

The Woodside Primary Academy

Wood Street, Walthamstow, London, E17 3JX



Inspection dates

24– 25 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Teaching is not consistently good across all year groups. Not all teachers use activities and approaches that capture pupils' interests and motivate them to do well.
- Learning slows because pupils lose interest and talk to their friends. As a result their behaviour requires improvement.
- Some teachers do not use their knowledge of what pupils know and can do to pitch work at the right level, especially for the more able. They do not always provide sufficient resources to allow pupils to deepen their understanding and allow them to think of their own ideas.
- Pupils' knowledge and skills in writing and mathematics are not as good as they should be. Marking varies in quality between writing and mathematics and between teachers.
- Activities in the Nursery and Reception are not always planned with a clear sense of what children are to achieve. There are not enough opportunities for them to develop their vocabulary in spoken and written English.
- Procedures to ensure that governors and staff share the high aspirations for pupils' achievement contribute fully to its improvement and put policies into practice consistently are at an early stage of development. This is at a time when staff turnover is high.
- While there have been improvements this year leaders and managers have not been fully effective in ensuring consistently good achievement and teaching.
- The achievements of pupils with serious disabilities or special educational needs are not compared with those in other schools to give an accurate picture of their progress.

The school has the following strengths:

- Senior leaders and representatives of the academy trust are highly ambitious for pupils to do as well as they can. They have taken rigorous action to tackle weak teaching and raise achievement.
- Good arrangements to safeguard pupils mean they feel safe while they are in school.
- Good teaching in Years 2 and 6 and in some classes is helping pupils to fill gaps in their learning. Pupils' reading skills are improving.
- In Year 6, pupils' attitudes and behaviour in English and mathematics lessons are excellent.
- Exceptional artwork enriches pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 52 parts of lessons of varying length. Many were observed jointly with the headteacher or members of the senior leadership team. Pupils were also observed working in small groups or individually with an adult away from their usual classroom.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes were observed in lessons, assemblies, playtimes and while they were moving around the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6. They spoke to pupils in different age groups formally and informally about their views of the school. Samples of their previous work were scrutinised.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and staff with responsibility for: inclusion, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, English as an additional language, literacy, numeracy, the Early Years Foundation Stage and newly qualified teachers. Inspectors also met with the learning mentors and representatives of the REAch2 Academy Trust and the governing body.
- The responses of 69 parents and carers who completed the online survey Parent View, the school's own parental survey and 86 questionnaires completed by staff were taken into account. Inspectors also met with parents and carers when they collected their children from school.
- Documents reviewed include the school's self-evaluation summary and development plan, arrangements for safeguarding, records of pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance, and records of the checks made on the quality of teaching. In addition, the school's website was scrutinised.

Inspection team

Kath Beck, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Clementina Olufunke Aina	Additional Inspector
Noureddin Khassal	Additional Inspector
Kate Robertson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is very much larger than most primary schools nationally. It is situated on two sites, Forest and Bridge, about three quarters of a mile apart.
- Children in the Nursery, Reception and Years 1 to 3 are taught on the Forest site while those in Years 4 to 6 are taught on the Bridge site.
- The number on roll and the number of teaching staff are rising rapidly. Many pupils leave and join the school at other than the usual time.
- The nursery takes children from the age of six months. The provision for children of this age up to the time when they enter the school's Nursery at age three is registered with Ofsted and inspected separately. There is a children's centre on Forest site and this is also inspected separately and the report is published on the Ofsted website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Almost all pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Over two thirds speak English as an additional language. This is much higher than usually found.
- Over one third of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those with a parent or carer in the armed forces). This is a higher proportion than usually found in most schools. The school receives pupil premium for those known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above that found in schools nationally. The school has specialist provision for pupils with autism. Most are integrated into classes.
- The school became an academy on the 1 December 2012. It is sponsored by the REAch2 Academy Trust.
- The headteacher took up his post full time in September 2013. Staff turnover is high. Many staff and some senior leaders are new to their roles. The governing body of the school was reconstituted in May 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in every year group, by ensuring that all staff:
 - plan and use tasks and approaches that capture pupils' interests, engage them fully in their learning, motivate them to achieve well and sustain their concentration
 - in the Nursery and Reception classes consistently plan clear purposeful activities that are based on what children know and can do
 - use their knowledge of pupils' prior learning to build on what they have learned before and to pitch work that offers consistently good levels of challenge, especially for the more able
 - give pupils the practical resources they require to support them in their learning in writing and mathematics and allow them to think of their own ideas
 - when marking pupils' work, give them clear information about what they need to do to improve, and check that they have acted on the advice.

- Raise achievement in writing and mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities, especially for children in the Nursery and Reception classes, that inspire them to develop their vocabulary in spoken and written English so that they can communicate effectively
 - teaching pupils to form their numbers and letters correctly from an early stage
 - insisting that pupils use the correct grammar, punctuation, spelling and a good style of joined handwriting in all their written work
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics
 - ensuring the programme of work for mathematics allows pupils to learn a wider range of skills, other than calculation, and apply these skills in other subjects and to situations found in everyday life.

- Strengthen leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - making sure that all new staff and those already in school share senior leaders' high aspirations to raise achievement, contribute fully to the school's improvement and put the school's policies into practice consistently
 - developing the partnership with a special school to compare the achievements of pupils with autism or other serious disabilities or special educational needs to ensure that data are accurate
 - sharpening the skills of local governors so that they too offer an increased level of challenge..

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2013, pupils' attainment at the age of five, seven and 11 was much lower than in most schools. A legacy of previous underachievement, together with many changes of staff, means pupils have a lot of ground to make up.
- Short intensive programmes of work designed to accelerate pupils' learning, regardless of their background, and some better teaching are helping them to close gaps in their learning, particularly in reading, but gaps remain in writing and mathematics. These initiatives are allowing all pupils to have an equal opportunity to succeed. More pupils than in previous years are on course to reach the expected or higher than expected levels of attainment at the end of Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 this year.
- While pupils are making better progress this year, overall progress requires improvement. In the Nursery and Reception, staff model spoken English well for the children, especially for those for whom English is an additional language. However, they do not give them enough opportunities to develop their vocabulary to communicate effectively in spoken and written English.
- Pupils are not using their improved knowledge of the sounds letter make well enough to spell accurately. Their books show that they do not always use the correct grammar and punctuation, or a good style of handwriting. Teachers do not insist that younger pupils form their letters correctly.
- Pupils in all year groups have acquired a wide range of methods to help them to read confidently. These include using their improving knowledge of the sounds letters make to help them to read unfamiliar words. The programme of work in mathematics focuses mainly on developing pupils' calculation skills. Younger pupils learn songs and rhymes that are helping them to recall multiplication tables and number bonds well. Some Year 6 pupils reach levels typically found in secondary schools. That said, not all teachers have sufficient knowledge to teach the subject confidently. There are few opportunities for pupils to apply mathematics in other subjects, and to situations in their daily life.
- More-able pupils are challenged to do well in Years 2 and 6. This is not consistently the case in other year groups where work is not always pitched at the right level.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those with autism, benefit from effective support and do better than similar pupils nationally. Where appropriate they have individual programmes of work that are matched to their precise needs. As a result of their highly complex needs, some pupils learn in very small steps. The school is not yet working with other schools to compare the progress of these pupils with similar pupils nationally to ensure they are making the best possible progress.
- The achievement of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium was similar to that of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. This is a much smaller gap than found in many schools.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The inconsistency of the quality of teaching over time across classes and year groups has hindered pupils' progress on their journey through the school. The many changes in staff are bringing about better teaching but have not yet resulted in consistently good learning for all pupils.
- In some classes across Years 1 to 5, the approaches teachers choose to use and the activities they wish pupils to complete do not always engage them in their learning. Resources are not sufficient to help pupils to complete tasks successfully. They do not deepen their understanding and allow them to think through their ideas or try things for themselves. Consequently pupils lose interest.
- Similarly teachers do not use their knowledge of what pupils have learned before well enough to

pitch work at the right level of challenge. More-able pupils say some of the work is too easy because they have to do the same work as everyone else before moving on to harder tasks.

- In the Nursery and Reception classes, teachers plan many captivating activities indoors and outdoors that are relevant to children's ages and interest. That said, the purpose of the learning and precisely how tasks build on what children already know and can do are not always clear.
- Teachers' marking is inconsistent. Older pupils receive detailed feedback about what they need to do to improve their writing and have good opportunities to act on their teachers' comments. This moves their learning along quickly. This is not the case in all year groups or in mathematics. Even when work is marked, not all teachers check that pupils have taken notice of their comments.
- Good teaching, especially in Years 2 and 6, is helping pupils to make up gaps in their learning. Pupils of all abilities are challenged to do their best through tasks that capture their imagination and challenge their intellect. Teachers' high-quality questioning and use of discussion promote pupils' learning well. Their monitoring of pupils' progress in lessons allows them to push learning along quickly or to amend tasks to better meet pupils' needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils are not always motivated to do as well as they can because the tasks they are asked to carry out do not always capture their interest or inspire them. They lose concentration, chatter to one another and talk while their teacher is explaining new learning, hindering their progress and that of their classmates.
- Pupils say that on occasion it is frustrating when the behaviour of some pupils delays the start to their lessons, and when some staff do not apply the same rules to dealing with some pupils' behaviour as others'. The school's policy for a 60 second deadline for pupils is not consistently implemented.
- When pupils are engaged fully in their learning, especially in Year 6 mathematics and writing lessons, their behaviour and attitudes are excellent. They are industrious, cooperate well with one another when sharing ideas, and do not interrupt the adults who are leading the learning of other pupils.
- Discrimination is not tolerated. During breaks from lessons pupils from all backgrounds move around the school sensibly and usually play well together. Those with challenging behaviour receive good support. A very small number of pupils have not been allowed to come to school for a short period this year because of their behaviour.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Most parents and carers who completed the online survey, Parent View, and staff who completed the questionnaire say pupils are happy and safe at school. Pupils also say they feel safe. They know what to do to protect themselves when on the internet, and if they are concerned about bullying.
- Staff work closely with parents and carers to safeguard vulnerable pupils. The learning mentors provide good support to parents and carers and follow up pupils' absences rigorously. Consequently attendance is above average this year and pupils arrive at school at the right time.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The leadership and management require improvement because the quality of teaching is not good enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. The school is led by an extremely capable headteacher who has implemented many important changes that are having a positive impact in creating a culture where teaching and good behaviour can flourish.
- To overcome the legacy of underachievement senior leaders carry out robust checks on the quality of teaching and manage staff performance rigorously, ensuring that the link between

pupils' progress and salary progression is secure. This has caused a high level of staff turnover. Some new staff lack clarity about what the school is trying to achieve, and policies such as those for handwriting, marking and behaviour management are not applied consistently.

- With the support of staff at the academy trust, and through training and coaching, teachers have a better understanding of how to teach the sounds letters make (phonics), reading and writing effectively. The programme to develop the skills of newly qualified teachers is of good quality. The school is well placed to take on the high number of newly qualified teachers due to take up their duties in September.
- Many aspects of the school, including the leadership and management, are in a period of transition. To manage the school's rapid growth, split site and drive to raise achievement rapidly, leadership at all levels has been extended and strengthened.
- New and experienced staff have been appointed to share leadership responsibilities and are held accountable for the school's development. Training sessions give leaders a clear understanding of their roles, but some are too new in post and have yet to make a significant impact on pupils' achievements.
- Senior leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils, regardless of their background, to do as well as they can. School and subject development plans are based on robust self-evaluation, and challenging targets are set for all to achieve. The progress made towards targets is checked regularly and actions amended as appropriate.
- The curriculum in reading, writing and mathematics is not yet promoting consistently high levels of attainment or capturing pupils' zest for learning. Mathematics is not applied sufficiently to a range of subjects or to everyday life.
- The additional sports premium has provided pupils with a broader range of sports to enjoy and opportunities to take part in competitions, which have had a positive impact on pupils' participation rates. Opportunities to take part in drama activities, complete artwork of exceptional quality and participate in visits out of school enrich pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is developing its partnership with parents and carers. Those spoken to expressed increased confidence in the school since September 2013, and all the changes taking place. The few parents and carers who completed Parent View do not share the same level of confidence.
- The support from the REAch2 Academy Trust is robust. The headteacher and senior leaders of the school work with the advisers and other schools in the trust to drive the school's improvement with positive results. The school's partnership with a special school to enhance provision is at an early stage of development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since their appointment, governors have undertaken training to fully understand their role, to analyse data and to raise their overall skills and effectiveness. They use their expertise in finance, training and safeguarding to manage the budget prudently and to benefit pupils. Frequent checks ensure that statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding are met.
 - The newly organised committee structure and visits to the school are helping governors to gain greater insight into the quality of teaching. While aware of the need to challenge and support the school more, governors are too reliant on the headteacher and other senior leaders for information.
 - Governors have implemented robust appraisal systems this year. They are aware that there are clear links between pay rises and pupils' progress targets. They have a clear policy to tackle underperformance and reward good teachers.
 - Governors know about the school's performance in comparison to other schools nationally. To realise the ambition for it to be highly effective and overcome the difficulties of high staff turnover, or temporary absence, the governors have reviewed their recruitment and retention policy. They have taken a robust decision to attract some new skilled staff and newly qualified teachers in order to have two teachers per class from September 2014. This is to ensure pupils from all backgrounds and abilities are taught by qualified staff.
 - Governors are aware of how pupil premium funds are spent, but have only recently begun to

track its impact on the achievement of pupils who are supported by it.

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	139016
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	440149

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3– 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	933
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pat Stannard
Headteacher	Shane Tewes
Date of previous school inspection	not previously inspected
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