

# The Woodroffe School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113901
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dorset
<b>Inspection number</b>	325910
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Gale HMI

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>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	1044
Sixth form	192
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jenny Perham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Steward
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 November 2005
<b>School address</b>	Uplyme Road Lyme Regis DT7 3LX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01297 442232
<b>Fax number</b>	01297 446829

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- Achievement and standards in the main school and sixth form.
- Developments in the curriculum and care guidance and support.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in driving improvement.

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form, assessment data, parents' questionnaires, planning documents, observation of lessons, and interviews with staff, students and the chair of governors. 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

The Woodroffe School is of average size. Most students are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. There are very few students who speak English as an additional language. The school is a specialist arts college and has recently taken on an additional specialism in mathematics and computing. Woodroffe holds Artsmark Gold and Sportsmark awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Woodroffe is an outstanding school. The improvement from good to outstanding since the last inspection has been rigorously pursued by the headteacher, with strong support from his senior team. The school has a very positive and friendly ethos that focuses on developing the whole student. This is reflected in its very strong commitment to equal opportunities and students' outstanding personal development. The innovative alternative school council is an example of how the school engages its few disaffected and vulnerable students and they in turn appreciate how hard the school has worked with them. This approach has resulted in a very harmonious school community, with excellent relationships reported by staff and students alike. As one parent commented, 'Behaviour and conduct are excellent; this school turns out a well-rounded well-adjusted pupil. I can't fault it'. Care and support are truly outstanding and have long been strengths of the school. The school has been working hard on bringing academic outcomes up to the exceptionally high standards of personal outcomes. Academic guidance through target setting, feedback and intervention is now good overall.

Students' attainment on entry to Woodroffe is above average. Those students completing their GCSE examinations in 2008 produced the best results the school has had. Standards were above average and overall progress from their starting points was good. Progress was good during Key Stage 3 and satisfactory in Key Stage 4 for this cohort, with girls making slightly less progress than boys. The current Year 11 students are making faster progress than their predecessors and the school has carefully monitored the progress of all students to ensure no group achieves less well than its peers. This has been the result of a more robust link between pastoral and academic staff and better teaching across the school. Improved tracking and intervention systems, particularly in Year 11, demonstrate that students are on course to meet challenging targets and give the school a new record for GCSE outcomes.

Students have an excellent understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lives, which is developed through the strong provision made for these areas in the curriculum. There is an excellent provision for exercise through the curriculum, the hilly site and very high rates of participation in extra-curricular opportunities. The great majority of students thoroughly enjoy their education, attend well and display extremely positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Students report that incidents of bullying or other forms of harassment are rare. When they occur, they are dealt with promptly and effectively. Students' views were reflected in the responses and comments received from parents. Students make a very good contribution to the school and wider community, for example through their 'Rights Respecting Schools' work with UNICEF, which they are delivering in other schools. The curriculum helps to foster very strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, for example through exceptional art provision and work as an International School with the global community. Students develop very good basic skills to help them progress to further education, training and employment, and they are provided with excellent guidance on the choices they need to make at various stages in their school careers. A good programme is in place to develop students' enterprise skills. The school evaluates the overall quality of teaching and learning as good, and improving and observations of a sample of lessons confirmed this view. Consistent strengths of teaching are very good subject knowledge that facilitates appropriate challenge to students, good planning for the effective use of interactive whiteboards and very good relationships that promote excellent engagement and enjoyment of learning. Strategies are already in place to share the excellent practice that currently exists, and these are having a

positive impact. Departmental reviews identifying good practice and areas for development are seen by staff as very positive. The use of internal and external expertise is helping the school to establish a higher proportion of outstanding lessons and helping the few teachers who are merely satisfactory to reflect on and improve their practice. A major thrust is a move from 'teaching' to 'learning'. Teachers are adjusting their planning to begin to focus more consistently on providing opportunities for students to make individual progress towards their targets. This has been most successful in Year 11, where the link between academic monitoring and teaching and learning is most strongly established. The school feels that the expansion and embedding of this system and its link to improved teaching and learning is the key to even faster progress for all students, and inspectors agree.

A programme of curriculum development since the last inspection has enhanced provision for information and communication technology. An innovative approach to leadership through the arts specialism has taken the subject forward, particularly in the use of multimedia applications. The award of an additional specialism is being used to expand the use of this important learning tool in other curricular areas. Provision for the most gifted and talented is developing and students in this group commented that their opportunities had been expanded in the last year. These improvements, coupled with an innovative literacy programme in Year 7 developing cross-curricular skills alongside knowledge, have produced an outstanding curriculum.

Outstanding progress since the last inspection is the result of excellent leadership and effective management. A culture of accountability and drive to improve has been clearly established among the staff. A parent reflected this with the comment that, 'My older child attended the school some years ago; it was good then and under Dr Steward it is even better'. Senior leaders have been very effective in tackling the areas identified for improvement in the last inspection. The headteacher and leaders at all levels provide very clear direction through an exceptional planning and self-evaluation system and are well supported by other staff. From this work, an innovative, proactive approach has developed to bring about change. Of the few criticisms received from parents, concerns often focused on the increasing number of students in a restricted site as the popularity of the school drives demand for places. The headteacher and other leaders share these concerns. However, the school is making very good use of the extra resources it receives for its specialisms, for example by improving teaching facilities and enriching the curriculum and through its work in other schools and the local community. Very efficient and effective use of funding demonstrates excellent value for money. Governors provide excellent support and are able to offer help and challenge to the senior leadership team and this has been well focused through a school improvement group. However, there is insufficient fine appreciation of how the school's data relates to judgements of its relative strengths. The school has developed excellent partnerships with parents and external agencies to support students' development. It has a good understanding of the needs of the local community and its place in it. Planning for the development of community cohesion has taken place and audits of the effectiveness of actions are helping the school know that its work is effective. An ongoing record of real success indicates that the school has very strong capacity for further improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 1**

Students enter the sixth form with slightly below average levels of attainment. They make good progress overall, with students achieving very well in the majority of subjects. However, in a few subjects, their achievement is satisfactory. Standards are rising and are now above average. The overwhelming majority of students successfully complete their courses. A high proportion

of students go on to higher education. Students achieve well because teaching is almost always good and sometimes outstanding. They are provided with excellent support, care and guidance, with students reporting that they are 'not alone in any sense' in the pursuit of their studies. The curriculum is very well matched to the needs of students and responsive to their requirements, for example in the development of options around their choices. Enrichment opportunities provided through the arts specialism and other areas are enthusiastically taken up, for example making a film for Mencap with a local special school. The head of sixth form provides excellent management and leadership of his tutor team. He has a very detailed knowledge and understanding of students' needs and ensures they are met as fully as possible while liaising effectively with curriculum leaders to ensure students achieve their potential. Monitoring of progress towards challenging targets is rigorous and there is a good balance between directing students and encouraging them to become independent learners. Students' personal development is outstanding and they make an important contribution to the life of the school and the wider community through activities such as the school council, mentoring younger students, the combined cadet force and helping to crew the lifeboat

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Expand and embed the effective links between academic monitoring and subject teaching established in Year 11 to develop a clear focus on learning and increase the proportion of outstanding lessons across the school.

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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	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2	

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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>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
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	1	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

### Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	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**

26 March 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of The Woodroffe School, Lyme Regis DT7 3LX

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when it visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons and meeting with you. We feel that the pride you take in your school has a large part to play in making it outstanding.

These are the main findings of our inspection.

- The Woodroffe School provides you with an outstanding education.
- Standards are rising and you are currently making good progress.
- Behaviour and relationships between staff and students are excellent.
- The headteacher and other leaders know the school well. They are driving rapid improvement in your school to make all aspects of it as good as the best.
- We agree with the headteacher and senior team that most lessons are good, with an increasing proportion that are outstanding.
- The school works exceptionally well with its partners to improve your personal development and well-being, which are outstanding.
- The school provides you with a responsive curriculum that meets your needs very well, and the extra-curricular and enrichment activities on offer to you are truly outstanding.
- The level of care and support shown to you is second to none and allows you to flourish.

The inspection team and the headteacher agree that the mission to make your academic outcomes as outstanding as your personal development is not yet complete and we have asked the school to do one thing in particular.

- Expand the very effective teamwork between the pastoral staff and your teachers, which is a feature in Year 11, throughout the school to help teachers produce more outstanding lessons for you.

You can do your part to help by ensuring that you always work hard. The team joins me in sending you best wishes for your studies and we hope that you all do very well in the future.

Yours faithfully

Peter Gale

Her Majesty's Inspector