

Woodcock Hill Primary School

Farwood Road, Northfield, Birmingham, West Midlands B31 1BS

Inspection dates

19–20 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior and subject leaders do not track rigorously how well pupils of different abilities progress.
- Governors are not clear if disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, make the progress they are capable of.
- Teachers do not check that taught strategies lead to pupils making improved progress.
- Pupils do not make the progress they are capable of in mathematics and writing.
- Teaching assistants' effectiveness is variable.
- Pupils' attendance remains below the national average. Too many pupils do not arrive at school on time.
- In recent years, pupils achieved low standards in key stage 2.
- Leaders have not evaluated the effectiveness of the curriculum.

The school has the following strengths

- Leadership and teaching are better this year, when compared with previous years.
- Pupils make strong progress in their reading. This is due to effective teaching.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children acquire secure phonic skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is promoted well.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Leaders and staff ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and increase pupils' progress by:
 - teachers in key stage 2, notably in Years 3 and 4, checking that strategies in lessons lead to pupils making strong progress
 - teachers moving pupils on to more challenging mathematical work more quickly in lessons and checking that pupils' explanations are mathematically correct
 - teachers checking that pupils use accurate punctuation and spelling in their writing
 - teaching assistants making sure that their teaching focuses on the issues that specific groups of pupils need help with.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - senior leaders refining their use of monitoring information so that they can better understand how the school is performing
 - leaders evaluating the effectiveness of their curriculum
 - governors being rigorous in checking that pupil premium funding results in pupils of all abilities making sufficient progress
 - subject leaders checking that the teaching of writing and mathematics is effective.
- Improve pupils' attendance rates and punctuality at the start of the school day.

An external review of governance is recommended.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding is recommended.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership has improved this year. This is due to senior and subject leaders' checking that teachers implement agreed strategies in lessons. Leaders have a better understanding of what teaching looks like in each classroom. This has strengthened leadership.
- Senior leaders, along with leaders responsible for writing and mathematics, are not clear if pupils with different prior attainment make sufficient progress in these subjects. As a result, leaders are not clear about the specific strengths and weaknesses of teaching in these core subjects.
- The Woodcock Hill curriculum has been designed to provide pupils with experiences which enable them to learn about life outside their locality. Typically, pupils enjoy their learning and are motivated by the topics they are taught. Leaders have yet to evaluate the effectiveness of their curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about how the school supports their SMSC development. Pupils explained how their lessons help them explore what it is like in other places and times. For example, pupils in Year 6 learned about slavery, and used their historical enquiry skills to refine their views about how slavery began and its impact on people. Pupils have a good understanding of democracy, which helps to prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders at all levels have a good understanding of the barriers disadvantaged pupils face in their learning. These barriers are varied. Pupil premium funding has been used to employ more teaching assistants this year, which has enabled disadvantaged pupils to be taught in smaller groups. This has led to disadvantaged pupils making better progress in each year group, when compared with last year.
- Leaders monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils. However, this monitoring is not precise enough. For example, it is not clear if disadvantaged pupils make the progress that they need to from their starting points.
- Leadership in the early years is effective. This is because the leader ensures that all staff support and challenge children with different abilities effectively. In phonics, for example, the leader works with staff in the early years and also in key stage 1, to ensure that pupils receive appropriate teaching.
- The leader with responsibility for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities knows what individual pupils need to do to make faster rates of progress. She deploys well her team of teaching assistants, some of whom have higher-level qualifications.
- Support commissioned on behalf of the local authority is effective. At the time of this inspection, the local authority representative had visited the school five times since January 2018. Leaders, including those responsible for English and mathematics, have benefited well. The school has received notes from each visit which make it clear what leaders need to do to improve the school's performance.
- Leaders are learning well from external support and training. For example, they have worked with English advisers to create and implement a variety of strategies designed

to improve pupils' reading. This has led to improved teaching.

- The primary school physical education (PE) and sports funding is used appropriately to ensure that all pupils become more physically active. A school mini-bus has enabled pupils to represent their school at more competitive events in the locality. A teaching assistant is funded to facilitate a range of extra-curricular activities which are valued by pupils. These include cricket and table tennis.

Governance of the school

- Minutes of governors' meetings demonstrate that governors challenge school leaders. For example, having received information from senior leaders about how well pupils are currently achieving, governors visited the school to check that other leaders concurred. However, governors do not require leaders to present evidence about how disadvantaged pupils with different abilities are performing. Governors know that provision is in place for these pupils, but they do not check that teaching is effective. When in school, governors visit lessons with leaders in order to check that teachers and teaching assistants are delivering sessions as agreed. This helps governors gain an understanding of teaching activity. They are less secure about how such work leads to pupils attaining high standards.
- Governors are keen to encourage more parents and carers to engage in the work of the school. A parent group has been set up, along with a range of other activities, such as a gardening club. These activities are in the early stages of development, but they are helping governors learn about parental views of their school. Governors ensure that their statutory duties are met.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff have a good knowledge of the community the school serves. They know the issues that are more likely to occur. As a result, they are vigilant in looking out for signs which could lead to pupils being unsafe. There is a culture of vigilance at Woodcock Hill.
- Leaders with specific safeguarding responsibilities, including governors, ensure that all staff receive relevant training. Staff use their school system appropriately for recording any concerns.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and are kept safe while they learn and play in school. The school site is secure and well maintained.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is better this year than in previous years. In all year groups, classroom staff carry out work according to the school's expectations, for example by asking pupils to discuss their learning with each other frequently. However, teachers do not check the extent to which such work leads to pupils making better progress.

- The teaching of reading is effective. Leaders and staff have responded well to the weak reading progress made by Year 6 pupils last year. Pupils of different abilities want to read the range of books they can choose from. Pupils enjoy reading and they read age-appropriate books fluently. Teachers use daily reading sessions to check that pupils read accurately and that they can answer questions correctly about what they have read.
- The teaching of phonics supports pupils well in their early reading. Teachers and teaching assistants understand the scheme of learning and make sure that pupils secure relevant skills. Staff use their good knowledge of how young children acquire reading skills to ensure that lessons incorporate phonics in various activities in the early years and in key stage 1.
- Teachers do not expect pupils to apply their grammar and punctuation skills accurately in all their writing. As a result, pupils write well in lessons where specific skills are taught, whereas their subsequent writing is less accurate. Despite this, the quality of writing has improved this year, most notably in key stage 1 and in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils do not make the required progress in mathematics to reach the standards they are capable of. This is because teachers do not check that pupils' written explanations are mathematically correct. Pupils spend too long in lessons working on tasks which they can cope with easily, rather than moving on to harder work more quickly.
- Teachers ensure that pupils receive a balance of calculation work, with problems which require them to explain their thinking. The mathematics leader has supported teachers well in planning for this balance. Teachers have a secure understanding of the standards expected by the end of each year group.
- Disadvantaged pupils are taught better this year than previously. For example, Year 2 pupils read well as they have been encouraged and helped to apply their phonics skills when reading an unfamiliar text. As a result, teaching promotes equality well as disadvantaged pupils make similar rates of progress to other pupils.
- Teaching assistants support teachers in classrooms as well as facilitating learning with small groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Their teaching is variable. Effective teaching is seen where pupils respond well to their guidance. For example, a writing group improved their spelling and punctuation well as pupils sought out errors in their own writing and edited it accordingly. Weaker teaching occurs when staff do not focus pupils' attention on key learning objectives. This includes not asking pupils probing questions which require them to infer.
- Teaching in the early years and in key stage 1 is more effective than in key stage 2. Teachers provide activities which support pupils with different abilities effectively more often. This means that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and the most able pupils work on tasks which lead them to make good progress. For example, pupils in key stage 1 who needed to develop finger strength in order to write more easily spent time manipulating playdough.
- Typically, classroom staff question pupils well. Where best, adults listen to pupils' responses to initial questions and then pose subsequent questions which make pupils think more deeply about their views. On other occasions questions do not challenge pupils to think harder.
- Pupils receive weekly homework which helps them to secure reading and mathematical

skills. In addition to this, pupils receive a menu of opportunities at the start of each term which are linked to the topics they will be learning about. Here, pupils are encouraged to present their learning in various forms, including model making. Homework helps pupils develop positive attitudes to their studies.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils acquire a good understanding of how to live healthily and with respect for others through a well-planned curriculum. This includes assemblies where pupils' SMSC is a focus.
- Pupils understand the dangers of learning and playing online. Lessons designed to convey clear messages about such dangers are appreciated by both pupils and parents.
- Pupils understand what bullying means. They say that if any bullying behaviour occurs staff deal with it effectively and swiftly. The positive views expressed by pupils concur with school records of bullying incidents.
- The school ensures that pupils have frequent opportunities for physical play and learning. Pupils develop positive attitudes about continuing to pursue healthy lifestyles. As a result, their physical well-being is well promoted.
- Too many pupils are not punctual at the start of the school day. It is not clear how effective are actions designed to improve punctuality, such as invitations to attend the breakfast club. As some pupils miss the start of the school day, their emotional well-being is not as well supported as it could be.
- Once pupils are in school, they are well cared for. Leaders have invested time and resources in their nurturing provision. However, some pupils do not make the accelerated progress required to catch up with other pupils. This means they are less confident learning in lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils conducted themselves well during the inspection. They were keen to learn in lessons and cooperated well with each other at break and lunchtimes.
- Typically, parents express positive views about how the school manages behaviour. Some parents talked about how their children are happy in school as they feel safe and secure.
- Where pupils' attitudes to learning are less positive, teaching does not engage pupils well. This is because there is a lack of expectations of pupils or insufficient challenge. Pupils in all year groups show positive attitudes to reading owing to effective teaching this year.

- Despite efforts made by the school, pupils' attendance remains below the national average. Staff with responsibility for working with families to raise attendance do not analyse attendance information rigorously. As a result, it is not clear which strategies are having the greatest benefit.
- Pupils' views about behaviour around school and in lessons are not consistently positive. They say that their learning and play are occasionally disrupted because of poor behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In recent years, pupils left Woodcock Hill having made slow progress through key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. This was because these cohorts of pupils received weak teaching through key stage 2. This meant that pupils were not well prepared for transition into secondary education.
- This year, pupils are making better progress. A greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils are attaining standards expected for their age. However, school assessment systems are not sufficiently refined to show if most able pupils, who are also disadvantaged, are making sufficient progress.
- Pupils in all year groups are making the strongest progress in reading. This is because the teaching of reading is effective. Pupils read widely and often, which helps them tackle reading comprehension work.
- Last year, a similar proportion of pupils attained the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check when compared with the national average. This year, pupils in both the early years and in key stage 1 are making good progress. This helps prepare pupils well for their learning in key stage 2.
- In mathematics, pupils are capable of making stronger progress. They spend too much time on work that they can cope with quite easily. They do not move on to harder work quickly enough in lessons.
- The positive steps taken to improve reading are not impacting on pupils' writing as well as they could. Pupils are yet to control their writing well. This is because they do not apply grammar and punctuation skills accurately in their writing across a range of subjects.
- There are clear systems in place to track the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities in specific aspects of learning, for example in the extent to which pupils are developing confidence in their speaking and listening. These pupils make good progress.
- Leaders collate and present achievement information for different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. This information does not clarify how well pupils with different prior attainment are performing. This is most notable for the most able pupils. As a result, it is difficult to evaluate how, for example, the most able disadvantaged pupils are performing.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership is effective. The leader, together with her staff team, plan and deliver a well thought through curriculum. Children collaborate well and secure key language and mathematical skills. Staff show their ambition by setting high expectations for disadvantaged children and their classmates.
- The combination of high expectations and a curriculum which engages children well leads to children making good progress through the Reception Year. The proportion of children attaining a good level of development has risen over the past few years.
- This year, children are making good progress from their different starting points, across all areas of learning. Staff ensure that their assessments about children's progress are accurate. They do this by asking consultants who are skilled in early years work to verify their judgements about children's attainment.
- Staff, alongside colleagues from other early years settings, review teaching and learning in each setting. They check that funding, including that for disadvantaged children and children who have SEN and/or disabilities, provides good value for money.
- The leader of the early years also oversees phonics at Woodcock Hill. This role enables her to track pupils as they progress through key stage 1. As a result, staff in Years 1 and 2 build on the children's good progress in the early years.
- Teaching engages children well. They enjoy the range of activities provided, willingly sticking to tasks. Staff ensure that children have more activities which require them to develop skills which they lacked when they arrived at the school. This includes letter formation work.
- The teaching of early reading and phonic skills is seen in many learning activities. The 'Under the Sea' theme provided children with opportunities to write about different creatures and sound out pertinent vocabulary, such as 'bubble' and 'swish'.
- In their safe indoor and outdoor environments, children look out for each other and support one another in their learning. For example, two children were writing about different creatures; they talked to each other about their words and gave constructive advice about how each could improve their spelling.
- Staff liaise well with parents. They welcome parental views about their child's strengths and weaknesses, using this information to help them plan activities which engage and challenge children effectively. If staff feel that they need further advice to support children's learning, they access external services readily. For example, teaching assistants have used speech and language guidance to inform planning for small groups of children.

School details

Unique reference number	103372
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10047439

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Cashmore
Headteacher	Bernard Moore
Telephone number	0121 675 4130
Website	www.woodcockhillprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	enquiry@woodcockhillprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 February 2014

Information about this school

- Woodcock Hill is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are no other significant groups.
- A similar proportion of pupils to the national average speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- There is a high proportion of teaching assistants.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for SEN and/or disabilities is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of SEN and/or disabilities or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The early years is made up of one full-time Reception class. Pupils in other year groups are taught in single age classes.

- Pupils from Woodcock Hill can attend a before-school breakfast club. It is overseen by the governing body and was observed as part of this inspection.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in every year group. They visited 10 lessons, two of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, the chair of the governing body and other governors, and also with a local authority representative.
- The inspectors met frequently with the headteacher.
- The inspectors talked to pupils about their reading. They listened to higher- and lower-ability pupils read.
- The inspectors examined work in pupils' books from a range of subjects.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation written to support school improvement. This included minutes of governors' meetings and attendance information.
- The inspectors took account of Ofsted's Parent View online questionnaire, which had 12 responses from parents. They spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors reviewed the school's website.

Inspection team

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