

Woodlands Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120436
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339694
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2009
Reporting inspector	John Paddick

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Daphne Whiteoak
Headteacher	Catherine Stratton
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, and held meetings with staff, governors and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, pupils' assessment records and details of the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspectors also analysed questionnaire returns from parents, staff and pupils.

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

- the starting points of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- current standards in school, particularly in respect of boys' work
- the progress of pupils with special educational needs
- the quality of target setting and monitoring
- plans for community cohesion and their impact.

Information about the school

The school is situated to the west of Lincoln city centre. It is an average sized infant and nursery school whose pupils are mainly from White British backgrounds. There are small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups and a few of these are at an early stage of learning to speak English. Of the school roll, a fifth of the pupils qualify for free school meals, which is more than in most schools. Around a third of the school's pupils have special educational needs, a high proportion. The school has awards for Activemark, a healthy school and basic skills. The school provides accommodation to the YMCA for child care provision and there is a breakfast club funded through St. John's Ambulance. The Woodlands staff and governors do not manage this provision so it does not feature in this report.

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

Woodlands Infant and Nursery School provides its pupils with a good standard of education. It has some outstanding features. The clarity of vision and commitment of leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, are central to the success that the school has in educating its pupils effectively. Nobody is complacent and there is a constant drive for improvement.

During their time in school, all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic heritages and the ones with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Some do better than that and reach high standards. This is because all pupils' individual needs are carefully identified and effective support is provided when necessary. Achievement is good because overall standards rise to average by the end of Year 2 even though many children's skills on entry to the Nursery are exceptionally low.

Pupils enjoy their education and co-operate well with their teachers and classroom assistants. Their behaviour is good in lessons and around school. They are keen to take on responsibilities within school and are beginning to experience the joy of giving by raising money for charity and providing food for the most needy in the locality. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall but they do not have sufficient awareness of the characteristics of multicultural Britain.

A key feature of the school's good quality of teaching is the constant praise, support and feedback that the children receive. Teachers plan lessons very well so that they provide the children with a good variety of experiences. They maintain a good pace so that learning and progress are good. The good basic skills curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of interesting experiences that pupils enjoy and which help to extend their vocabulary and improve writing. The school recognises that there is not an early enough emphasis on literacy. In particular, too little is done to develop speaking and listening skills, particularly for boys. Outstanding care, guidance and support provide a very warm and stimulating atmosphere which is highly motivating for pupils. They say that they feel very safe and secure in school.

Improvements since the previous inspection have been good, particularly in relation to the development of assessment procedures and setting targets for pupils. Average standards by the time pupils leave Year 2 have been maintained. It has effective procedures for self-evaluation and is moving forward quickly. Consequently its capacity for further improvement is good. It provides good value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Provide an increased early emphasis on literacy, especially in relation to boys' acquisition of speaking and listening skills by:
 - more emphasis on a wide range of story telling to increase vocabulary
 - exposure to more unfamiliar words in topic work
 - giving more opportunity to speak in pairs and present to groups of pupils and the whole class.
- Provide pupils with a better introduction to the nature of multicultural Britain by:
 - using topic and themed approaches
 - introducing visual links to other schools through the use of computers or photography.

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

Pupils respond very well to the helpful praise and support that they receive from teachers and classroom assistants. They display good attitudes in class where they are attentive, co-operative and keen to do well. Their good behaviour supports learning in the classroom and helps to ensure that the school runs smoothly. All groups of pupils make good progress in their learning as they move through the school. When they start in the Nursery, although some children have expected skill levels for their age, many are a very long way behind this. Hence, the overall profile of attainment in each intake is extremely low, particularly in relation to vocabulary and use of language. This applies more to boys than girls and tends to act as a brake on progress. By the time pupils have benefited from the school's good teaching for four years, Year 2 pupils reach broadly average overall standards. This represents good achievement. Pupils of all abilities do well. Those who are capable of reaching well above average standards do so and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are enabled to reach their targets too. Although pupils in Years 1 and 2 currently lag behind expectations for their ages, teachers and their assistants are rapidly closing the gap between where pupils are now and where the school wants them to be. The pace of pupils' learning has recently accelerated quickly because the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is often of an exceptional quality. At their current rates of progress, pupils are on track to attain average standards by the end of Year 2, as in previous years.

Pupils say that they feel extremely safe in school and enjoy their education. They develop well socially because of the way that they are encouraged to relate to each other and to adults. In this respect the adults who work with them are excellent role models and do a fantastic job. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy food and the importance of exercise. They are eating more fruit than previously and choose healthier options at meal times. Participation in physical education is enthusiastic and obviously enjoyable. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with particular strengths in cultural aspects through art and music, and spiritual aspects through assembly and an excellent 'spirituality week'. However, pupils do not know enough about the wide range of cultures in modern Britain. Pupils make a good

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contribution to the school community through activities such as playground buddies and paired reading.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	2
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers and classroom assistants know the pupils' needs very well and understand what they need to learn next to ensure that they make good progress. They work extremely well as a team providing effective extra support for pupils who find the work difficult. The atmosphere for learning is excellent because boys and girls respond well to an approach which is frequently compelling. Teachers indicate clearly what pupils need to do to improve their work. They plan a rich variety of activities to interest and engage pupils and to build securely on what they understand and can do at all stages. Lessons usually move along at a brisk pace because teachers have planned to get as much out of the available time as possible. Explanations are clear but occasionally teachers speak and question pupils for too long. This causes a few pupils to let their minds wander. Teaching is always at least satisfactory, usually good and on occasions outstanding so its quality firmly underpins the good progress that pupils make as they move through

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 school.

The curriculum has several outstanding features. It is carefully crafted to ensure that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good gains in their personal development and basic skills. It is enriched by a strong emphasis on art, themes on a wide variety of topics including spirituality, and strong pastoral care which provides a constant safety net to support any pupils having problems. However, too little attention is paid to the early teaching of spoken language skills or to the multicultural nature of Britain.

Care, guidance and support are of the highest order. All required procedures for the safeguarding of children are firmly embedded into the daily routines in the school. The highest quality welfare provision for children is at the heart of the school's work. Without the superb level of pastoral support that the children receive, they would not thrive in their education as they do. Parents fully recognise this and one said, 'I feel the staff go above and beyond being teachers. They ensure they are always available to children and parents alike. You couldn't ask for more'.

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 provides excellent leadership for all aspects of the school's work. She communicates her vision for the school extremely effectively so that managers at all levels know exactly what is required from them in playing their part to ensure that all of the pupils receive the best quality of education possible. Middle and senior managers work well as a team to keep a relentless and effective check on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. An extremely strong team of governors understands very clearly where the school's strong features lie and they know what still needs to be improved. They challenge and probe extremely thoroughly and very effectively monitor the quality of the school's work, often from first hand observation of lessons and communication with parents. Staff morale is very good but teachers and classroom assistants are not sufficiently involved in the production of the very well focused school development plan. Arrangements for the safeguarding of children are outstanding.

The way that the school engages with parents, carers, and other establishments to enhance children's chances is first rate. The partnership with parents underpins the good progress that pupils make, often against all odds. Aspirations are continuously raised so that parents clearly understand what it is possible for their children to achieve

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in their lives after they leave Woodlands. The very many links that the school has with outside agencies are managed superbly so that specialists can provide the best quality help to pupils with special educational needs or disabilities. Excellent links with the junior phase of education help to enable the highest achieving pupils to start Year 3 work early. The school has a good development plan for community cohesion. Currently, its work is extremely strong in relation to what the pupils do within their own school and the immediate locality. Pupils have lots of opportunity to take responsibility in these areas. However, although they learn about a range of cultures through topic work, there is not yet enough on the multicultural make up of Britain.

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	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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

On entry to the Nursery, many children have a very limited vocabulary and find listening and speaking quite demanding. From this low starting point, all groups of children make good progress because they are taught well. Although standards are generally still below average when children leave the Reception class, this represents good achievement. As pupils enter Year 1, areas of relative strength are their mathematical, personal, social and physical development.

The improved organisation of both Reception classes into a shared unit is working well. Children move confidently between both areas. Careful organisation provides some good focused teaching for children of different abilities from both teachers and classroom assistants. The Nursery has just started 'breakfast times' with toast and fruit. These are very relevant and valuable occasions for children who are making good progress in sitting, listening, socialising and improving their language. Members of staff are

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continually thinking of creative ways to engage parents. For example, school books and learning journals are being sent home in order to encourage a two way sharing of learning. Teachers and classroom assistants really do go the extra mile to reach out to parents and bring them in so that they understand how their children are getting on. Leadership is good and there is a highly analytical approach to the use of data about how well children are progressing. However, the pupils' very limited language skills do restrict other areas of their learning. Key examples are their writing, creative development and knowledge and understanding of their world. Teachers recognise this and are beginning to put more emphasis upon developing children's understanding of language through more imaginative play.

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

Parents have an extremely positive view of the school and the quality of education it provides for their children. Inspectors received many written comments praising the school for the quality of care that it offers to all of its pupils. They agree that these positive views are accurate and that the school does provide a good standard of education for its pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodlands Infant and Nursery 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	87	5	11	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	36	80	8	18	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	69	11	24	0	0	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	73	9	20	0	0	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	36	80	6	13	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	82	6	13	0	0	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	78	9	20	0	0	1	2
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)	32	71	5	11	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	71	11	24	0	0	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	58	14	31	0	0	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	71	8	18	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	39	87	3	7	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	48	40	48	0	0	1	2

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.



22 October 2009

Dear Children,

Inspection of Woodlands Infant and Nursery School, Lincoln, LN6 0PF

Thank you very much for your warm welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. A particular thank you goes to those of you who talked to us about your school and to those who read aloud for us or answered our questions while you were working. We enjoyed our visit and you will be pleased to know that Woodlands is a good school.

The school is well led and managed so it runs smoothly on a day to day basis. It provides you with good quality lessons that pitch the work at the right level to enable you to make good progress. Your teachers and classroom assistants know you all very well and care for you deeply. They do their very best to ensure that all of you do well and they are there to help you if you have problems of any sort. We are glad to hear that you enjoy school and we wish to congratulate you on your good manners and the way that you co-operate in class. We know that you enjoy school because your teachers make lessons interesting and because they are very kind and helpful to you. The individual help that teachers and classroom assistants give you really does help you to do well.

We have asked your headteacher, the staff and governors to do two things to make your school even better. These are to:

- give you more opportunity to develop your vocabulary and improve your listening and speaking skills
- enable you to learn more about people from all of the different cultures that we find in Britain today.

With very best wishes for the future,

Yours sincerely

John Paddick

Lead inspector

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