

Woodfield Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132818
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	341351
Inspection dates	22–23 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Kevin Sheldrick HMI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	572
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shirley Jones
Headteacher	Alwyne Jolly
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 27 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation relating to planning, monitoring, safeguarding, communications with parents, records of governor meetings and 96 parental questionnaires.

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

- The achievement of pupils, particularly those who have English as an additional language.
- The extent teaching is enabling all groups of pupils to achieve well.
- How effectively the school meets the needs of all pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable.
- The extent to which the school is able to analyse all of the information about its effectiveness and arrive at a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses.

Information about the school

The school is larger than most middle schools. The majority of pupils live in the Greenlands and Lodge Park wards although a small minority comes from other parts of Redditch. One in five pupils is eligible for free school meals, higher than the national average. One in three pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is higher than average, although the proportion with statements of special educational needs is average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is average.

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

Woodfield is an effective school that continues to improve and provides a good standard of education. All groups of pupils achieve well and all other outcomes are either good or outstanding. The school's outstanding curriculum, and care, support and guidance contribute to the highly effective social, spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils. All groups of pupils and their parents stressed how safe and secure they feel at this happy school. The school has extremely effective arrangements for engaging with parents. The school is relentless in its quest to involve all parents in ensuring pupils achieve well and are well cared for. The school has achieved its aim of being 'a warm and welcoming environment in which all pupils will want to take advantage of the opportunities to learn'. A dedicated physical education department ensures many pupils take well above the minimum recommended amount of exercise. This provision, together with the highly effective strategies to ensure pupils are very aware how to be healthy, led inspectors to give the highest grade for this aspect. Behaviour is good, and pupils are extremely courteous, polite and very proud of their smart, well-cared for school campus. Pupils have ample opportunity to contribute to the community through raising money for charity and they have provided leadership in addressing environmental issues, for instance by developing a recycling centre. The school council has its own budget which it has used to enhance pupils' well-being, for instance through the creation of an environmental area with a pond and the purchase of outdoor play equipment. Older pupils expressed a strong desire to participate further in activities that will allow them to influence learning.

Pupils progress well because teaching is good. In the more effective lessons teachers ensure pupils are working at the highest level of which they were capable. A small minority of lessons are less effective because pupils do not progress quickly enough onto more challenging tasks. Self-review is broadly accurate and has resulted in important improvements to teaching and the curriculum. However, evaluation is not always linked to really stretching targets or sufficiently analytical to enable leaders to fine-tune initiatives so that they have the maximum impact on the progress made by different groups of pupils. Nevertheless, all groups of pupils consistently make good progress and attainment is improving. All of this success is ultimately because of the effectiveness of leadership and management in the school. Although there is scope for further improvements in self-review, there is a good track record of improvement, and leaders have overcome barriers preventing some groups of pupils progressing well. These important improvements are evidence that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement. There are developing strengths in how the school is promoting community cohesion, for instance in the immediate locality and in terms of international

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links. However, the current strategy does not take sufficient account of the national dimension.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of Year 8, further improve pupil progress by:
 - ensuring pupils are always clear about what they must do to achieve their very best
 - avoiding unnecessary consolidation of work at levels pupils have already reached
 - increasing the opportunities pupils have to influence learning.
- Improve community cohesion by:
 - addressing more fully the issues relevant to the national context
 - by January 2010 develop further the existing audit to better cover the national dimension
 - by March 2010 ensure actions are being undertaken that will further improve community cohesion
 - by September 2010 undertake a review of the initial impact of the actions taken so far.
- Improve self-review by:
 - ensuring information about the progress being made by different groups throughout the school is readily available
 - analysing the full range of evidence and linking this to even more stretching targets
 - involving governors more in critically evaluating all aspects of the school's work so they can have more influence on the strategic direction of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy learning and hold positive views about their lessons, particularly in Years 5 to 7. From below average starting points, pupils progress well because in the majority of lessons teachers make their expectations very clear, and effective strategies are used to enable pupils to appreciate the levels they are working at. In a small minority of lessons observed by inspectors, pupils made satisfactory progress largely because there was not sufficient emphasis on pupils being able to achieve at a higher level and too much time was devoted to consolidation. Published assessment information available before the inspection led inspectors to investigate the progress made by pupils for whom English is an additional language. Inspectors found that these pupils progress as well as others in Years 5 and 6 because of the effective additional support they receive. The effective work the school does to improve basic literacy skills has been instrumental in ensuring these pupils make particularly good progress in Years 7 and 8. Pupils with special

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education needs and /or disabilities make good progress. Those receiving additional external support, or who are part of the nurture group progress particularly well because their needs are carefully identified and support is very well matched accordingly.

Evidence from the school's assessment information, lessons and in pupils' books indicates average levels of attainment by the time pupils reach Year 8. Tests administered by the school in Year 8 point to steadily rising standards, as does performance in the national tests at Year 6. The school ensures a high degree of consistency across different subjects. Science has consistently performed very well because of the highly enjoyable investigative approach established in this subject. Standards in physical education are also above average and this subject makes a very important contribution to healthy outcomes for pupils.

Inspectors only saw one example of less than perfect behaviour. Behaviour is good overall, although older pupils referred to silliness in a minority of less effective lessons where pupils were not actively involved. Pupils are polite and courteous and expressed strong opinions about how they would challenge any unfairness including any remarks that are hurtful to others. Bullying and racism very occasionally occur but this is dealt with promptly and effectively. The school site is very secure, pupils know how to evaluate risks and they spoke of how easy it is to speak to someone about their concerns. Although attendance is satisfactory, the vast majority of pupils attend very well and punctuality is spot-on. Pupils' preparation for their future economic well-being is good because the curriculum ensures the development of good independent learning and team work skills.

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	1
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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<p>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</p> <p>Taking into account: Pupils' attendance¹</p>	<p>2</p> <hr/> <p>3</p>
<p>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</p>	<p>1</p>

How effective is the provision?

In most lessons, pupils behave very well because teachers ensure they are motivated and actively engaged in learning. The school uses the subject expertise of teachers well and this inspires pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6. There is substantial additional adult support and the small class sizes allow work to be better matched to the needs of different ability pupils. In the most effective lessons, teachers minimise the times when pupils are passively listening so they can concentrate on discussing ideas and focus on tasks well matched to their abilities. The questions teachers ask are adjusted in light of pupils' responses and a variety of approaches are used to ensure all pupils have to think about the key ideas. Pupils generally are very positive about their teachers and how well they are helped to learn new things. Although teaching is good overall, particularly in Years 5 and 6, a small minority of teaching is satisfactory. Pupils are sometimes too passive for extended periods of time as they listen to the teacher. This can make it difficult for the teaching assistants to provide support. Most pupils know how to improve their work further and what they have done well, because marking is good and has improved since the last inspection. Less effective teaching did not always ensure pupils were clear about what they must do to achieve their very best.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs very well indeed. The current literacy focus is of particular benefit to those pupils who speak English as an additional language. Teachers use resources creatively, often making links to web-sites so pupils are able to independently pursue lines of enquiry at home or in the very well used library.

The development of the 'challenge' days and the Friday afternoon 'Preparation for life' sessions has resulted in some memorable experiences for pupils and staff. This arrangement has also enabled staff to work off timetable and across age groups on a range of innovative and often creative activities. Development days enable a specific subject to become the focus of a whole day project, such as happened in French recently. A bank account information and communication technology (ICT) activity has helped teach pupils about looking after and handling money. Pupils talked enthusiastically about many of the experiences they have had at school, for instance boys in Year 8 said they would never forget the time when they designed a restaurant because they felt the activity was so real. Pupils experience many visits, including residential experiences and are involved in a wide range of after-school and lunchtime activities. These include family opportunities such as that for aerobics after school. The records the school keeps point to the strong involvement of all groups of pupils in extra-curricular activities. There are effective programmes to help pupils understand about how to work well with others and how they can keep themselves safe and

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healthy. The effectiveness of the curriculum has resulted in the school deservedly gaining nationally recognised awards for the quality of its basic skills teaching, arts and sports.

The excellent care, guidance and support stems from the school's strong commitment to ensuring the well-being of pupils. The school provides a wide variety of support that is very well targeted to pupils' needs. The school tracks all the outcomes for individual pupils and responds very speedily as soon as there is the slightest hint that pupils may not achieve their targets. The school involves parents very well. As one parent commented, 'The school has been proactive in helping me support my son. They were very supportive and I felt I could approach them at any time if I needed to.' The support provided includes nurture groups, well coordinated support from outside the school, in-class support from teaching assistants and an extensive mentoring programme. Some younger pupils particularly appreciate the additional support provided by Year 8 pupils who undertake a range of tasks such as listening to readers. Pupils at risk are identified well in advance of transfer and receive additional support to ensure a smooth transition.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

There is a strong commitment across the entire school to ensuring improvement. The school is effective in promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination because it takes the actions needed to ensure different groups achieve positive outcomes. The monitoring of lesson planning is good because where weaknesses are recognised, such as in the clarity of lesson objectives, follow-up work shows how teachers have responded to this and improved their practice. The school is clear about the need to develop an even more sophisticated approach to monitoring linked to even more stretching targets. The school is pro-active in working with partners in order to improve, for instance in trying to ensure teachers have confidence in the progress records that arrive from first schools.

Governors are well organised, regularly visit the school and most know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They bring useful expertise to the leadership of the school, for instance financial acumen. Governors hold the school to account for tackling weaknesses by ensuring key improvement issues are included in performance management. Governors are not yet fully involved in evaluating some important aspects of the school such as the progress of different groups and safeguarding. The school's

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vetting arrangements meet government requirements and the school adopts good practice across all areas of its safeguarding work. Pupils and parents' views about safeguarding are considered and pupils' knowledge of how to stay safe is first class. The school's excellent links with other key agencies are used well to reduce the risk of harm to pupils.

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
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

Views of parents and carers

Most parents are happy with their child's experience at school. All parents who responded think their child is safe at school and is well prepared for the future. The vast majority of parents responded positively to all the questions in the Ofsted questionnaire. Parents praised the school's work in helping them understand how they can support their children's achievement and well-being.

A very small minority of parents felt the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors investigated this issue and concluded that the school has an effective range of strategies for dealing with behaviour. A few parents disagreed that the school effectively helped their child have a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors came to the conclusion that the school's work in this areas is highly effective and results in many pupils making healthy choices. Of the few comments made by parents, almost all were supportive of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodfield Middle 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 572 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	40	47	49	6	6	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	48	50	46	48	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	43	46	48	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	33	56	58	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	42	51	53	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	35	54	56	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	31	59	61	5	5	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)	26	27	60	63	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	36	49	51	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	40	41	43	8	8	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	39	43	48	6	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	43	45	46	48	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	36	47	59	0	0	1	1

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools 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.



25 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodfield Middle School, Redditch, B98 7HH

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. I would particularly like to thank those pupils we interviewed for their perceptive comments about the school.

You told us that you thought your school was good and we agree with you. We think the school lives up to its aim of being ' a warm and welcoming environment in which all pupils will want to take advantage of the opportunities to learn'. These are the main conclusions about your school.

Almost every pupil behaves well and is polite and courteous.

Pupils from all backgrounds achieve well and attainment in the school is improving.

You know what you need to do to live healthily and many of you consistently make healthy choices.

You feel safe because the school looks after you so well.

The school provides a high quality education that includes a very interesting curriculum, with many of you taking advantage of the many after-school activities.

Teaching is good, as are the leadership and management of the school.

We have asked your school to make the quality of education even better by addressing three issues.

Ensure teachers make it clear to you how you can produce the very best work in lessons and reduce the occasions where you sit listening to teachers without being actively involved.

Improve community cohesion by working to bring about better relations between communities in the United Kingdom.

Ensure school leaders monitor even more effectively so that they identify what is needed to enable you to make outstanding progress.

You can help by seeking clarification about what you must do to produce the best possible work in lessons. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Sheldrick

Her Majesty's Inspector

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