

Woodfield Academy

Studley Road, Redditch, B98 7HH

Inspection dates

26–27 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All groups of pupils achieve well and make good progress from their starting points. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make equally good progress to that of others.
- The academy has successfully eliminated the gaps in performance between pupils eligible for free school meals and other pupils.
- By the end of Year 8, pupils' attainment overall is broadly that expected for their age, and is well above expected levels in mathematics. Pupils' achievement is rising year on year.
- In English and across the curriculum, pupils' reading and writing skills are well developed.
- The quality of teaching is good with many examples of outstanding practice. Teaching is improving and most is demanding, exciting and gets the most out of all groups of pupils.
- Pupils behave well and feel very safe. They have a good understanding of the academy's high expectations of behaviour.
- The headteacher's great determination and drive to ensure that all pupils succeed is supported very well by senior and subject leaders.
- Leaders, managers and governors have an accurate understanding of the academy's strengths and have taken decisive and effective action to improve the quality of teaching and to raise pupils' achievement further.
- This is an academy that continues to make prompt progress on its journey to excellence.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some lessons, there is insufficient challenge, particularly for the more-able pupils.
- Questions are not always used well enough by teachers to encourage pupils to think deeply.
- Teachers do not always make sure that pupils respond to what has been asked of them when their work is marked.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 25 lessons, including eight that were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and visited classrooms with senior staff to look at how well disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs were learning. Inspectors also visited lessons with senior staff to look at pupils' progress in mathematics, English and science, and at learning in a wide range of other subjects.
- Discussions were held with senior and subject leaders, staff, a member of the governing body and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at its self-evaluation and planning documents, external evaluations of its work and examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors took note of the 11 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' and pupils' responses to the academy's own recent surveys, and written comments made by parents while attending parents' evenings, were considered. Inspectors also analysed the responses to inspection questionnaires returned by 48 staff.

Inspection team

Michael Merchant, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kevin Harrison

Additional Inspector

Hilary Green

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Woodfield Academy converted to become an academy in June 2012. When its predecessor school, Woodfield Middle School, was previously inspected by Ofsted in September 2009, it was judged to be good.
- The academy is a larger than average-sized middle school.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. About one in five pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which are pupils of Pakistani heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional funding from the government for some groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those with a parent in the armed services) is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is well-above average.
- The academy does not use any alternative provision (regular learning at places away from the school site) for its pupils.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that pupils make consistently rapid progress and attainment rises further by:
 - making sure that all teachers plan tasks that get the most out of all pupils in every lesson, especially the more-able pupils
 - checking that all pupils respond to the very helpful marking provided by most teachers
 - making sure that all teachers use questions in lessons which encourage all pupils to think deeply and give full answers
 - making sure that teachers have more chances to share what works best in their lessons with each other and also to observe what works well in similar schools.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the academy in Year 5 with skills and abilities in English and mathematics that are generally well below those typical of their age group. Many have particularly weak skills in reading.
- All groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress overall and make rapid progress in mathematics and reading. This fast pace of learning reflects the success of the academy's commitment to ensuring that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- By the end of Year 8, pupils' attainment, overall, is just above that typical of their age group, and is getting better year on year. Many pupils make particularly impressive gains in mathematics. The academy's information shows that most pupils are currently working at mathematics levels that are, on average, over a year ahead of where most pupils typically are nationally.
- These rapid gains in attainment and progress, however, are not consistent across all year groups and subjects and so pupils' overall progress is good rather than outstanding. In Year 5, most make the progress expected of them. Progress is good throughout Year 6 and, in Years 7 and 8, pupils make rapid gains.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make consistently good and, sometimes, outstanding progress. Teachers and other adults prepare work for these pupils at precisely the right level. Carefully targeted support means that they make at least good progress in relation to their starting points.
- Across the academy, teachers are very aware of the need to develop the reading, writing and speaking skills of pupils and they plan carefully to use these skills in lessons. Very well-considered and highly effective reading support starts in Year 5 for any pupils who need it. As a result, pupils read, write and speak with increasing confidence as they move through the academy.
- The academy makes good use of funding received through the Year 7 catch-up programme, extra money from the government to support those pupils who attained below-average levels in English and mathematics in Year 6. Extra classes and additional support are provided for such pupils and many make fast gains in acquiring number, reading and writing skills.
- The academy has used its pupil premium funding to introduce a range of measures, such as one-to-one tuition and additional staffing in some classes, to help eligible pupils. As a result, those eligible for this additional government funding make rapid progress through Years 7 and 8. They attain very similar levels in English and mathematics by the end of Year 8 as other pupils and make very similar rates of progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers expect much of their pupils and there is a very positive climate that encourages good learning in the academy.

- Where teaching is not yet outstanding, learning is held back because:
 - teachers do not get the most out of every pupil because all pupils complete the same task and these are not always hard enough for the more-able pupils
 - questions are not always used as well as they could be to probe pupils' understanding and to prompt them to fully explain their answers
 - although most marking is thorough, teachers do not always check to see that pupils are acting on the advice previously given.
- In the most effective teaching, teachers' use of questions to extend pupils' understanding is masterly. They provide extensive opportunities for pupils to work independently and think for themselves.
- Because lessons are lively and imaginative, pupils' interests and enthusiasm are captured well. As a result, pupils put a great deal of effort into their work and keep up good levels of concentration.
- Most lessons are purposeful because teachers make it clear to pupils what they are trying to achieve. Pupils learn fastest when they are busy and active in lessons, finding things out for themselves or talking about their work with their classmates.
- Teaching is most effective when the work set in lessons helps pupils of all abilities to do well. Here, pupils become absorbed in the tasks, relish the challenge and work flat out, putting energy and thought into all they do.
- An example of teaching which enthused pupils to learn actively was seen in an exciting and high-powered Year 8 English lesson. All pupils made exceptional gains in their skills of writing dialogue based on a character in a graphic novel. They eagerly researched aspects of such novels and shared readily with each other, with considerable feeling and empathy, the experiences of their chosen characters through carefully chosen and skilfully written dialogue.
- In mathematics, teachers use their strong subject knowledge and understanding to plan for imaginative and engaging activities. This was well displayed in a very successful Year 8 mathematics lesson. Pupils were captivated and enthused by the sheer speed and demand of the mental arithmetic tasks set by the teacher. They relished the intellectual demand of the activity and took great pride in completing the task.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with teachers to ensure that materials are suitably adapted for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The majority of pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. They respond well to the effective systems the academy uses to manage behaviour.
- Good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to their consistently good behaviour around the academy and in enrichment activities and assemblies.
- Pupils from different cultural and religious backgrounds get on well together and appreciate the harmonious climate created in the academy.

- Pupils are invariably polite, courteous and friendly, offering help and assistance to visitors and other pupils.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in the academy and if they have a problem, they know they can talk to a member of staff who will help them solve it.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and say that the use of racist or homophobic language is extremely rare. If it does occur, pupils are confident that it will be challenged and dealt with successfully by staff. The academy actively encourages all pupils to express their individuality and appreciate that people are different.
- Attendance is, currently, broadly average but is improving for all groups of pupils. Most pupils come to school regularly and are punctual.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because pupils are, sometimes, passive in lessons and a very small minority occasionally misbehave, which spoils the learning and enjoyment of others.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, key leaders and the governing body set consistently high expectations for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They have been entirely successful at managing the development of a new academy community.
- Good systems are in place to allow leaders to have an accurate and realistic view of how well the academy is performing. Action plans set out clear priorities and underpin the drive for improvement. Strong systems for checking on the performance of pupils and staff are helping to support continuous improvement.
- Leaders are quick to recognise and praise the good work of staff and pupils and are alert to situations where people need more advice and guidance. Because staff benefit from supportive feedback, a climate has been created where everyone is trying hard to make the academy even better. Consequently, teamwork is strong and pupils' progress accelerating.
- Pupils are given challenging academic targets that have raised their ambitions. Leaders at all levels make good use of information on pupils' progress to check any slowing down. Checks are followed up swiftly with well-thought-out support that helps pupils to catch up.
- Teaching has improved because leaders carry out rigorous checks on its quality. This leads to staff training and support that is well matched to the areas that need to improve. Staff are gaining confidence in leading staff training, although teachers do not always share what works well with each other in order to improve teaching further.
- The headteacher has ensured that there are secure procedures in place to make sure that teachers are accountable for their performance. Staff are not allowed to be rewarded financially unless they are successful in helping pupils make at least good progress.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously pursued. No pupil is denied access to anything the academy has to offer. Leaders ensure that there is no discrimination against any pupil.
- The way in which subjects are organised provides well for the needs, interests and aspirations of

all pupils.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors bring a good range of relevant skills and have had training on their roles. They have high ambitions for the academy, hold leaders closely to account for the academy's performance and are kept well informed about pupils' achievement compared to the national picture. They know where the best teaching is in the academy and, as a result, are in a strong position to contribute to its development and improvement planning. Governors have contributed fully to the discussions on how the pupil premium funding should be spent and have kept a careful check on the impact of the extra support and guidance provided for eligible pupils. They set ambitious targets for managing the headteacher's performance of his responsibilities and hold him to account for the way in which increases in pay are used to reward teachers. They know how any underperformance is being tackled. Governors meet all their responsibilities well, including national requirements for safeguarding pupils.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138208
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	412948
Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	560
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dan Hartles
Headteacher	Jason Beardmore
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	01527 527081
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