

Woodrow First School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116730
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	338880
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Carolyn Carnaghan

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Jackman
Headteacher	Mrs S Hawkes
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2006
School address	Longdon Close Woodrow South Redditch
Telephone number	01527 527619
Fax number	01527 500497
Email address	office@woodrowfs.co.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

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 12 teachers in 14 lessons and spent approximately two thirds of their time observing learning. Meetings were held with teachers, pupils and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised some of its documentation and policies and analysed responses to 77 parental questionnaires.

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

- how well teaching and the curriculum challenge pupils and support their academic progress and personal development
- the effectiveness of care, guidance and support in helping pupils achieve well
- whether provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage matches the needs of all children.

Information about the school

Most pupils at Woodrow First School are from a White British heritage. There is a higher than average proportion with special education needs and/or disabilities, the majority of whom have speech and language difficulties. The school site is shared with a pupil referral unit and a Children's centre. Most pupils come from homes that are near to the school.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This a good school where pupils' achievement and enjoyment are good. Children arrive in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below age-related expectations. Pupils make good progress during their time in school to reach broadly average levels of attainment by the time when they leave in Year 4.

Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good but slows a little during Years 1 and 2. However, pupils' social and personal skills continue developing well and this stands them in good stead for their learning in Years 3 and 4, where progress picks up. The school has found that the arrival of a number of pupils who have not been through Nursery and Reception slows things down and there are extensive initiatives in place to support these children. The Early Years and Key Stage 1 are the bedrock on which good and improving progress is built. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make equally good or better progress than their peers because their needs are very quickly identified and strategies put in place to help them.

The school's outstanding care, guidance and support promotes good learning for all. The Nurture Group, that takes those with predominantly social and behavioural difficulties, effectively supports and cares for pupils that would otherwise find school very hard. Without this support, these children would find it impossible to access the opportunities of learning open to all. Pupils with speech and language difficulties achieve well.

Pupils are very safe in school and their outstanding behaviour underpins this. Pupils' outstanding personal and social skills and their excellent understanding of working together in teams to solve problems, help them develop successfully towards their future adult lives.

Teachers provide generally challenging lessons because they are well planned and target the needs of all pupils. Where lessons are less successful, tasks do not allow pupils to extend their skills far enough and they are not sufficiently placed in the context of the real world. Teachers also do not always focus sufficiently on the step-by-step development of writing skills, building on previous learning, and sometimes opportunities are missed to raise attainment in this area. However, the school has a good capacity to improve, because leaders and managers evaluate the school thoroughly, developing very clear understanding of their pupils, their families and their needs. This means that long-term planning is sharply focused on learning. More effective monitoring by subject leaders illustrates the improving trend.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise attainment by:
 - providing more focused opportunities in lessons for pupils to develop their writing, by building step-by-step on previous learning
 - planning further opportunities for pupils to apply their learning to real-life contexts.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Good achievement for all groups of pupils comes about because most lessons are stimulating and fun. Tasks challenge pupils to take risks, for instance to try out new and difficult vocabulary in English or to express their views about how the school should develop. Pupils work very well together, and they rarely pause before starting what their teacher has asked them to do. They find the challenges in most lessons exciting and their work attests to this. They take great care to finish work neatly and often beautifully, such as in the 'prayer walk' created out of lots of footprints and prayers, written by each member of a class.

Teamwork is often the basis for learning and pupils genuinely take responsibility and care for one another. They act as play buddies in the playground and members of the school council contribute ideas and time to the good of their community. Pupils show how well the school appreciates their ideas and opinions through their confident attitudes and joy in their work. Although attendance is satisfactory and has been an issue for the school, the great majority of pupils have good attendance and say the best part of the school is the lessons.

Pupils enjoy activities that help keep them healthy, both during and after school. They show appreciation for eating healthy food and make good ambassadors by entering sporting competitions for their local area. Their development as well-rounded individuals is good and they take time to enjoy each other's achievements. Pupils enjoy assemblies, celebrating good behaviour, attitudes and successes. They learn about other cultures, such as the local Chinese community, and they have visited local places of worship of a variety of faiths.

A keen emphasis is placed on safety in the school and pupils are very careful about how they move around the site and grounds. Their understanding of how to be safe is excellent, whether it be in lessons, in the playground, on trips out of school or when using the internet. The emphasis on working together, shown in action by pupils, means they are developing good skills that will help them tackle life as adults.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well planned and assessment is used effectively to ensure different activities build on pupils' abilities and prior learning. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will behave well, listen to each other and work cooperatively. Teaching is characterised by lively introductions, clear explanations, and skilful questioning to assess pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support pupils' learning in the classroom and this provides a sensitive and clearly successful element for driving up progress.

Marking is very thorough and provides pupils with essential feedback and ways to improve further, often linked to the learning objectives of the lesson. Teachers' respect for their pupils comes over very clearly in the comments they write in books. Occasionally, however, teaching is less effective, when the pace dips or explanations are imprecise or over long.

The broad and balanced curriculum meets all requirements and is planned to work on a two year rolling programme of themes, tailored to address the needs of each class. Teachers regularly review the curriculum, such as how they will deliver more opportunities to use writing across subjects and in different contexts. This is not always sufficiently apparent, however, and pupils sometimes have trouble understanding how their learning could be used in the real world.

The Nurture Group is an outstanding example of where both teaching and curriculum are successfully adapted to the very particular needs of pupils who have behavioural and emotional difficulties. These pupils are extremely well supported and develop skills and techniques that help them come more easily into the mainstream school environment.

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The outstanding care provided by the school is predicated upon its knowledge and understanding of the pupils and their families and this enables these young people to develop so effectively into well-rounded individuals. The personal, social and health aspects of the curriculum are also strong features that permeate all other aspects school life. These underpin pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes. The teachers and staff make outstanding role models and the ethos and high standards expected of everyone ensure their ongoing ambition.

The curriculum is enriched by many visits and events that help bring learning to life and make it enjoyable, such as to the local church or Redditch town centre, the theatre museum and a residential trip to Malvern. Pupils also enjoy the range of after school activities on offer.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 headteacher and her team help embed ambition and enthuse teachers and pupils. Monitoring of teaching is accurate and leads to good staff deployment. Leaders and managers at all levels plan effectively, often involving partners, such as outside arts and sport practitioners. The headteacher has a very sound understanding of how her pupils are getting on and she uses this to develop and adapt the curriculum, so that the needs of all groups of pupils can be met.

Leaders and managers set targets that are clearly understood by teachers and the close team of teachers and assistants ensure their planning helps deliver opportunities to pupils, some of whom have found education a real challenge. Governors are influential in the life of the school. They are a visible presence around school, sometimes observing lessons, taking walks around classes to follow up on, for example, how well teachers use questioning to engage pupils. They help develop essential strategic planning, based on this good evaluation they undertake, and because they monitor school life well, they are able to challenge staff to do better. Governors have good relationships with parents and carers of pupils and this helps them respond to their needs.

Parents and carers enjoy good relationships with the school and they appreciate how their views are sought and valued. The school supports family learning through workshops on reading and writing. The school has a good relationship with the neighbouring pupil referral unit with which it cooperates regularly, for instance in the provision for individual pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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Transitions between schools are well organised so pupils are confident when they go up to the next stage of their education.

No groups of pupils suffer discrimination and pupils feel their school provides them with enough support and help to overcome any difficulties. The good planning of teachers and managers ensures activities can be adapted for the needs of all, promoting equality of opportunity. Policies relating to the safeguarding of children and child protection are firmly in place and are regularly updated and thoroughly reviewed, to reflect the needs of these pupils and their families. Governors and staff receive regular training to keep them up to date in this regard. The school environment is very safe. All staff are fully vetted and everyone, pupils and staff alike, work towards maintaining this school as a safe and vibrant place of learning.

The school is a key member of its local community and teachers have a clear understanding of the area, helping to make a positive impact. There are many opportunities for pupils to link up with a range of minority ethnic communities and those with different faiths and customs.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

From starting points that are well below the expectations for their age, children make good progress. By the end of Reception, their attainment remains below the national average. Children clearly enjoy their learning, they show curiosity, develop confidence and take an active part in the wide range of well-designed activities on offer to them. They learn how to play cooperatively and safely, to be considerate to each other and to

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take turns.

The learning environment is safe, spacious, welcoming, well-organised and stimulating. Resources are of high quality and well used, both inside and out. There are opportunities to play, explore and learn outdoors. The carefully planned activities promote effective learning and enjoyment. and there is an appropriate mix of activities initiated by the children and by the teachers. ICT is used to enrich children's learning, such as through the use of the white board to reinforce what has gone on outside in the garden: children can water their plants both virtually on the screen inside and actually, outside.

Practices are monitored and updated or adapted to ensure individual needs are met. Observation and assessment are used effectively. The leaders and staff are a cohesive team with a consistency of approach and expectations, placing the well-being and development of children at the heart of their work. Behaviour is well-managed as a positive way of building relationships.

The policies and procedures to keep children safe are well understood and applied by all. The staff team allows children to range over both Nursery and Reception areas and they work efficiently to ensure children are fully included and achieve as well as they can. Induction into the Nursery is very well managed and there are productive relationships with parents and carers.

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

The responses to parental questionnaires returned to the inspectors showed that the majority of parents appreciate the school's activities. Most said their children enjoy learning, feel safe, that teaching is good and that they feel supported at school. Some parents expressed concerns that poor behaviour was not tackled and that their views were not taken into account; the inspection found behaviour was outstanding. The school listens carefully to parents' views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodrow First 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 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 197 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	64	26	34	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	66	22	29	4	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	57	30	39	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	62	28	36	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	69	23	30	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	54	70	22	29	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	61	29	38	1	1	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)	41	53	31	40	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	60	30	39	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	48	30	39	8	10	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	45	33	43	8	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	58	27	35	4	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	70	22	29	1	1	0	0

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.



11 March 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Woodrow First School, Redditch, B98 7UZ

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school recently. We agree with you that your school is good and we are very pleased that you enjoy coming to school, get on well with your tasks and work very well together in teams to solve problems. Your behaviour is outstanding and you understand clearly how to be healthy as you grow up.

We think your teachers make sure you are very safe and that your lessons are interesting, fun and challenging. They care and support you very well in lessons, at playtime and when you go out on trips.

So your school can become better still, we have asked your teachers to help you by:

- planning more opportunities for you to develop your writing, by building step by step on what you know already
- helping you see how your learning fits into the world outside.

You can help by continuing to work as hard as you can in lessons, particularly in your writing.

Yours sincerely

Carolyn Carnaghan

Lead inspector

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