

Woodcote Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123040
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	340264
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Georgina Beasley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cathy Gordon
Headteacher	Chris Field
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors spent a third of their time looking at learning in lessons. They observed 13 lessons taught by seven teachers. Inspectors met with staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at assessment information, pupils' writing and project work, individual education plans, teachers' planning, monitoring and evaluation documents, the school development plan and policies and procedures. Fifty six questionnaires from parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- how well the school uses assessment information to help pupils to learn effectively
- the challenge given to higher attainers to help them achieve as well as they can
- how effectively the school helps the youngest pupils to make progress
- pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures and communities other than their own.

Information about the school

Nearly all pupils in this village school are from White British backgrounds. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, mostly for speech and language difficulties. Very few speak English as an additional language. Children start in the Reception class either in September or January each year and most attend full time after a few weeks. A pre-school and after-school club operate every day on the school site. Both have their own voluntary management committees and so their work is covered in a separate 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

This is a good school. The headteacher articulates his vision for the school's development clearly and so there is a shared commitment and common purpose from all staff, governors, parents and carers and pupils to the school's continued improvement. Good leadership and management from all staff with responsibilities ensure actions focus on the pupils' needs. Governance is satisfactory; the governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. The whole staff team is constantly looking for ways to further improve learning and progress. The school's evaluations of its work are accurate and steps to improve its work effective. Previous weaknesses in teaching have been tackled effectively and the quality of teaching throughout the school is consistently good. There is good capacity to improve. Most parents recognise the strong improvements since the previous inspection, especially in relation to how the school puts the children's welfare and progress at the forefront of its work. They value the accessibility of the headteacher and staff, and the numerous opportunities for them to support the school's work.

Pupils have positive attitudes and behave well. They enjoy school greatly because the curriculum is interesting and adults give them the support and guidance they need to achieve well. Robust safeguarding procedures and good care and guidance for personal development ensure pupils' respectful attitudes, and good consideration for their own and others' safety. Pupils lead healthy and active lives and have good personal and academic skills to stand them in good stead for later life. Pupils play an active role and make a good contribution to the school and village communities, but more could be done to raise their awareness, knowledge and understanding of the diversity of British and world cultures and communities.

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class where their love of learning begins. The school nurtures this enjoyment well and pupils make good progress towards their targets. Attainment has improved strongly in all year groups over the last three years and is now securely average at the end of Year 6. Attainment in reading and science is above average due to the opportunities for practical investigations and problem-solving activities, and for individual and group research for the numerous projects pupils complete. Nevertheless, work set for pupils does not always provide them with enough challenge, especially in mathematics and writing. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for their own learning and know what a successful piece of work should look like at the end of lessons. There is not always enough time in some lessons for pupils to write at length or to check that their work is always presented neatly, with correct spellings and punctuation.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Improve attainment and learning by:
 - ensuring that teaching provides sufficient challenge for every pupil, particularly in mathematics and writing
 - giving pupils enough time to write and check that they use correct spellings and punctuation and consistently present their work neatly.
- strengthening pupils' learning, awareness and involvement in cultures and communities other than their own.

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

Pupils enjoy school. This is reflected in the school's friendly atmosphere and pupils' above average attendance. Pupils know right from wrong. Inspectors agree with those that said that behaviour is 'generally good but a few pupils can be a nuisance which spoils it a bit for the rest'. It is clear through talking to pupils that they know any concern will be dealt with promptly. Pupils make healthy food choices at lunchtimes and enjoy the active playtimes. Football and tag rugby matches with other local schools give pupils a sense of pride in their sporting accomplishments. Building igloos during the recent snowfalls is one example of pupils' good ability to work collaboratively in their school teams. Pupils have an acute understanding of their personal achievements and good respect for others but their knowledge and understanding of cultures other than their own are more limited. Pupils learn to become good citizens through numerous activities, including school council work, acting as playtime buddies and reading partners, organising charity and other fund-raising events, and the delivery of harvest parcels to villagers.

Achievement is good and pupils make good progress in lessons and from their starting points. There has been year-on-year improvement over the last three years due to more targeted teaching that meets the needs of pupils more effectively. Attainment is average overall at the end of Year 6, but above average in reading and science because more pupils reach higher than average levels in these subjects. Pupils have good computer skills due to numerous and varied opportunities to develop these skills through independent research and presentations of project work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English in addition to another language make good progress and most reach expected levels by the end of Year 6. The highest attainers make good progress. Lessons do not always challenge the small number of pupils who make satisfactory progress but who are capable of achieving higher levels, especially in mathematics and writing. Pupils structure their writing well and express ideas creatively and imaginatively using rich vocabulary. Spellings and punctuation are not always accurate and presentation is not always neat. Occasionally, pieces of work are only a couple of sentences long as it takes time for some pupils to put pen to paper.

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	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
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching meets the needs of pupils in lessons through targeted support, practical investigations and interesting activities. This was demonstrated in a mathematics lesson where pupils used interlocking shapes to build three-dimensional models to deepen their understanding of the shapes' attributes and so help them remember the names. Teachers ask questions that probe pupils' understanding and so help them to think through and solve problems on their own. They use assessment information well to plan learning that meets most pupils' specific needs. An effective team of teaching assistants ensures that the subsequent targeted support is particularly beneficial for pupils who need extra help to learn well. While there are good levels of challenge for most pupils in lessons, sometimes there is still not enough to enable every pupil capable of harder work to reach their full potential. Teachers make their expectations of pupils, in terms of the quality of work produced, very clear. Teachers' focused feedback in lessons and in written comments on pupils' work help guide pupils' own assessments of their learning. Clear success criteria ensure self- and peer-assessments are focused when used. Pupils do not always have enough time in lessons to check that their work is up to the expected standard, especially in writing.

The curriculum is broad and enriched through a varied range of visits and extra-curricular activities which bring learning to life. Pupils throughout the school have the opportunity to take part in sporting events. Independent projects provide good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and computer skills in different contexts. Pupils like The Big Write lessons because 'We have more time to write and so feel more relaxed to think, to get our ideas down and then check the accuracy of our writing.'

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The school provides good levels of care for pupils' health and welfare. Close links with the local secondary school ensure pupils are confident to move to Year 7. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support and guidance through small group interventions or individual tutoring to enable them to play a full role in lessons and to learn effectively. Staff follow the advice from specialists to provide especially effective support for pupils with speech and language difficulties.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There are effective systems to monitor and review the school's work. School leaders use the information from regular checks of pupils' progress to adjust curriculum and lesson planning and to put additional support in place for those pupils whose achievement seems to be slipping back. This close monitoring ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Overall, the school's promotion of equal opportunities is good. While the school notes whether it is on track to reach its end-of-year targets, when it exceeds these, it does not always revise them with more challenging ones. School leaders communicate their vision clearly to staff, who feel valued but say that they would appreciate greater involvement in evaluating the school's work. The governing body ensures safeguarding arrangements are robust and effective. Governors have felt better informed in recent years and so are now beginning to hold the school to account more effectively, as well as becoming more involved in strategic planning. The school has completed an audit of its community involvement and has an agreed action plan for improvement. There are some opportunities for pupils to get involved in learning about cultures and countries other than their own, but these are not planned sufficiently well to ensure pupils' awareness, knowledge and understanding of wider British and global communities are secure. Partnerships are good and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

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

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have resulted in good improvements to children's learning and development since the previous inspection. From starting points that are broadly in line with typical expectations, the children make good progress and in a short time become confident learners. Although some only have two terms in the Reception class, most reach the expected goals in all areas of learning by the end of the year. The vibrant classroom and outdoor area provide a welcoming and supportive learning environment for children and their parents and carers. Adults plan learning effectively so that the organisation and availability of space and resources enable children to follow their own ideas and lines of inquiry.

The children make good progress because adults build learning systematically. They make careful observations of the children at work and at play and so know clearly what they have achieved so far and what they need to do next to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. Adults intervene at the right moment with questions, adding resources or joining in with games to extend ideas and so build learning effectively. Parents and carers contribute to the assessments of their children's learning and receive detailed information about their achievements so they can support learning at home. Good links with local pre-school provision ensure that the school, children and parents know each other before they join.

The children make very good progress in their personal development because of well-organised opportunities for them to develop their own ideas, and to learn together through play. The children confidently ask for help, show delight when they have achieved something new and know where to find support to help them achieve something they find challenging. For example, there was evident delight when one boy managed to roll a car tyre over a challenging obstacle course that the children had built themselves, and another shout went up when a group of children finally managed to build a cylinder of sand that stood over 25 centimetres tall. Great collaboration and cooperation was needed to complete these tasks successfully. Specific focus on building

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the children's knowledge of letters and sounds and regular opportunities to listen to stories and share books with an adult, older pupils and each other result in very good progress in reading.

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

About a third of parents and carers returned questionnaires. The responses indicate a great deal of satisfaction with the school, especially in the amount of improvement since the previous inspection in all aspects of its work. Inspectors agree that improvement has been good. A few parents and carers raised concerns about bullying and behaviour. Incidents of bullying and subsequent actions are logged and dealt with effectively. Pupils who were interviewed all said that adults deal with concerns and bullying straight away and, should it be necessary, continue to do so until issues are resolved. Inspectors judged that behaviour is generally good, although a small number of pupils do need regular reminders to behave well. While most parents and carers think the school takes account of their concerns, a small number feel that their concerns were not always followed up. Inspectors agree with those parents and carers who welcome the accessibility of the headteacher and staff should they need further information. One said that they liked the headteacher being around at the start and end of the day for informal contact, and another that 'staff are friendly and very approachable'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodcote 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 175 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	64	18	32	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	75	14	25	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	50	25	45	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	38	32	57	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	31	55	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	45	28	50	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	55	25	45	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)	21	38	26	46	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	52	24	43	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	46	22	39	6	11	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	52	18	32	5	9	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	38	68	16	28	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	66	15	27	2	4	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.



20 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodcote Primary School, Woodcote, RG8 0QY

Thank you for your warm welcome when I visited with two inspectors last week. Thank you especially to those of you who told us so much about your school.

We have decided that Woodcote is a good school. All of the adults who work in your school work closely with your parents and carers to help you make good progress, especially in your reading, science and computer skills. Thank you for sharing your project work that shows you are using your skills in lots of different ways. The interesting curriculum and trips, and the practical investigations you do in class, help to make your learning fun and so you all concentrate well in lessons. Your behaviour is good, although a few of you could try a bit harder to be kind to others for all of the time. Congratulations to all of you who take part in sporting events. I know this is nearly all of you at some time. This and choosing healthy foods for lunch and joining in with all of the games at playtimes helps you to keep fit and healthy. All of the adults in your school want you to do well and so work closely together to make sure that you do. With good leadership from your headteacher, they keep a close check on your achievements and plan lessons that help you build on your learning. They give you good support and guidance about how to do this and so you are very good at explaining what a successful piece of work looks like. You can help by always checking that you have achieved this before deciding you have finished.

There are two things that we asked your headteacher and staff to improve. We have asked them to think of ways to help some of you to do even better in mathematics and to give you more time to write and check your work in some other lessons, just like you do in The Big Write lessons. We have asked that you learn more about the different cultures and communities in Britain and the rest of the world. You can help by asking lots of questions that help you understand what the word 'diversity' means.

Thank you again for making our visit so memorable.

Yours sincerely

Georgina Beasley Lead inspector

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