

Woodhouses Voluntary Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105688
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	336539
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Jim Kidd

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Sleigh
Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Vickers
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2007
School address	Ashton Road Woodhouses Failsworth M35 9WL
Telephone number	0161 6816793
Fax number	0161 6835142
Email address	info@woodhouses.oldham.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2010
Inspection number	336539

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Ten lessons were observed and all of the five teachers were seen at least twice in the classroom. Meetings were held with pupils, teaching staff, support assistants, parents and carers, governors and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including school improvement planning, pupil progress monitoring records, minutes of governors' meetings and reports written by the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors also analysed 90 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 15 completed by staff and 72 returned by pupils in Key Stage 2.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether apparent improvements in pupils' progress, noted in 2009, are being maintained
- the level of challenge in the classroom and whether it is sufficient to ensure that pupils aim for the highest standards
- the impact of ongoing curriculum development
- how and with what impact senior leaders have managed staffing difficulties over time.

Information about the school

This school is much smaller than average and takes pupils from the village in which it is situated and also from a wider range of districts. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than usually found. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average, as is the number with a statement of special educational needs. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and there are hardly any who are at early stages of learning English. Woodhouses holds national Healthy School status, has the International Curriculum (Intermediate) award, International School (Foundation) award and has gained the Active Mark for the last three years. The school has experienced severe staffing difficulties since the previous inspection.

The Woodhouses Out of School Club was inspected separately and receives a separate report which is available on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It is an improving school because of determined leadership and good levels of teamwork among staff. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the care, guidance and support provided for them are outstanding. Woodhouses enjoys a most positive reputation within the community and pupils and their families are very proud indeed of the school. As parents say, 'This is a lovely school: pupils, teachers, the headteacher and parents all work together as a team.' Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children make good progress and achieve well.

From skills on entry to the Reception class, which vary from year to year but which are broadly in line with age-related expectations, pupils achieve satisfactorily across the school and reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. As a result of effective support, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those identified as vulnerable achieve well. After some significant difficulties over a three-year period, staffing is now more stable and pupils' attainment is starting to rise. The school recognises that although achievement is satisfactory, there is not yet sufficient challenge in teaching to ensure a further rise in achievement, nor are strategies to improve progress sufficiently embedded.

Pupils love their school and are delighted to show visitors their work and introduce them to their classmates. They display an enviable social conscience and are only too keen to celebrate difference and diversity. A wide range of charities benefits from their proactive approach to helping those less fortunate and they speak with real pride about their sponsorship of an African school child through the 'Compassion Project.' Their support for younger pupils in school is outstanding too.

Curriculum development is ongoing and the 'Personal Learning Space', when pupils focus more closely on their academic targets, is beginning to pay dividends. Moreover, the 'I Can Do' mathematics strategy in particular is helping to reinforce pupils' skills in numeracy. Pupils see its value and comment with the utmost honesty, 'We don't always like it, but it certainly works!' However, there are currently not enough opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to practise their skills in mathematics and English.

The committed leadership team has managed the staffing issues soundly since the previous inspection and leaders have an accurate understanding of where the school needs to improve. They have introduced several well-founded strategies to foster school development but it is too early to see their full impact. The school has, therefore, a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement and provides satisfactory value for money.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' achievement by:
 - embedding strategies already introduced, to facilitate increased progress in lessons
 - ensuring that challenge in the classroom is consistently high enough to enable pupils to reach the standards their ability warrants
 - building upon the successes in the 'Personal Learning Space' initiative to ensure that pupils focus even more closely on their targets
 - continuing to develop the curriculum so that pupils see the links between subjects, thus enabling them to reinforce their skills in literacy and numeracy in all their lessons
 - sharing across the school the good practice observed to ensure that pupils take even more responsibility for their own learning and progress.
- About 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils of all abilities are fully engaged in their lessons and are eager to learn. They enjoy working in pairs and groups and have a high regard for the adults who work with them. Indeed, pupils enjoy their lessons. The bespoke support from the talented team of teaching and learning support assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those identified as vulnerable make good progress and become more confident in their learning.

Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and there are examples in both key stages of pupils making good progress in lessons. Following a dip in attainment in 2008, standards rose in 2009 and this trend is being maintained, particularly in mathematics. Pupils in the current Year 6 class, for example, solve problems accurately using fractions and verbalise their calculations with confidence.

Pupils feel safe in school and say that bullying is rare but that when it does occur there is always someone to talk to, an adult or older pupil, and that the problems are solved rapidly. A visit to the dining room at lunchtime reveals that pupils have a keen awareness of healthy eating: younger pupils in particular are only too willing to show visitors their lunchboxes to demonstrate that eating fruit and vegetables is second nature to them. When they arrive in the morning, they visit the trolley to select their piece of fruit for playtime. Pupils take responsibility readily and talk with pride about their work as sports leaders, school councillors and, in their words, 'Helping the little ones in Reception.' They enjoy the variety of school productions each year and the choir performs regularly in the local community. Assemblies are well planned and delivered

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

and have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' singing in assembly is a joy to hear and both boys and girls join in with gusto.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are examples of good practice in both key stages. In the best lessons, pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, to act as learning resources for each other and take more responsibility for their own progress. In a Year 6 science lesson, for example, pupils working in pairs as 'talk partners', came up with a range of experiments to test the effectiveness of washing-up liquid and they modified their approaches after hearing the ideas of other groups. Similarly, pupils in Years 1 and 2 worked in groups to produce alliterative sentences and were enjoyed showing their classmates the results of their efforts. The school recognises, however, that staffing difficulties over time have had a negative impact on the quality of teaching and that pupils have not always been challenged to reach for the highest levels. Things are improving, but on occasions teachers direct learning too much and pupils' engagement with their own learning suffers as a result. Teachers often use assessment

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

well to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' learning needs but ongoing assessment in the classroom sometimes fails to ensure that children are challenged enough. Marking is satisfactory overall but there are examples of impressive practice, which gives pupils credit for the standards they reach but also provides them with detailed comment on how they can improve their work.

Although the curriculum is well planned to meet pupils' needs, interests and aspirations, there are currently not enough opportunities for them to practise their skills in mathematics and English. Respect for the environment and for religious and cultural diversity lead directly to pupils considering the importance of self-respect. Pupils speak positively of the wide range of enrichment activities, clubs and sports, for which the take up is high.

Pastoral care is outstanding. Pupils, parents and carers speak with one voice about the high quality of support from teachers and from teaching and learning support assistants. Pupils with special educational needs and those identified as vulnerable benefit from everything the school has to offer as a result of support which is tailored to their individual needs. They achieve well both personally and academically as a consequence. A key aspect of the guidance which pupils receive is the part played by older pupils, who support their classmates and younger counterparts with zeal.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The talented headteacher displays real determination to move the school forward and she is supported well by her able and committed deputy. Both lead by example and have seen the school through a difficult period in its history, when pupils' achievement began to decline. They have a clear vision for how the school should develop, and strategies to raise attainment. Staff at all levels of experience and responsibility believe that teamwork is of the essence and comment, 'We are all in this together and we are proud of our school.'

Governors are efficient and effective. The Values and Beliefs Committee, for example, does much to promote pupils' personal development. The recently established Leadership and Management Committee is enabling the governing body to become more informed about school performance and to challenge the leadership with increasing rigour.

Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements and all parents who returned the

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

questionnaires expressed the view that the school keeps their children safe. All relevant policies are in place but the school recognises that it needs to ensure they are evaluated and updated regularly. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity for all is good and pupils and staff are encouraged to challenge discrimination whenever it occurs.

The school promotes community cohesion well. It has produced a detailed audit of the school's context and has established links with a local school whose pupils are predominantly of minority ethnic heritages. Through assemblies, displays on corridors and in classrooms and through the ethos of the school, pupils are encouraged to value and celebrate cultural differences.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is comprised of a Reception class which has close links and which shares both indoor and outdoor areas with Year 1 pupils. Small numbers enter Reception each year, and children's skills on entry vary from year to year but are generally in line with those expected for their age. When they start school, their personal development tends to be above expectations, but in recent years pupils' skills in speech and language have not been of the same level. Staff know their children very well indeed and relationships between children and between children and the adults who work with them are strong.

Teaching is good and pupils derive full benefit from the play-based curriculum, which results in them enjoying the activities and making informed choices about what they want to do next. From building structures with plastic blocks to hunting for the Gruffalo,

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

they are engrossed in their learning and want adults to join in with them. They help each other and behave with a maturity which belies their years. They make good progress and achieve well. Their parents and carers have nothing but praise for how quickly their children settle down into their new surroundings. Parents believe, too, that teachers and support staff are approachable and that they keep them well informed about how well their children are doing.

The Reception teacher leads and manages the area well. She ensures that the assessment and recording of pupils' progress is accurate, that children are always safe, and she has a keen understanding of how to enhance the setting. She recognises, for example, that the outdoor area needs to develop further and she has already begun to bring this about.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers that returned the questionnaire are entirely satisfied with their children's experiences at school and comment, 'The headteacher and staff work extremely effectively to ensure that our children are happy, safe, eager to learn and enthusiastic.' Parents are also very impressed with how the school encourages its pupils to live a healthy lifestyle. A very small minority of parents believes that pupils are not making enough progress in school. Inspectors judge that pupils' progress is satisfactory, but agree that it should be accelerated.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodhouses Voluntary Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 136 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	70	26	29	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	76	84	14	16	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	49	54	39	43	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	49	37	41	9	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	49	54	36	40	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	49	38	42	3	3	3	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	60	34	38	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	40	44	39	43	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	48	39	43	4	4	3	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	49	45	50	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	44	42	47	3	3	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	53	59	34	38	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	59	36	40	0	0	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodhouses Voluntary Primary School, Manchester,
M35 9WL

Thank you all so much for welcoming the inspection team to your school. You were so friendly, polite and kind to us and we really enjoyed watching you learn. Your singing of 'Lovely Jubbly in assembly was a privilege to hear and I also enjoyed visiting the Reception class to help them hunt for the Gruffalo. I am especially grateful to those of you who gave up part of your lunchtime on Monday to come and talk to me. I promised I would write you a letter about the inspection, so here goes!

Woodhouses provides you with a satisfactory education but it is improving all the time. You are making better progress in your work because you try so hard and you enjoy the activities in your lessons. Your behaviour in class and around school is good and you are really good at always looking after the younger children. You gave me some good advice about what I should eat (and what I shouldn't!) and you know exactly why it is important to keep yourselves fit. You like the many extra-curricular clubs and activities you have and music, such as the choir and brass band, is very important in your lives. You like to celebrate differences in people, in cultures and religions and you believe that you should, in your own words, 'Dig deeper and you'll find similarities.' You told me that the adults who work with you in school take excellent care of you and you are so right! Your headteacher, the staff and governors are really keen to make Woodhouses even better. I have asked them to help you make more progress in your work by challenging you more in class; encouraging you to find more things out for yourselves; keeping on with the 'I Can Do' mathematics; and giving you opportunities to practise your literacy and numeracy skills in all your subjects. You can help too, by continuing to work hard, like you do in the PLS sessions, for example.

Best wishes to you all and thank you again for being so kind.

Yours sincerely

Jim Kidd

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.