and, with the staff and governors, is constantly looking for ways of improving your school. They check carefully on how well you are doing in important subjects. We agree with them that some of you could do better in your writing and in mathematics so that more gain Level 5 standards by Year 6. That is why the staff are concentrating more in these areas to help you do well. You can help them by regularly checking your work and continuing to work hard.

With all good wishes for your future at Woodthorpe Primary.

Ray Jardine

Lead inspector