

# Wootey Infant School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115985
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326303
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bernice Magson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	125
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Tim Duddridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Ella Palmer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 September 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Wootey's Way Alton GU34 2JA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01420 83656
<b>Fax number</b>	01420 81269

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	326303

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small infant school serving a mixed community in Alton. Most pupils are of White British origin and a very few are from minority ethnic groups. Pupils are admitted to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the Autumn term of the school year when they are five years of age. Pupils are taught in mixed age classes in Years 1 and 2. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, including speech, language and communication difficulties, and physical, social and emotional needs. Three pupils have a formal statement for their individual education needs and three are looked after pupils. The school has an Activemark for Sports and enhanced Healthy Schools Status. Extended services are available on site, including out-of-school childcare by a private provider.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a happy school where pupils achieve well. They reach average standards by the end of Year 2. A dedicated headteacher and committed team of staff and governors work together effectively to develop an ethos that promotes core values of happiness, respect and creativity. Parents are positive in their support of the school, praising 'the good focus on children's emotional well-being, social skills, creativity and self-esteem as well as their academic achievement.' The school is an integral part of its community.

The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy school and participate eagerly in activities. Attendance levels are improving. Relationships between pupils and with adults are good. Pupils are keen to support others and respect their contributions. They choose annual charities to help each year and senior citizens are often welcomed into school. The pupil council eagerly take on roles and responsibilities, such as in showing visitors around the school. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and know how to take care of themselves. They have a good understanding of the next steps in learning because of the good use of improvement targets in lessons and regular discussions with teachers. Pupils work hard, for instance, to climb the handwriting ladder or gain the award of Golden Star of the Week. They are making good progress in learning basic skills necessary for their future well-being.

By the end of Year 2 pupils attain above average standards in mathematics and average standards in reading, but attainment in writing is below average. Standards in mathematics are a strength because teachers plan challenging learning tasks for all pupils. Currently, the school is addressing the weakness in writing, where few pupils are attaining the higher levels. There is now an increased focus on the teaching of letters and sounds. Pupils do not yet have enough opportunities to write at length and for a real purpose.

The curriculum includes a good range of first-hand learning experiences to motivate pupils. They enjoy opportunities to discover and make independent choices. They achieve well in the creative arts. Most lessons are planned well and good attention is given to challenging pupils of differing ages and abilities taught in the same class. A good range of teaching methods is used involving individual, group and whole class activities. Staff identify individual needs early and sensitive support is provided in lessons. There is good use of computers to help pupils learn. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and participate willingly, because activities are practical and fun. However, a small minority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not always behave appropriately, because they are unsure of teacher expectations and learning tasks do not fully challenge them. In these instances, progress is satisfactory. Teacher marking is good, well annotated and with good advice to pupils about how they can improve.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and her two deputies set challenging targets to raise standards. Changes in senior staff and the governing body have interrupted some improvement activities. Some elements of development planning, monitoring and evaluation, although maintaining the school's strengths and bringing steady improvement, are not sharp and incisive enough to help subject leaders and governors to make rapid improvements. Nevertheless, the school has a good capacity to improve because of excellent teamwork and a shared commitment to school improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The EYFS is a bright and stimulating environment in which children love to work and play. They are happily settled and feel secure and safe, confident that their needs are addressed. Induction procedures are good. Children are beginning to make choices and take care of their own needs. When searching the grounds for hidden treasure to count, or making a kite to fly, children are enthusiastic learners. An experienced team of adults ensure that children are introduced to exciting and challenging experiences every day. 'I love our musical tree', commented one child as they listened to the sound of the wind in the branches of a large tree and watching the attached streamers and plastic bottles blow in the wind. The quality of teaching is good, and some adult-led activities are excellent. An experienced team of adults are skilled at assessing children's responses and, through questioning, extend their learning. Basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy are developing well. Teachers give good praise and explain well how learning can improve. There is extensive marking in exercise books, although not in language that children can understand. Many children start school with below-average attainment for their age, particularly in personal and social skills and in communication, language and literacy. By the end of the Reception Year most reach expected goals, although skills of early reading and mark-making remain below expected levels for their age.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the curriculum and teaching and learning in writing in order to raise standards by Year 2, particularly those of the more able.
- Review behaviour management strategies in Years 1 and 2 so that the needs of all pupils are addressed.
- Develop a sharper and more incisive approach to development planning, monitoring and evaluation.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Standards are average by the end of Year 2. Over time, results in national tests vary considerably because of the small number of pupils in each cohort. In 2008 results dipped because a quarter of pupils had learning difficulties and/or disabilities and many others joined the school after the Reception Year. Nevertheless, pupils are making good progress from below-average starting points. The current Year 2 is on course to achieve their predicted targets and with a greater number of pupils attaining the higher levels in national tests. This is because actions to bring improvement in writing and mathematics are raising standards gradually. Poor behaviour has influenced the performance of a small minority.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school 'because it is fun'. They are confident that staff will address their needs and say that actions are introduced quickly to eliminate poor behaviour. Pupils understand the importance of personal safety. Good developments in their personal qualities are preparing them well for later life. A regular sharing of achievements in celebration assemblies and golden time is motivating pupils to learn and socialise in an appropriate way. Pupils enjoy good links with older pupils in the junior school during shared reading activities. In numeracy lessons,

both in Reception and Year 2, pupils showed that they are developing an understanding of economic enterprise when pricing toys, sorting them according to cost and giving change on purchases. Pupils like to make independent choices, but their expectations are sometimes too low and they do not always recognise that their decisions affect the quality of their work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching is mostly good. Adults plan together in teams, ensuring that activities are provided which build effectively on pupils' previous learning. All lessons include a good focus on improving skills of speaking and listening, and pupils are encouraged to share their ideas with adults and talking partners. The best teaching has a brisk pace, and there a good balance between adult-led activities and independent learning. Teachers are good communicators and pupils know what it is they are to learn. Pupils are keen to improve and most are highly engaged in their learning. In literacy and numeracy adult support is targeted successfully, so that individual needs are met and all pupils can achieve. In a small number of lessons in Years 1 and 2, the deployment of staff and organisation of activities is not planned well enough to ensure that pupils remain motivated and learn effectively.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum includes a good range of imaginative and creative experiences taught through a topic approach. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' personal skills, particularly in raising self-esteem. Excellent attention is given to promoting healthy lifestyles and physical exercise has a high priority. Planning of the curriculum is mostly good and activities challenge pupils of differing ages and abilities taught in the same class. Additional strategies are in place to help less able pupils, including teaching assistants who are extremely effective. However, the curriculum offers few opportunities for pupils to write at length and for a real purpose, and the needs of the more able are not met sufficiently. In some subjects the support of pupils with behavioural needs is less well addressed. A good number of visits and visitors are used to enhance the curriculum. There are many well-planned and shared activities with pupils from the nearby junior school. Out-of-school clubs are extensive.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care, guidance and support of pupils are good. Systems are securely in place to safeguard children and ensure their welfare. Induction procedures are good. Staff know pupils well and establish good relationships with them. Assessment systems are well established and pupils' progress is tracked regularly. Good links are made with outside agencies to help support pupils with learning difficulties and behavioural needs. Attendance and punctuality are monitored rigorously, and some families receive support from the county. Parents are pleased with how well their children are cared for, nurtured and supported. They receive good information about the curriculum and pupils' targets for improvement are shared at parents' meetings.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher has been successful in developing a cohesive team of staff and governors who are committed to school improvement. Under her guidance the development of pupils' personal qualities is strongly promoted. All adults work hard to ensure that the environment is vibrant, interesting and challenging, so that pupils are eager to learn. Extensive developments have taken place in the EYFS in order to improve provision outdoors. A good range of initiatives is in place to raise standards in writing that are gradually increasing the rate of pupils' progress. Although the school development plan sets out a clear framework for improvement, it is not sharply focused on exactly how progress in writing is to be rapidly accelerated. Similarly, systems for monitoring and evaluation, although satisfactory, do not provide the incisive insight needed to increase the current good rate of progress. The school finances are efficiently managed.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### 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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

04 December 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Wootey Infant School, Alton, GU34 2JA

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed meeting you and seeing the exciting things you are doing. Thank you for inviting me to the assembly led by the Robins class. I thought that the singing of 'The Acorn Song' was lovely and your pictures were excellent, particularly the huge collage tree. I can see why your parents, grandparents and carers are so proud of you. I think that you have a good school. I liked these things about your school.

- You are friendly and very welcoming.
- You care for each other well.
- Most children work hard in lessons and your standards are improving.
- Your teachers provide a good range of interesting things for you to do.
- Your pupil council are good at suggesting ways to help your school improve.
- Your headteacher and all the adults are working hard to improve your school.
- Your parents and carers are glad that you go to this school.

To make your school even better, I have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do three things. First, I think that the teachers could plan for you to do writing activities more often in Years 1 and 2. I also think that some of you could listen better to the teachers and try harder to do your best work. Lastly, I would like the adults to develop better systems for checking on the school's performance.

I hope that you carry on enjoying the many interesting things provided for you. I am sure that your school will continue to improve.

Yours sincerely

Bernice Magson

Lead Inspector