

Wootey Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116037
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338711
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Liz Kounnou

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Dave Harvey
Headteacher	Mrs Heather Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2007
School address	Wootey Way Alton GU34 2JA
Telephone number	01420 82532
Fax number	01420 543345
Email address	adminoffice@wootey-jun.hants.sch.uk

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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

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Thirteen lessons were observed, during which five teachers were seen teaching. One class was taking part in a residential visit during the inspection week and was not observed. Meetings were held with governors, teachers and pupils. Inspectors observed other aspects of the school's work and looked at pupils' books, including those from the class that were not in school, teachers' planning, work displayed around the school, school policies, assessment information and records. Inspectors read questionnaires from 25 parents and carers, 100 pupils in Key Stage 2 and 14 staff, all of which helped to inform the inspection process. The questionnaires were offered to pupils, parents and staff online through the internet as part of a pilot project. No parents used this facility.

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

- the impact of the leadership team in bringing about a consistent improvement in teaching, learning and assessment in all classes
- the quality of school systems to support pupils with special educational needs and those who are falling behind
- the extent to which pupils develop key workplace skills such as teamwork, independence and perseverance in lessons.

Information about the school

Wootey Junior is a smaller-than-average primary school. The number of pupils attending the school has fallen since the last inspection. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils in this group mainly have severe or moderate learning difficulties and/or speech and language difficulties. A few have behavioural problems. Most pupils are of a White British heritage. A very small minority are learning to speak English as an additional language. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2009.

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 satisfactory school is improving under the strong leadership of the headteacher. She has transformed processes for checking how well pupils are doing and this lies at the heart of effective systems for identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school has made some progress since the last inspection and capacity to improve the school further is satisfactory. Progress is accelerating because self-evaluation is realistic and shows a sound understanding of how to move the school forward, but does not yet extend to leaders at all levels in the school. The leadership team has worked successfully in partnership with the local authority to introduce effective strategies to raise attainment in mathematics. At the beginning of the school year, progress in mathematics was still too slow and had not improved significantly since the last inspection. As a result of the strategies implemented since September, progress in the classroom is now good. Improvement in attainment in writing since the last inspection has been slower to achieve. Nonetheless, pupils' attainment is currently broadly average in both reading and writing.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and characterised by high levels of preparation, good relationships so that pupils want to please their teachers, and very positive classroom management that leads to good behaviour in lessons. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly, often providing clear guidance to help them improve. They display targets prominently in classrooms so that pupils know what they should try to do better. Lesson plans provide a lot of detail about the activities that are to take place, but are not fully effective in setting out how these activities will help pupils reach the next steps in learning. Assessment information is not used consistently to inform the planning. Sometimes there is a mismatch between the activities provided and pupils' ability. Pupils who are working at lower levels are given tasks which at times are too difficult for them, but at other times too easy. The most able pupils can spend too long following instructions rather than using their initiative. The level of challenge for this group has not improved substantially since the last inspection.

School leaders identified the need to improve teaching and learning further, by making lessons more active for pupils. This is a key priority in the school's effective development plan. There is a tendency for teachers to take too long explaining things to pupils at the start of lessons, reducing the time available for them to tackle the tasks they are set. This slows the rate of progress. Teachers provide a great deal of help and support for pupils, including for those with special educational needs. On occasions the amount of support provided slows the pace of learning. Too much guidance limits pupils of all abilities from thinking things out for themselves, and making their own decisions, such as how they will plan and record their work.

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A recent school audit looked at how well the school was promoting community cohesion. School leaders found that while there were good links with the local community, very little work had been done to promote pupils' understanding of the wider community in the United Kingdom and around the world. Consequently, pupils have little understanding of cultural diversity. School displays are attractive and of high quality but reflect a narrow range of cultural events. The exception is the French classroom, which exudes Gallic culture.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rate of pupils' progress in English and mathematics and the level of challenge for pupils of all abilities by:
 - reviewing medium-term plans for these subjects by the start of the next school year, so that planning makes clear how pupils in all classes will develop their skills and cover all aspects of the curriculum
 - making better use of the information gained from assessment activities to plan lessons at the right level of challenge for all pupils
 - ensuring that pupils of different abilities work at activities that will help build on their prior attainment and move on to the next steps in learning.
- Improve teaching and learning so that pupils have more opportunities to be active in lessons and develop key skills such as decision making, using their initiative, and working cooperatively by:
 - ensuring that teachers talk to pupils less at the beginning of lessons
 - providing more open-ended tasks for pupils to complete.
- Improve pupils' understanding of diverse cultures, both in the United Kingdom and around the world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall as a result of appropriate interventions tailored to their needs. The few pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language enjoy working in small groups and make satisfactory progress.

Attainment in mathematics is rising quickly. Pupils' confidence in mathematics leads them to work industriously and happily in lessons. Year 6 pupils tackled a task to rotate uneven shapes through 90° and 180° with great care, plotting the new positions on a grid using tracing paper. However, the task lacked challenge for the most able pupils, who were able to do this easily and quickly. By contrast, the most able pupils in Year 4 worked out for themselves how to use a formula to calculate the length of a rectangle when given only the measurements of the breadth and perimeter. They rose to the challenge of teaching other pupils in the set how to do this. Pupils are often very interested in the topics chosen for English lessons. The illustrations in a storybook telling the tale of Bob Robber and Dancing Jane enthralled Year 6 pupils. They learned how to

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use short, punchy sentences for impact in the introduction to their own stories and how to use similes and metaphor to imply the personalities of the characters they wrote about. The few pupils who struggle with their writing enjoyed the story but found the writing task too complex for their skills, while the most able were not challenged to extend their skills to a higher level. Fewer pupils reach the higher levels in writing than might be expected, given their abilities in reading.

Pupils' attendance is above average and they are keen to come to school. They relish the responsibilities they have around the school. The Gardening Club make a very good contribution to the school and local community, diligently working with a community volunteer to improve the grounds. They won a local award and gained silver in a regional gardening contest for their sterling efforts. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all the activities provided to keep them fit and healthy, making full use of equipment and the extensive grounds and eagerly participating in many sports clubs. They report that they eat healthily because 'the dinner lady puts loads of vegetables on your plate'. Pupils feel safe at school and trust teachers to respond to their concerns, such as putting locks on school gates. In lessons and all around the school, almost all pupils behave very well and show unfailing courtesy to visitors. They know right from wrong and socialise well together. On the other hand, pupils' spiritual development is only satisfactory because of a lack of challenge and real excitement in many lessons. Workplace skills are similarly satisfactory owing to missed opportunities for teamwork and decision making.

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	3
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	2

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

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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	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is variable. Teachers often ask pupils to discuss things in pairs and demonstrate their skills to the class, and pupils respond well. Teachers regularly stop and refocus lessons to make sure that all understand what they are doing. Nonetheless, teachers sometimes interrupt the flow of lessons when they stop to explain things that pupils already know. The pace of learning is satisfactory in the main. Preparation of resources is a strength, including small charts that enable pupils to mark for themselves how well they think they have done in lessons. However, the quantity of resources, such as writing frames and other prompts, stuck in pupils' books to support their learning prevents pupils from making decisions and sometimes confuses them.

School leaders are about to review the content of the curriculum in line with new guidance. This provides a good opportunity to improve planning for progress in key skills, particularly in the mixed-age classes, where the older pupils are not always stretched to reach higher levels. Plans for English and mathematics do not provide a clear map of the progress expected in all year groups. Curriculum enrichment includes plenty of extra activities such as residential visits. Year 5 pupils were away on just such a visit during the inspection. Some clubs are so enjoyable that pupils have to be prised away at the end of lunchtimes. The drama club's roars of laughter echoed up the corridor.

Pastoral care is good. Vulnerable pupils are supported well in their learning, often receiving one-to-one tuition to help them improve their progress. Good relationships mean that pupils trust the teaching staff implicitly and share any concerns with them. Pupils know their concerns will be taken seriously. The small number of pupils with behavioural difficulties are supported very well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

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School leaders, including governors, pay good attention to safeguarding issues. The required paperwork is very well organised and continuously updated. New systems such as 'Just a Minute' sessions in classrooms after lunch have enhanced pupils' safety and given them a clear platform to raise any issues of concern. Governors are fully involved in the drive to improve the school and have taken part in extensive training to help them improve their roles. The new headteacher has created a culture of school evaluation based on unambiguous evidence that is helping all leaders to pinpoint the actions needed to improve progress for all. There is clear ambition and support from all staff to improve the school even further, and a clear sense of urgency. Teachers have responded well to training and implemented good strategies to improve the breadth of learning in mathematics. The recently introduced good tracking systems have ensured that staff have a very clear picture of those pupils who are doing well and those who are stuck in their learning or falling behind. Meetings to discuss progress in all classes have ensured that no pupil escapes the net. School leaders have put well-targeted flexible intervention programmes in place to help pupils catch up. Leaders have encouraged and supported staff in using the new national materials for assessing pupils' progress to improve the accuracy of assessment.

Following the school review of community involvement there has been a good start in extending links with other communities. A link with a French primary school adds to the school's good provision for modern foreign languages. School leaders are fully aware there is more to do. A clear plan of action includes widening links to include schools in the United Kingdom with more diverse catchment areas.

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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents who responded are pleased with the school. A few comment positively on the changes the new headteacher has introduced, one saying: 'I feel a definite extra warmth and cheer.' A very small minority of parents raised a variety of concerns. Inspectors agree that teaching and learning and the rate of progress could be better across the school. However, the inspection found that parents receive good information about their children's progress, so that this concern was not well founded. The headteacher has completely reviewed the arrangements for transition from the infant school in partnership with her colleague headteacher, so that parents' concerns about this process will be addressed this year.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wootey Junior 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.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	40	14	56	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	44	14	56	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	44	13	52	0	0	1	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	36	15	60	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	52	11	44	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	44	13	52	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	5	20	19	76	1	4	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)	9	36	12	48	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	32	15	60	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	24	17	68	1	4	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	32	15	60	2	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	40	14	56	0	0	1	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	44	13	52	0	0	1	4

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



18 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wootey Junior School, Alton GU34 2JA

Thank you so much for welcoming us to your school. We very much enjoyed our visit. You worked hard in the lessons we saw. Yours is a satisfactory school and your teachers are helping you to make sound progress. Thank you to all of you who answered the questionnaire. Quite a few of you said that that you felt behaviour in the school could be better. However, I have to say that we found you to be well behaved in all your lessons and very polite.

The things we like most about your school are:

- the Gardening Club's work to improve the school grounds, and the laughter we heard in the Drama Club
- the way you try hard to stay healthy by taking lots of exercise and eating plenty of vegetables
- the neat work that you do in your mathematics books and the thoughtful way that you use the 'I Can' statements to check your work together
- the way that staff and governors ensure that you are safe and well cared for at school.

To help the school become even better, we have asked the governors, headteacher and staff to improve your progress in English and mathematics. You could help by working really hard to reach your targets. We would like you to have the chance to make more decisions in lessons, particularly when you work together in groups. Lastly, we think you could learn more about how other people live and work in the United Kingdom and around the world. You could tell the headteacher some things you would like to find out. Thank you again for talking to us about your school and making us welcome.

Yours sincerely

Liz Kounnou

Lead Inspector

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