

Woodbridge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124619
Local Authority	SUFFOLK LA
Inspection number	314987
Inspection date	21 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Robert McKeown HMI

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pauline Hammond
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Connolly
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2004
School address	Wilkinson Way Woodbridge Suffolk IP12 1SS
Telephone number	01394 382516
Fax number	01394 388602

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The following issues were investigated: pupils' achievement; academic support and guidance; the quality of teaching and learning; and, how well the school's leadership monitors its work. Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, discussions with pupils and looking at their work, discussions with staff, governors, and a scrutiny of school documents and parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is an average size primary school, which has recently moved into a well-equipped new building. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. A small number are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion identified by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Children's skills and aptitudes on entry to the Foundation Stage are typical for their age. The headteacher has led the school for seven years; he is retiring at the end of this year.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Woodbridge Primary is a good school, which has continued to do well for its pupils through a period of considerable staff change and its relocation to an impressive new building. Several parents who returned a relatively small number of inspection questionnaires commented favourably on the education received by their children. Parents were particularly pleased with the school's happy atmosphere and the sense of community. It is also clear from talking to children that they are proud of their school and enjoy being part of it.

Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. They get a good start in the Foundation Stage and achieve above average standards in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6. In 2007 results were well above average in English and mathematics and above in science. Challenging targets set with the local authority were exceeded. In contrast, pupils did not do so well in Year 2, particularly in writing and mathematics. This year's results in Year 2 are expected to be much better, brought about by a combination of good teaching and improvements in tracking progress. The school recognises that setting targets for pupils for the end of Year 2 would also be beneficial. Pupils with additional learning needs and those who are at the early stages of learning English receive very good support and most make good progress.

Pupils' personal development is particularly strong and this reflects the high priority given by staff to caring for all pupils. Attendance is well above the national average and behaviour is excellent. Older pupils have a very good knowledge of the importance of taking exercise and eating healthily. Physical activities are a prominent part of the curriculum and this includes regular swimming for older pupils. Relationships between pupils are outstanding, helped by their understanding of issues such as bullying, which are explored fully in assemblies. Pupils feel very secure in their surroundings and know their teachers will help them resolve any problems they might have. They are pleased with the recognition they receive for their achievements and understand the school's expectations of them. The school and class councils are popular forums for discussion in which pupils are able to contribute their ideas towards school improvements. Council members have discussed what pupils might be looking for in a new headteacher. Pupils with responsibilities contribute well to helping the school run smoothly and several charities are supported through fund-raising events.

Teaching and learning are good, particularly in the Foundation Stage, in Year 2 and in Years 5 and 6. Teachers are making increasingly good use of the improved facilities such as interactive whiteboards to support their teaching and to stimulate learning. Some teachers are also adept at linking learning across subjects, for example, writing instructions on how to complete electric circuits. Support from teaching assistants in lessons for booster groups and for individuals is very good. The school acknowledges that for some classes, while the teaching is satisfactory, pupils' learning and progress could be better. Staff changes and interruptions in teaching require more systematic monitoring to ensure pupils' achievements are not affected.

There is a prominent focus in the curriculum on pupils developing their skills in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), and this prepares them well for the future. Good examples of older pupils' work in design and technology are on display and there are plans to introduce the teaching of French for older pupils in the New Year. Provision in music is particularly good, with specialist music teaching for all classes, a strong emphasis on singing and the opportunity for every Year 5 pupil to learn to play a brass

instrument. Pupils have the chance to undertake educational visits and attend some sports clubs after school. Parents and pupils would like to see more clubs taking place for all ages.

Improvements in the tracking of pupils' progress have been introduced recently. The school now has a good amount of data from which to assess rates of progress and identify any underachievement. Teachers are also keeping better records of how well the children in their classes are progressing. Pupils have learning targets for writing and mathematics attached to their exercise books and older pupils understand how these contribute to their overall achievements. Marking in pupils' books varies in regularity and quality; in the best examples it gives pupils a clear idea of how well they are doing and how they might improve their work. The school has identified that improvements are required in assessing and tracking progress from the Foundation Stage through to Year 2 and in analysing the impact of intervention programmes used to help pupils catch-up.

The headteacher cares deeply about the welfare and progress of all who attend the school. He is popular with pupils and they appreciate the time he gives to listening to their points of view. The pivotal working partnership between the very experienced headteacher and chair of governors has successfully guided the school through a challenging period. Good teamwork from all staff and the important contributions made by key staff, some of whom are in temporary positions, have been fundamental elements in this success. It has been a significant achievement maintaining a good quality education for pupils while setting up and moving to a new school building. The school's view of its own effectiveness, as reflected in its self-evaluation form, is accurate. The school improvement plan reflects this analysis, identifying suitable priorities. The governing body gives the school good support and keeps a close eye on how well it is doing. Links with other local schools are good and accommodation is now excellent. Some aspects of subject leadership have become less effective during the period of staff and building changes. The regular monitoring of teaching and learning to promote improvement in the overall quality has also lapsed. The school acknowledges that these aspects of leadership and management require strengthening.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the time they spend in the Foundation Stage 1 and 2 classes. By the time they enter Year 1, many children have higher than average levels of achievement. In the latest assessments in 2007, outcomes in some early literacy and numeracy skills were not as good and were below the local authority average. In other aspects of early learning such as in physical, creative and social development, children's attainments were above average. The early year's curriculum includes a suitable balance of learning through play and practical activities and through acquiring important basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Improvements in recording children's progress, including portfolios of photographic evidence have recently been introduced. Accommodation for learning indoors and outside is first rate. Improving transition from the Foundation Stage to Year 1, enabling pupils to continue to learn through purposeful play activities, is a priority; this is a change that would be welcomed by some parents.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 2.
- Introduce regular observations of lessons by senior leaders to keep a close check on the quality of teaching and learning and take steps to improve it where it is less than good.

- Undertake a review of the allocation and effectiveness of subject leader roles and establish a system that enables subject leaders to contribute to monitoring and evaluating pupils' achievements and the quality of provision.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

22 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Woodbridge Primary School, Woodbridge IP12 1SS

Thank you for helping me with my inspection work when I visited your school. I enjoyed the day I spent with you. Please thank your teachers and all the other adults working at the school for assisting me throughout the day. Mr Connolly and all the adults care for you very well and want you to be successful.

I enjoyed talking to you about the work you do in your lessons and hearing about the good things that go on. It was a pleasure to meet so many enthusiastic children who really like coming to school. I was very impressed with everyone's behaviour and with how well you get on together. I was pleased to hear that no-one is bullied and that your teachers will always help you if you have a problem. Your new building is fantastic and you have some very good indoor and outdoor facilities; I passed on your request for more playground equipment. I like the fact that you all have the chance to learn to play a musical instrument and that you share your singing with local people. The school and class councils give everyone an opportunity to have a say in making your school even better.

At the end of my visit, I told Mr Connolly and Mrs Hammond that I thought your school was doing well. I asked them to keep a close check on your learning and progress in lessons. I also asked your teachers to make sure they keep an eye on how well you do in all the subjects you are studying.

You have a lot to look forward to in the rest of the year; I hope you do your best and enjoy every minute.

With best wishes,

Rob McKeown

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools