

Wood Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124057
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	328038
Inspection date	3 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Brian Holmes

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	119
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Hayton
Headteacher	Gaynor Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Wood Lane Bignall End Stoke-on-Trent ST7 8PH
Telephone number	01782 720487
Fax number	01782 720 487

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wood Lane is a smaller than average primary school with an Early Years Foundation Stage covering Nursery and Reception-aged children in a mixed-age class. Since the school was last inspected, it has increased its numbers significantly. The proportion of pupils who join the school other than at the normal time is much higher than average. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The school has been awarded International School status as well as dyslexia friendly and Healthy School status.

The school has childcare provision that is not managed by the governing body and was inspected separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good quality of education. The outstanding quality of provision for pupils' care, guidance and support makes a major contribution to their outstanding personal development and well-being. The school has excellent links with other schools and local agencies to support pupils' well-being. The school has the overwhelming support of parents, who appreciate the 'friendliness, approachability and dedication' of the staff and the high standards of care that the school provides for their children. One parent, typical of many, endorsed this, writing that 'our children are extremely well cared for and almost part of an extended family'. Another commented that the school has a great 'community spirit'.

From the good start made in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children achieve well and reach standards in English and mathematics which are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6. Many parents comment on how pleased they are with the good progress their children make at the school. Progress in reading and writing is faster and more consistent than in mathematics. Pupils' progress in mathematics is being tackled but the strategies to improve pupils' mental arithmetic at the start of lessons are not having enough effect on pupils' achievement. The quality of teaching and learning and curricular provision is good for both and has a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Teaching is matched well to the needs of all pupils and stimulates pupils through a good range of learning activities. The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers pupils a wide range of activities which support both their personal development and their learning.

Pupils' achievement is good because of the good leadership and management and clear direction which the headteacher and the staff set for all pupils to do their best. There are good systems for checking the performance of pupils which help staff to use the results of assessments to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. Pupils receive good guidance on how to achieve their targets and are involved in assessing their own progress through the 'I can' statements. Subject leaders, however, are not consistent in monitoring and evaluating whether the steps they take to improve provision have a positive effect on the achievement of the pupils.

Pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning and their behaviour is outstanding. They show excellent levels of care for each other. Older pupils, for example, act as Playground Leaders for younger pupils. Pupils enjoy school immensely and their positive attitudes are reflected in their views of their teachers, who they say 'give up a lot of time to help us'. One parent commented that 'both my children always come home excited about what they have learned at school'. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and the school is working hard to improve attendance further. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to live healthily, as seen in their enjoyment of sports activities and their healthy food choices at lunchtime. Their understanding of how to stay safe is excellent. They know that they can go to any adult in the school if they are worried. Their contribution to the life of the school is outstanding through their work as school councillors, Euro Buddies and the many other roles which they fulfil. The Euro Buddies are working hard on links with children in schools across Europe. Pupils' future economic well-being is enhanced because of their good achievement. They are developing into confident and mature young citizens as they progress through the school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good because of effective leadership and management and a team of committed staff. Children join the Nursery with skills well below the levels expected nationally. They make good progress although most enter Year 1 with standards which are below average, with about half the children working securely within the early learning goals. Their progress in personal, social and emotional development is a strength. Links with parents are very good. Parents are pleased with the start that their children make at the school. One typically commented, 'My child's reading and writing has come on brilliantly since attending the school'. They make comments on their children's achievements on the 'tree' outside the learning area. Staff place a high priority on children's health, safety and welfare which results in children who feel safe and are confident. They develop a love of learning and have good relationships with the adults around them. The range of activities in the indoor environment is stimulating and is planned well to match the needs of all children. Children listen carefully to adults and are keen to be involved and to learn. They are given good opportunities to develop their language skills, for example in a discussion about where other children live around the country. The outdoor environment is used satisfactorily to promote children's learning, but the range of activities is not as stimulating as that provided indoors. Children's profiles give regular and clear information about their learning and development and are used well to plan and improve their progress as they move through the EYFS.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the provision for mental arithmetic so that pupils' rate of progress in mathematics matches that for reading and writing.
- Ensure subject leaders consistently monitor and evaluate the strategies introduced to improve provision to ensure that they have a positive effect on improving standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6 is good. From different starting points, depending on when they joined the school, all pupils make good progress. Their progress is faster in reading and writing than it is in mathematics. The school is working hard to improve progress in mathematics and is aware of the gap in pupils' progress. Strategies to improve pupils' mental arithmetic at the start of lessons and for homework are not having enough effect on pupils' progress. Important factors in improving achievement have been the improved use of assessment to check pupils' performance and the guidance given to pupils to help them know how to improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are progressing and achieving well because of the good levels of support they receive for their learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their social and moral development is seen in the excellent relationships in school and pupils' clear understanding of right and wrong. They make an excellent contribution to the life of the school through the many opportunities they have to take responsibility, for example, as prefects and sports captains,

where older pupils support younger pupils. Through the links they have with other schools in Britain, Europe and around the world, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of other cultures and how other children live and learn. Attendance is satisfactory, and the school is working hard to dissuade parents from taking their children on holiday during term time. Pupils' enjoyment of school is seen in their enthusiasm in lessons and their support for each other. 'It is a friendly place and everyone makes sure you are OK,' commented one pupil to explain why they like school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers enjoy excellent relationships with their pupils and manage them extremely well. They plan well to meet the needs of the different ages and abilities in each class, although occasionally, there are missed opportunities to stretch the most able pupils even further. Teachers use a good range of practical activities to stimulate pupils, giving them good opportunities to improve their speaking and listening through 'talk partners'. They work well together in independent group activities and share resources willingly. Thorough marking makes clear what pupils need to do next to make their work better and pupils are becoming skilled at checking their own work through seeing how well they have met the 'I can' statement in each lesson. Teaching assistants are deployed well and provide good levels of support for pupils' learning, particularly lower ability pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the pupils' needs well. Learning is well planned so that pupils have good opportunities to use their reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in all their subjects. Projects introduced in literacy, for example, 'Launch the Lifeboat', have had a positive effect on pupils' achievement in enhancing their speaking and listening skills. In mathematics, however, strategies to improve mental arithmetic have not impacted sufficiently on pupils' achievement. An extensive programme for personal, social and health education supports pupils' personal development and well-being extremely well. Pupils have access to a good range of clubs, which are well attended. There is excellent enrichment of the curriculum through visits. For example, pupils visited a quarry in Wales as part of their topic on rocks and soils. Through the links with schools in Europe and other parts of the world, pupils have opportunities to use their ICT and writing skills. All of these experiences enhance their education well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The welfare of the pupils is at the heart of the school's work. They are respected and valued as members of the school community and this helps them to mature into sensible young people who gain excellent personal skills in preparation for life ahead. Pupils say that 'the school is a friendly place where we all support each other. The teachers keep an eye on you.' Adults show high levels of care and concern for all pupils, which creates an atmosphere where pupils feel very safe and grow in confidence. Many parents comment on how happy their children are at school because of the rigorous steps the school takes to care for them. Procedures for

safeguarding and the welfare of pupils meet requirements. There are good procedures for supporting learners with difficulties and/or disabilities and vulnerable children. The school's hard work to improve attendance is reflected in the thorough checking of absences and work with outside agencies to improve attendance. Academic guidance is a strength. Pupils know their targets very well and what they need to do to improve their work, and this has a significant impact on how well they achieve during their time at Wood Lane.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, staff and governors have a clear vision for the school to 'provide high quality education that enables all pupils to do as well they can'. They work hard together to continue improving the achievement of all pupils and to maintain high standards for pupils' personal development and well-being. This common purpose among staff and governors indicates that the school has a good capacity to improve further, as seen in improved progress by pupils in writing. Self-evaluation is good, with effective systems for checking provision and improving the performance of pupils. The contribution of subject leaders to raising standards is not consistent. It is good in English but in mathematics, for example, there is not enough focus on how pupils' achievement will be improved through the actions being taken. Governors fulfil their duties well and challenge the school effectively to improve provision and pupils' standards and achievement through their committees, which meet regularly. The school makes a good contribution to the promotion of community cohesion. There is a clear plan to improve pupils' awareness and understanding of different faiths and cultures. The school's actions promote pupils' understanding of others in the local, wider and global communities well. A parent's comment demonstrates how this is greatly appreciated, recognising how important it is to 'widen children's perspectives to help make them feel a part of the global generation'.

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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?	1
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 ¹ 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

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 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?	1

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 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**

4 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wood Lane Primary School, Staffordshire ST7 8PH

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We thought you were extremely polite and helpful. We enjoyed talking with you and listening to what you had to say. We know that you are extremely proud of your school and enjoy your time there. We think that Wood Lane is a good school with a number of strengths. These are the main things we found out about your school.

- You make good progress in your work and reach the standards expected of you. You do better in reading and writing than in mathematics because you are not as good at mental arithmetic as you are in your other lessons.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you show extremely good attitudes to learning.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to live healthily and how to stay safe.
- The school provides a wide range of activities, which you enjoy, and which help you to achieve well.
- You make an excellent contribution to the life of the school through the different jobs you do, such as Playground Leaders, Euro Buddies and School Councillors.
- You are taught well and say that your teachers 'give up a lot of their time to help' you.
- You know your targets and how to improve your work.
- The adults in school look after you extremely well and they all work hard to help you do your best.

In order to make the school even better, we have asked the staff to:

- help you to improve your mental arithmetic so that your progress in mathematics is as good as your progress in reading and writing
- make sure that teachers in charge of subjects check carefully how well you are doing in order to help you improve your progress further. You can help by continuing to work hard and behaving well.

Best Wishes

Brian Holmes Lead inspector