

Woodfall Primary School

Woodfall Lane, Little Neston, Cheshire, CH64 4BT

Inspection dates 18–19 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

This is an outstanding school.

- Since the previous inspection, this school has continued to improve in every way. The headteacher has focused everyone's energies on improving teaching and learning to be the best it can be and, as a result, standards are high.
- From when they first start school to when they leave at the end of Year 6, pupils' academic progress is excellent. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above average.
- For the past two years, the rate of pupils' progress across Key Stage 2 has put the school in the top 5% of schools nationally.
- The impact of teaching over time is outstanding. Teaching is innovative and imaginative and pupils are keen to learn. The quality of teachers' marking, particularly in English books, is excellent.
- Teamwork at all levels, including teachers supporting each other and the contributions of teaching assistants and volunteers, has helped to build and maintain an exceptionally effective climate for learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils do very well at Woodfall Primary and reach standards that are in line with those reached by non-disadvantaged pupils in most other schools.
- Pupils who have faced difficulties in their lives or have struggled to cope at other schools do well at Woodfall, both socially and academically.
- The specialist support given to pupils with particular learning needs is second to none.
- Systems for checking on teaching and learning are highly effective.
- Pupils display high levels of respect towards others. They are patient and supportive, yet can be competitive and ambitious when necessary. Their ability to act as the situation requires is a credit to them.
- The school's systems for helping pupils to manage their behaviour are carefully thought through and implemented with consistency by all staff.
- The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop a range of interests and skills, and to make the most of their talents. Excellence is encouraged; success is recognised and applauded.
- Parents and pupils express a high level of confidence in the school's work to keep pupils safe. Pupils say that bullying does not happen. They are taught how to manage conflict and learn how to sort out problems for themselves.
- Outstanding early years provision means that children settle in quickly and make rapid progress when they first start school. The vast majority are very well prepared for their start in Key Stage 1.
- 100% of parents who entered a response on Parent View would recommend this school to other parents.
- The governors are extremely well informed about the school's work and performance. They provide a level of challenge and support that brings out the best in everyone.
- The school is still working towards the implementation of a new method for checking pupils' progress following the removal of National Curriculum levels.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed many lessons, several of which were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher, and also made several short visits to classrooms and outdoor activities. Inspectors also observed a whole-school assembly, a singing practice, some small-group teaching sessions, a workshop led by members of the local community, and groups of pupils reading to parent volunteers.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour, and the school's procedures, at the beginning and end of the school day, at lunch and break times, and when pupils were moving about the school or taking part in extracurricular activities and school sports.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, school leaders and governors. A telephone conversation with a local authority officer also took place.
- By the end of the inspection, there were 66 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors looked at the results of the school's own survey of parents' views, talked to some parents at school and considered the responses to Ofsted's school staff questionnaire.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included information about pupils' progress, school improvement plans, and information about the work of the governing body. The work in pupils' books and on display, records relating to the quality of teaching, staff performance management, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Martin Pye, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Cathy Parkinson	Additional Inspector
Maureen Hints	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Woodfall Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most of the pupils are White British.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are broadly in line with the national average.
- Up until 2013, the school had resource base provision on site. This was funded by the local authority and offered tuition and support to pupils with particular learning needs from Woodfall and other schools. The school now runs its own specialist provision for Woodfall pupils with special educational needs. This allows some pupils to be taught in small groups away from the main classes.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils at the school is below the national average. The term disadvantaged pupils is used to describe those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority. These pupils receive additional support from pupil premium funding.
- Before- and after-school care is available on the school site. This is not managed by the school and is subject to a separate inspection at a different time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets out the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The current headteacher was appointed in 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Following the removal of National Curriculum levels, the school needs to implement a new system for keeping track of pupils' progress. School leaders should make sure that this new system builds on the excellent work done so far, so that it continues to be highly effective at informing pupils, staff, parents and governors about pupils' knowledge and understanding, and their next steps in learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's unwavering focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning has been a key factor in lifting the school's effectiveness from good to outstanding. She is a highly visible presence in the school and uses her knowledge of the pupils and staff to make sure everyone is doing their best and that their skills are being used to maximum effect. She gives praise where it is due, brings challenge where it is needed and makes well-informed decisions about staff deployment. In short, she is an excellent leader.
- The school has a proven track record in growing future school leaders who leave the school for promotion elsewhere. As such talent moves on from the school, new talent moves in to take its place as can be seen clearly in the current leadership team. Senior and middle leaders are capable, motivated and highly effective in their roles. Leaders with responsibilities for areas such as marking or the teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) have brought an ambitious consistency to the quality of teachers' and pupils' work across the school. Similarly, subject leaders are expected to make a positive difference and deliver results. There is a climate of trust and experimentation underpinned by rigorous accountability.
- School leaders spend a lot of time checking teachers' work, providing feedback and working alongside staff to share expertise and build team spirit. All staff receive regular training and are guided to reflect on the impact of their teaching; to think carefully about what worked well and what could be improved. Some staff with leadership responsibilities provide advice and support to staff in other local schools.
- All pupils have equal opportunity to benefit from all the school offers and to experience success. The school curriculum is packed full of interesting activities and events that give pupils the chance to learn and apply new skills, and to test and challenge themselves. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 get the chance to take part in residential visits to activity centres, a specialist languages teacher provides high quality tuition, and links with schools in France and South Africa help pupils to learn about life in other places.
- Leaders' stated aim is to provide pupils with a 'strong inner moral code' based on a solid understanding of right and wrong and values such as tolerance, perseverance, honesty and trust. These, and other values, are given a high profile in classroom practice, school assemblies and in displays around the school. Pupils' behaviour around school, their care for others and the good sportsmanship apparent during a tag-rugby competition, for example, demonstrate the strong impact of the school's work in this area. Pupils know that their actions can bring about change for the better and, through their links with the local rotary club, they get involved in voluntary work and raise money for good causes.
- School leaders have used the primary school sport funding to build further on the school's existing commitment to interschool tournaments and sports festivals, and to provide additional resources and training for members of staff. Woodfall Primary enters teams and individuals into many different events and, over time, pupils have enjoyed success and recognition, as the many cups and trophies on display testify. In addition to competitive sport, the school offers sports teaching and clubs that are open to all pupils.
- Parents have access to information about the school's work through regular newsletters, meetings and an informative and up-to-date website. Parent volunteers make a valuable contribution to the school's work, regularly helping in class and working with reading groups. Parents spoken to during this inspection were very pleased with the school's work and, of the 66 parents who had entered a response on Parent View, 100% would recommend the school to other parents.
- The local authority keeps a distant watch on the school's performance and does not provide any support other than that which the school chooses to purchase.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very well informed about the school's work and current priorities in primary education. Governors stay up to date through training and make sure that school leaders provide them with the information they need in order to do their job. They analyse school performance data to check how well different groups of pupils are doing and how it compares with other schools.
 - They know about the quality of teaching because they have oversight of the school's performance management routines. They understand, and can explain, that the quality of teaching has improved, and continues to improve, because expectations are clear and leadership is strong. They do not accept underperformance and, through their appraisal and pay policies, make sure that effectiveness in the classroom is linked with salary and career progression.
 - Governors articulate an ambitious vision for the school and when asked by inspectors how they have secured ongoing school improvement, they give credit to the school staff and leadership team but also say that, as governors, they 'challenge everybody to do their very best'. Records of meetings and other

school documentation confirm that this is the case.

- Governors display astute financial awareness. They know how specific funds, such as pupil premium or the primary school sport grant, are used and the benefits that such spending is bringing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They attend regularly, look smart and are rarely late. They arrive at school ready to learn and are keen to succeed.
- In class, pupils listen carefully, ask thoughtful questions and work hard. Almost without exception, pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary.
- The school's approach to managing behaviour is fair and consistent. Any rare instances of poor behaviour are challenged and stopped. Good behaviour is noticed and rewarded. Inspectors' scrutiny of school records discovered notable successes over time in helping some pupils to improve their behaviour. Exclusions from school do not often happen.
- Pupils show a mature ability to act appropriately in different situations. Their competitiveness in team games or during auditions for the annual musical production does not eclipse pupils' sense of fair play or concern for those around them. They willingly take on responsibilities and display great respect and sensitivity towards others. There is good-natured camaraderie underpinned by patience and kindness, so that no-one is left out.
- Pupils recognise and applaud each other's skills and talents, and the variety of activities that happen at school give them many opportunities to do so. Similarly, the school staff make sure that pupils' efforts and achievements are noticed and celebrated and there are several routines and awards that serve to do this.
- Routines such as the secret spy, whereby an 'undercover' pupil reports on the conscientious attitudes and helpful actions of others, help to keep everyone focused on the value of positive behaviours and mean that pupils get attention for all the right reasons. Across the school, the expectation that pupils will follow the school rules and do their best is well understood by all.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils know that bullying can happen in different ways and they understand how harmful it can be. They say that bullying does not happen at Woodfall Primary and are confident that 'it would be dealt with well if it did'. Pupils who have recently joined the school report that they have been made to feel very welcome and that everyone is kind.
- Some Key Stage 2 pupils are trained to act as peer counsellors and are on duty at lunchtimes to help pupils sort out playground disagreements and upsets. These counsellors are given excellent training and guidance and take their roles seriously. The skills they develop, and the assistance they provide, encourage everyone to develop reflective and respectful attitudes towards themselves and others.
- Pupils are taught about risks, including when riding a bicycle or using the Internet, and how to manage these in a sensible way. Bumps and knocks do happen on the busy playground but well-organised supervision and first-aid arrangements mean that pupils get the attention they need. In addition, the pupil play leaders are usually on hand to help out, if needs be.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Pupils learn a lot in lessons. They are keen to succeed and the excellent teaching they receive means that they do.
- The teamwork at this school is superb. Teaching staff share skills and learn from each other and, consequently, there are no weak links and teaching is continually improving.
- Teaching in different subjects and classes is excellent. Whether leading a singing session, coaching the rugby team, teaching place value, or exploring modern literature, teachers' strong subject knowledge and ability to motivate and inspire shine out.
- Teachers engage and hold pupils' interest while they teach them what they need to know. In one captivating example seen, two teachers entered into an entertaining dialogue about how to use a paper fortune-teller to check the features of a non-chronological report. It held everyone's attention with magical charm, so that the clarity and precision of their explanations struck home with maximum effect. Such

simple, yet imaginative and often innovative, techniques are put to use in every class.

- Teachers and teaching assistants take great care to make sure that time and tasks are focused efficiently on learning. Everything that happens in class is purposeful and leads to new learning, improved understanding, and feelings of success.
- Teaching is pitched with precision because teachers' checks on pupils' knowledge, understanding and progress are thorough. Teachers know exactly how well pupils are doing and what they need to learn next, and make full use of this information when planning lessons. The quality of marking in pupils' books is testimony to teachers' conscientious approach to their work. The standard of some of the marking in pupils' books, particularly in English, is exemplary.
- While the school's checks on pupils' progress are excellent, staff are still planning how to manage the changes that have been brought about by the removal of the National Curriculum levels.
- Teaching staff are excellent role models, classrooms are tidy, discipline is firm yet warm, and good manners and attentive listening are well-established expectations. In every class, there are productive and well-understood routines that allow lessons to proceed with brisk purpose.

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are high. Pupils make excellent progress at this school and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above average.
- In 2013, pupils made so much progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 that the school was ranked in the top 2% of primary schools nationally. A similarly strong picture was seen in 2014, with the school's progress data placing it in the top 5% of schools.
- In the main, children start school with levels of knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. School staff are quick to check children's learning needs and to provide them with the teaching they require. After a great start in the early years, pupils in Key Stage 1 continue to make significant gains in their learning. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 are above average, having risen year on year for the past three years.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do extremely well at Woodfall. The additional support and specialist teaching provided is highly effective. Pupils who have struggled to cope in other schools, and those who find aspects of learning difficult, receive patient and skilled help that enables them to move forward in their learning, to make the most of all the opportunities provided by the school, and to experience success.
- The small-group sessions that run in the school's own dedicated special educational needs support base enable pupils with the greatest needs to grow in confidence and do their best.
- Pupils of all abilities succeed as readers. School staff, supported by a team of volunteers, do all they can to promote reading and the benefits that a love of reading can bring. The Year 1 phonics screening check results for 2013 and 2014 were above the national figures and, across the school, pupils are capable readers because reading is taught with imagination and flair. Pupils are given many reasons to read and adults regularly read to pupils.
- The ambitious targets and demanding work set for the most-able pupils bring impressive results. In 2014, for example, over half the Year 6 cohort reached Level 5 or above in writing, and three quarters reached this level in reading and mathematics, with some reaching Level 6. This high expectation is clearly apparent in the level of challenge seen in lessons and the quality of work on display and in pupils' books.
- Disadvantaged pupils who attend Woodfall primary reach standards that are more or less in line with those reached by non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils at Woodfall outperformed non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in mathematics and were only about half a term behind in reading and writing. Within the school, there is an attainment gap between the two groups. In 2014, non-disadvantaged pupils were about a term ahead in reading and about two terms ahead in writing and mathematics. So, while disadvantaged pupils at Woodfall are making strong progress and doing well, it is clear that non-disadvantaged are racing even further ahead.

The early years provision is outstanding

- Most year groups start in reception with levels of knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. Any children who start with skills below this are given the support they need to help them make the best possible progress. Consequently, the vast majority of children are very well prepared for their start in Key

Stage 1.

- During their first year in school, children make strong progress in all areas of learning and development because teaching is outstanding. In 2014, for example, almost 100% of children reached a good level of development in their personal, social and emotional development. The school's successful focus on making sure that children develop positive attitudes to learning, life, and each other prepares them well for their future school career and is indicative of the school's attention to the well-being of every child.
- Work seen in children's books and observations of classroom activities confirm that the excellent progress seen in previous years is still the case this year. Close checks on children's learning and detailed record-keeping enable the early years team to plan next steps with well-informed precision.
- The leadership of early years is outstanding. Everyone knows what is expected of them and all are trusted to take responsibility and exercise initiative. Consequently, good ideas flourish, communication is excellent and morale is high. The early years leader is also the special educational needs leader, and any children with particular learning needs are identified quickly and given extra support.
- The reception children behave well and feel safe at school. The school site manager checks the outdoor equipment on a daily basis to make sure it is in good order and staff are trained in paediatric first aid. As in the rest of the school, risk assessments are carried out for all outdoor activities, and children and staff manage day-to-day risks in a sensible way.
- School staff make a great effort to keep parents informed and involved in their children's education. Information about children's learning is sent home weekly and parents are encouraged to add their own comments and 'wow' stars in order to support their children's school work. Responses from parents spoken to during the inspection, and analysis of parent questionnaire responses, indicate a very high level of parental satisfaction with the school's work to help their children settle in and make progress when they first start school.

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	135019
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	448865

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Duncan Haworth
Headteacher	Helen Hough
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2010
Telephone number	0151 338 2288
Fax number	0151 353 1402
Email address	admin@woodfall.cheshire.sch.uk

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