

Woodrow First School

Longdon Close, Woodrow South, Redditch, B98 7UZ

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their low starting points. Standards are close to average by the time they leave the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start, and the majority of them reach the level of development expected for their age by the time they start Year 1.
- The school makes good use of extra government funding to help disadvantaged pupils catch up with their classmates.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils get on very well with each other in their work and at play.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is now above the national average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding. Parents and staff readily agree that their children are well cared for.
- The headteacher, supported by other leaders and governors, has improved the quality of teaching. As a result, most pupils make good progress.
- Senior leaders' judgements of the quality of teaching are accurate. The good training opportunities the school provides have helped other staff to check and improve teaching and pupils' progress in the areas they are responsible for.
- Governors ask searching questions of school leaders. They visit the school regularly to find out for themselves how well pupils are doing.
- Pupils show a thirst for learning because the rich curriculum stimulates their interest in their work.
- Pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding extremely well through their well-planned lessons, assemblies and extra activities.
- Through the school's links with other cultures and faiths, pupils are prepared very well for life in modern Britain.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most able pupils generally make good progress but, very occasionally, some of the work they are set is too easy for them.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to create their own stories and poetry in their writing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 parts of lessons taught by 11 teachers. Two lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made shorter visits to a number of lessons and listened to pupils read. They attended two assemblies and visited the playground at lunchtime.
- Inspectors met two groups of pupils and talked to other pupils in lessons, in the playground and as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors saw pupils’ written work during lessons and looked in greater depth at a sample of pupils’ books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other school leaders and staff, and with five members of the governing body. Inspectors considered the responses to the questionnaires completed by 47 members of staff. An inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority and to an external consultant.
- Inspectors considered the views given in 21 responses to the online survey (Parent View). An inspector spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school’s checks on how well it is doing and its plans for improvement. They checked the school’s information about pupils’ progress over time and looked at records of leaders’ judgements on the quality of teaching. Inspectors looked at the minutes of governing body meetings and governors’ reports of their visits to the school. They scrutinised how the school keeps its pupils safe and looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- At the same time as the inspection, the school was visited by a group of 15 Palestinian teachers and educational researchers, who attended lessons in a number of classes.
- As part of a pilot study, science was reviewed by a specialist inspector. The outcomes from this exercise do not form part of this inspection.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Cooper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jennifer Taylor	Additional Inspector
Michael Onyon	Additional Inspector
Helen Lane	Her Majesty’s Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Woodrow First School is a larger than average in size. It provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by means of a Nursery class in addition to a class in Reception. Two thirds of the children who enter the school in Reception come from the school's Nursery, with most of the other children attending other nurseries. Children in the Nursery attend either the morning or the afternoon session.
- Most pupils are from a White British heritage.
- A fifth of all pupils are disabled pupils or pupils who have special educational needs. Just over one tenth of pupils are supported by school action, which is above the national average. Close to one fifth of pupils are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, which is above the national average.
- Over half of pupils are supported by the additional pupil premium funding. This proportion is well above the national average. The extra funding is for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who join partway through their primary school education is higher than average.
- As this is a first school, there are no government floor standards setting the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been a number of staff changes in the past two years.
- The headteacher provides support to another primary school in the local authority.
- The school runs a Breakfast Club and a number of after-school clubs.
- The school site is shared with a pupil referral unit and a children's centre, both of which are managed by the local authority. Neither of these settings formed part of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and achievement across the school by ensuring teachers:
 - always set sufficiently demanding work for the most able pupils
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to write in a wide range of styles, including stories and poetry.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The experienced headteacher, who is ably supported by the deputy head, is passionate in his vision for the school. All staff are united in their belief that all pupils can succeed and thrive at the school and check carefully that this is happening. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is excellent and their attendance and attitudes to their learning are consistently good. Every member of staff who completed the questionnaire said they knew what the school is trying to achieve. Morale is high.
- Leaders' checks on the school's progress are accurate. The school improvement plan has the right priorities to move the school forward. Targets set for teachers are linked to the school plan and measured against national standards.
- Senior leaders and teachers in charge of subjects check the quality of teaching systematically through regular visits to lessons. In staff meetings, teachers review pupils' books together to check pupils' progress and the quality of marking. Teachers are challenged by leaders about the progress each pupil makes, and this helps ensure standards continue to rise.
- The school teaches the new National Curriculum through imaginative topics that link different subjects together appropriately. Drama makes a considerable contribution to the curriculum, as pupils appreciate the way they are encouraged to ask questions and suggest their own ideas. Highly effective international links are used to enhance pupils' learning and their cultural understanding.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. In one very successful whole-school assembly, pupils' ideas for solving the dilemma of two teachers, who were trying to eat with metre-long spoons, were cleverly linked to the school motto, 'We care, we share, we learn together'. This contributed very well to the development of their moral and social understanding. Music is used at the beginning and end of assemblies to create a calm and reflective atmosphere. Pupils develop good social skills in their lessons and listen to each other's ideas attentively and courteously.
- Both the pupil premium funding and the primary school sports funding have been used well to improve achievement. Gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in both English and mathematics and others in the school are closing rapidly. Staff teach physical education (PE) confidently, following the training by a sports lecturer. Pupils have suggested ideas for sports at lunchtime, including tag rugby and hockey. The after-school clubs, which include cheerleading and yoga, are popular with pupils. Pupils now take part in competitions with other schools and came second out of twelve schools in Tri-Golf. The extra funding has improved pupils' stamina in PE and increased their knowledge of how to keep fit and healthy.
- Parents who responded to the online questionnaire Parent View agree that they are kept well-informed about their children's progress. Parents say that the school goes out of its way to work with them.
- The local authority gives light-touch support to the school, recognising that it is improving quickly. The local authority appreciates the support given by the headteacher to another school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know how well the school is doing because they look closely at the school's information about pupils' progress and compare this to national data. In their meetings governors ask probing questions, while having a clear understanding of the boundaries of their role as governors. Governors make good use of training from the local authority, including induction for new governors and training in safeguarding. They use their own governing body plan to improve their effectiveness.
 - From their regular visits to the school, governors find out about the quality of teaching, when they go into lessons with senior leaders. During recent visits, governors saw that the quality of pupils' writing, including their use of punctuation, was improving. Governors have checked how well school leaders are developing the new National Curriculum, including how well pupils' progress is being checked in the light of recent changes.
 - Governors make sure that challenging targets, linked with the improvement plan and pupils' progress,

- are set for the headteacher and staff. They know how good teaching is and what is done to improve it, and check that teachers are only rewarded if pupils achieve well.
- The school's budget is managed well. Governors check how the extra government funding is being spent and the difference this makes to reducing gaps in results between disadvantaged pupils and others.
 - Governors speak regularly with parents, attending parents' evenings and events such as a tree-planting activity supported by the local community. The Chair of governors regularly talks to parents in the playground.
 - Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet current national requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils listen to instructions carefully and are eager to set to work. They persevere with their learning and willingly complete the extra challenges teachers give them in their books. Pupils' consistently positive attitudes help them to make good progress.
- Behaviour in assemblies, around the building and in the playground is excellent, contributing to a happy and harmonious school community. Pupils show respect towards other pupils and adults. Records of behaviour show that low-level disruption, either in lessons or during break times, is very rare and well-managed should it occur.
- During the past two years, no pupils have had to be sent home for a short period due to poor behaviour. On the few occasions when any pupil finds good behaviour difficult, the school gives very good support to ensure that behaviour improves quickly.
- Pupils take care of the school environment, and not a scrap of litter was seen. Pupils willingly collect and tidy away all the play equipment at the end of lunchtime. They wear their school uniform with pride.
- Pupils are respectful of different cultures and religions because the school provides many opportunities for them to learn about other countries and faiths. This prepares pupils exceptionally well for life in modern Britain. Pupils showed the utmost courtesy towards the Palestinian visitors, responding politely to their questions and making them welcome in their lessons and in assemblies.
- The vast majority of pupils arrive at school in good time, and punctuality is improving. Attendance has risen each year and is now above average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Leaders make sure that the site is safe, and visitors to the school are supervised.
- The school is rigorous in its checks of staff and visitors. Two staff carry out checks together to make sure that the single central record (SCR) meets statutory requirements, and the governor with responsibility for safeguarding reviews the SCR twice each term. All required training is in place to ensure the safeguarding of pupils.
- Pupils behave safely at all times both in and out of lessons. In a Year 4 physical education lesson, pairs of pupils acted safely and responsibly when doing balances, because they frequently checked each other's holds and stretches. Year 2 pupils explained how to use thermometers safely when measuring the temperature of a hot drink. Pupils give way to each other and adults when moving around the school.
- Pupils' knowledge of internet safety is secure. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children learn that not all internet games are safe. Pupils understand about different forms of bullying including cyber-bullying. They are very confident to talk to an adult if they have any concerns about their safety.
- Parents who responded to the online survey or talked to inspectors are overwhelmingly confident that

their children are safe and secure at the school. Their views are fully shared by staff.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of work in pupils' books and their learning in lessons show that they are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as a result of good teaching. Parents who completed the Parent View survey or spoke to inspectors all agreed that teaching is good.
- Lessons begin promptly and pupils are ready to learn from the start. Teachers are enthusiastic about the topics pupils are learning, and this sparks interest among pupils. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson pupils enjoyed stepping into the role of 'zoo archaeologists' who had to take accurate measurements of bones.
- Teachers always want pupils to do their best, and most pupils know exactly what is expected of them. This helps them settle quickly to their learning. In a Year 1 lesson, where pupils had been reading *The tiger who came to tea*, pupils were encouraged to prepare different questions to ask the Palestinian visitors in the lesson. They were keen to pool their questions and they listened attentively to the responses of the visitors. By the end of the lesson, pupils had created well-presented booklets which showed good progress in writing.
- In the main, pupils are challenged well by teachers in their work. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils were buzzing with ideas to explain the connection between the seven seemingly random numbers the teacher had given them. Once they had spotted the pattern, they relished suggesting increasingly larger numbers up to one million. This showed their good grasp of place value and prepared them well for tackling more demanding questions. On occasions, however, some of the work they are given is too easy for the most able pupils.
- Teachers are skilled at checking how well pupils are doing during the lesson and make sure that they always understand the learning. Teaching assistants support the learning of individuals and small groups well, particularly those involving disadvantaged and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They help to develop pupils' skills in speaking, so that they are more confident to join in the lesson.
- Teachers give pupils helpful and often detailed guidance on how to improve their learning. They make sure that pupils spell words correctly. Pupils readily answer the extra questions that teachers and other adults set them, and their books show that they make even more progress in their skills and understanding as a result.
- Pupils frequently write letters and reports and include them in their books. However, they have only limited opportunities to write their own stories and poems and their skills here are less well-developed than they are in other aspects of their writing.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this is built upon in Key Stage 1. Standards have risen to a point where they are broadly average overall in Year 2 in 2014, particularly in reading and writing; however, they are still below average in mathematics. Pupils make good progress during Year 1 and Year 2, and their rates of progress are increasing in all three subjects.
- A higher-than-average proportion of Year 1 pupils met the required standard in the 2013 national screening check on how well they know the sounds that letters make (phonics). The 2014 results show a further improvement. Pupils enjoy their phonics lessons: Year 1 pupils were excited about moving on to the next stage because they had mastered the letters and sounds they had learnt so far. Year 2 pupils who read out loud to inspectors could break down and build up more difficult words. Pupils enjoy reading across the school.
- Pupils' progress is good throughout Year 3 and Year 4. The school has been particularly successful in

helping lower-attaining pupils to catch up quickly. This prepares pupils well for moving up to the middle school.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported by staff in lessons and in small group sessions. The school's commitment to providing equality of opportunity is evident in the good progress these pupils make and the way in which they are fully involved in the life of the school.
- Gap in results between disadvantaged pupils supported by extra funds and other pupils are closing quickly. Eligible pupils are approximately two-and-a-half terms behind their classmates in reading, and slightly less so in writing, and gaps are also closing in mathematics. The school has used the funding well to provide extra support in lessons, as well as paying for computer tablets, music tuition and, more recently, for a new library in the school.
- The increasing number of pupils who join the school late settle quickly because they are given good support. This helps them catch up with their classmates.
- Not enough pupils reach the higher levels at the end of Year 2. Evidence from pupils' books and lessons seen during the inspection shows that the most-able pupils are not always given work that is sufficiently challenging. A few pupils told inspectors that they would like their work to be harder.

The early years provision is good

- Children join the Nursery with skills that are well below those typically seen for their age, especially in writing and mathematics. They get off to a good start, particularly in their social and physical skills, although a few children still struggle when using numbers.
- Children, including those who arrive from different nurseries, settle quickly into Reception. Many children have skills that are still below those expected for their age. They achieve well in Reception because of the good teaching and the interesting learning activities they are set, and this prepares them well for moving on to Year 1. The majority of children achieve the level of development expected for their age, although the proportion doing so remains below the national average because a few children have not developed their writing as well as other skills.
- Children who need extra support are quickly identified and helped. Children who struggle with speaking and listening are helped to catch up with their language skills. Staff work closely with parents so that children's personal and learning needs can be dealt with as early as possible. Parents meet regularly with staff to discuss their children's development, and how they can help them learn at home.
- Teaching is consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The many activities on offer stimulate children's interest and make them want to find out more. For example, children in Reception enjoyed discussing about different jobs that people do. They responded enthusiastically to adults' questions and were eager to tell each other what they knew already. They were keen to show that they had completed writing without extra help.
- Behaviour is outstanding, because children are often engrossed in their learning and there are extremely clear routines. Children are used to taking turns. For example, Nursery children suggested swapping musical instruments. At the end of the day, children quickly help to tidy up in the classroom before settling to look at books together.
- Children work and play in a safe and secure learning environment. When playing in the outdoor area, children make way for each other when riding on tricycles. Children can explain why they need to wash their hands before their snack.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Well-chosen training helps staff to develop relevant expertise, such as in improving children's language skills. Nursery and Reception staff have common systems for testing and recording children's progress, and the local authority speaks highly of the accuracy of their judgements. The 'learning journeys' provide a detailed record for parents about their

children's learning and progress.

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	116730
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	448481

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

Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	324
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Jackman
Headteacher	Richard Kieran
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2010
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Fax number	01527-500497
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