

Woolden Hill Primary School

Netherfield Road, Anstey, Leicester, Leicestershire LE7 7ES

Inspection dates

23–24 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' plans for improvement are not sharply linked to the progress of specific groups of pupils to drive more rapid improvement in specific areas.
- While ambitious for the school, leaders are not accurate in their evaluation of some aspects of the school's performance.
- The advisory board do not have a sharp enough grasp of the progress of different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to hold the school more stringently to account.
- The quality of teaching and learning is not yet consistently good. Too often, teachers are not precise enough in matching work to pupils' abilities. Sometimes, the least and the most able pupils do not make enough progress in their lessons.
- Teachers sometimes do not address pupils' misconceptions, which slows progress, particularly in mathematics.
- There are too many inconsistencies in the rates of progress, attainment and proportions of pupils achieving at greater depth.

The school has the following strengths

- This is a rapidly improving school. The ambition and drive of the headteacher, school leaders and the trust are instilling a culture of improvement that is shared by all.
- Leaders have put into place a wide range of well-chosen initiatives that are beginning to have a positive impact in many aspects of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and want to do well.
- Pupils' attainment and progress are improving as a result of improvements to the quality of teaching. Teaching is engaging and enthusiastic.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years and key stage 1 is effective.
- Children make a good start to their schooling in the early years. They make very good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning is strong.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further increase the impact of leaders in improving pupils' attainment and progress by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders further develop and refine the use of analysis of the progress made by different groups of pupils to more sharply inform planning for improvement and the setting of more focused targets
 - middle leaders use this information more effectively to plan how to accelerate pupils' progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it accelerates pupils' progress, by all teachers:
 - improving the accuracy of their assessment of pupils' learning to match work more closely to pupils' abilities
 - addressing pupils' misconceptions, particularly in mathematics
 - teaching the skills and understanding pupils need in mathematics to use their reasoning skills and become effective problem solvers.
- Develop governance by ensuring that:
 - the advisory body more effectively challenges leaders about the performance of groups of pupils in different subjects, including the use of the pupil premium funding, to continue to improve the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders' self-evaluation of some aspects of the school's performance are too generous. There are still inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and in the attainment and progress of pupils in different classes and subjects. School results were poor last year, particularly for key stage 2. While there has been clear improvement, leaders have not had sufficient time to ensure that these are consistent, sustained and secure.
- Senior and middle leaders' plans for improvement do not focus specifically enough on improving pupils' progress to bring about more rapid improvement in specific areas. This is an area the headteacher has already identified to develop with her staff.
- Leaders have placed increased focus on evaluating the impact of the pupil premium funding on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. The pupil premium is used in a range of ways, for example providing extra support for pupils' speech and language development, the appointment of a dedicated higher-level teaching assistant to support pupils learning across the school, or to provide access to extra-curricular opportunities. Pupils' work and school assessment information show that attainment and progress are improving. However, disadvantaged pupils need to make more rapid progress to catch up with their peers and pupils nationally.
- The headteacher is passionate and determined to improve the school so that all pupils achieve their very best. The headteacher and deputy have formed a strong relationship and in a short space of time, and together with staff, parents and pupils, and with the support of the trust, are changing the culture and ethos of the school.
- Leaders have introduced rapidly a wide range of initiatives to improve children's attainment and progress, such as the 'accelerated reader' programme in English, for example, or the mastery approach in mathematics. The headteacher and her staff are instilling in pupils greater self-belief and ambition for what they can achieve. The headteacher's clear vision has placed the school on a path of rapid improvement.
- The quality of teaching is improving as a result of the headteacher's drive to improve standards and her determination to create a stable staff team. Leaders have successfully managed a period of significant staff changes and have an accurate picture of where teaching is strongest. They have identified teachers' underperformance in the past and tackled this successfully through additional training and support, along with the school's performance management procedures.
- Leaders and staff have benefited from the wide range of support offered by the trust. All staff who inspectors spoke with were positive about this support, referring to, for example, joint work with other schools to develop assessment practices. Subject leaders spoke of the valuable network meetings in which they share expertise and ideas which they then implement in the school. The advice of lead teachers in the trust has supported the school in developing approaches to teaching and learning. The trust has also provided support for leadership in the early years, and the coordination of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school's broad and balanced curriculum, enrichment activities and wide range of extra-curricular clubs ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education

is effective. 'Experience' days launch new topics to engage and excite pupils. Pupils in Year 6 described how they had pretended to be evacuees as part of their Second World War topic, and one said of her work: 'I was proud of my poster. It was fun. Everybody had a different idea.'

- Displays around the school reflect the many opportunities pupils have to develop their understanding of British heritage and culture to prepare them well for their life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the impact of interventions and the use of additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Systems for checking progress have improved. Rates of progress are improving in line with that of other pupils.
- Leaders have used the additional funding for physical education and sport well to support improvement in teaching and improve rates of participation in sporting activity and inter-school events, such as tag rugby, dance, basketball and a swimming gala.

Governance of the school

- Members of the advisory board do not have a sufficiently clear grasp of the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. While much information about pupils' achievement is available, this is not used strategically enough to more stringently hold the school to account.
- The advisory board knows the school well and is very supportive of the leadership team.
- The advisory board works very closely with school leaders and staff and effectively establishes links between schools to support many aspects of development. Members undertake regular visits to the school to monitor the curriculum, meet with subject leaders and check, for example, safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and the advisory board ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
- The school's single central record of employment checks meets statutory requirements. Staff recruitment and vetting procedures are rigorous and all checks are recorded carefully.
- The designated leads for safeguarding are appropriately trained to carry out their role. They are committed to ensuring pupils' safety and welfare and ensure that all staff are fully trained.
- Leaders ensure that concerns and any incidents relating to behaviour, bullying or racist or homophobic language, for example, are systematically recorded, including the actions taken. The designated safeguarding leads analyse information carefully to ensure that children are safe and to promote their well-being.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently good. Teachers are sometimes not adept at accurately assessing pupils' understanding and using this information to plan the next steps in learning. As a result, pupils' progress, particularly for the most and least able, is not consistently as rapid as it should be.
- In some lessons, teachers do not adapt pupils' work to meet the needs of different pupils. Pupils' work shows that sometimes the most able pupils do not move on to more challenging work quickly enough or the least able do not make the progress they should.
- Teachers do not consistently address errors and misconceptions, particularly in mathematics, which slows pupils' progress.
- Teachers now provide frequent opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills as part of the newly introduced 'mastery' approach. Recent work in books shows that pupils are increasingly recording their reasoning. However, some children are not yet equipped with the skills and strategies they need to be effective problem solvers or to communicate their reasoning clearly.
- There have been significant changes in teaching staff recently. Under the leadership of the headteacher, the quality of teaching is improving. Teachers are enthusiastic, engaging, motivated and committed to improving the quality of teaching and raising the achievement of all pupils.
- Teachers use visual imagery and apparatus well to capture pupils' interest and promote their understanding.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They concentrate, apply themselves, and work hard to complete all that is asked of them.
- Adults are often deployed well throughout the school. Inspectors saw many instances where teaching assistants provided unobtrusive, focused support for individuals or groups of pupils.
- Where teaching is stronger, staff use questioning skilfully to check pupils' understanding and take their learning forward.
- The presentation of pupils' work has improved since September. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to produce sustained pieces of high-quality writing in different subjects.
- Teachers plan topic and learning experiences that engage pupils' interest and stimulate their curiosity.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when online.
- Pupils take pride in their work. Teachers promote this by, for example, asking pupils to

put a cube in a 'proud' jar when they do their best. This builds pupils' confidence.

- Pupils in key stage 2 spoke with inspectors in great detail about how their dissection of a heart in science had helped them understand the working of their bodies and the importance of healthy lifestyles.
- While some parents raised concerns about bullying, inspectors could find no evidence that bullying was an issue. All parents who responded to Parent View said their children were happy at school and feel safe. Pupils say that they feel safe, and know what to do if they are worried. They are very confident that adults will address any concerns that they have.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that behaviour has improved since the appointment of the new headteacher. They are very clear about the expectations for behaviour which are consistently and positively promoted by teachers and staff. Pupils are very polite and courteous in classrooms, corridors, on the playground and at lunchtimes.
- In lessons, pupils are often encouraged to work together. They collaborate very well and show mutual respect for each other. Relationships are very positive. In a small number of lessons, some pupils lost focus only if their work was not well matched to their needs.
- Attendance is currently below that seen nationally, though figures have been affected by a small number of pupils who, for legitimate reasons, have periods of long-term absence. Leaders monitor attendance very closely and have raised the profile of attendance in the school and with parents. The attendance of the large majority of disadvantaged pupils, while still below that seen nationally, is improving. The recently appointed educational welfare officer is working with families to improve attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Work in pupils' books and the school's most recent assessments of reading, writing and mathematics show that, while improving, there are too many inconsistencies in pupils' attainment and progress, including the proportions of pupils working at greater depth.
- In 2016, standards in reading, mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling in key stage 2 were well below those seen nationally. The school was below the government's floor standards. Too many pupils who left key stage 1 at the expected and above the expected levels of attainment made less than expected progress in reading and mathematics.
- In 2016, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils was often below that of non-disadvantaged pupils and pupils nationally. As a result of leaders' more focused use of the pupil premium funding this year, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is generally in line with that of their peers and improving. However, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is lower than that of their peers and pupils nationally.
- Leaders are addressing a legacy of underachievement in many areas. Decisive actions, implementations and staff training are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. School assessment information currently shows that pupils' attainment in

reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 is improving. Overall, larger proportions of pupils across the school are now making expected progress. However, more time is needed for many of the new initiatives to impact on standards securely.

- The new approach to the teaching and learning of mathematics is beginning to have an impact on pupils' achievement. However, lower- and higher-ability pupils do not consistently make the progress they should. School information shows that the proportions of pupils currently working at greater depth are often low.
- In 2016, attainment at the end of key stage 1 was below that seen nationally in reading and mathematics. Attainment and progress are now stronger in key stage 1. School information and pupils' work show that standards are improving in reading, writing and mathematics, including the proportions of pupils working at greater depth.
- Pupils make good progress in phonics. The proportion of pupils passing the phonics screening check in 2016 was in line with that seen nationally and pupils are on track to achieve this in 2017.
- Standards in writing, including grammar, punctuation and spelling, are improving across the school.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities from their starting points is generally in line with that of other pupils.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make a good start to their education in the early years. They are confident, inquisitive learners who are keen to talk about their work.
- The proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development has been higher than the national average for the last two years and school information shows that children are on track for this to continue. Children achieve well across all areas of learning and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The headteacher, the support teacher from the trust, and the temporary early years teacher have put into place robust arrangements to ensure that the early years is well led and the quality of teaching is high. Standards are being maintained.
- Pupils' learning journey records give a clear overview of children's progress and development. However, information about children's achievement in mathematics is not as thorough as in other areas.
- Expectations for writing are high. Children's written work is sustained, and of good quality. Phonics is taught well and children show good understanding, which they are able to apply in their work. Talking about the word 'spoon', one child said, 'it's a digraph in the middle'.
- Teachers encourage parents to play an active role in their child's development. Parents follow, and contribute to, their child's online learning journey record of development. Inspectors observed children watching and discussing a video posted by a parent of their child on holiday in Spain. Children were enjoying learning and saying words in Spanish.
- Teachers plan activities that build on children's learning needs and interests, such as the 'motion in the ocean' topic. This included pirate-themed opportunities to promote

children's writing skills or making sea creatures from junk to promote creativity. Outdoor and indoor provision provides a stimulating range of activities and opportunities for children's learning across the curriculum.

School details

Unique reference number	140851
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10031126

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Sujay Lavingia
Headteacher	Sarah Sadler
Telephone number	01162 362154
Website	www.wooldenhillprimary.org.uk/
Email address	abarkley@woolden.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Woolden Hill Primary School is a smaller than average-size primary school. Pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- The school became part of the Discovery Schools Academy Trust in June 2013. Since that time, two interim headteachers were appointed.
- The headteacher took up post in April 2016 and the deputy headteacher in September 2016.
- Four new members of teaching staff joined the school from September, and a teacher from the trust is covering the early years class temporarily.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language are below the national averages.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- In 2016, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups. Some lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils reading. Inspectors talked with pupils about their school and looked at examples of their work with subject leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders, the school and trust coordinators for the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the chief operating officer of the trust, members of the advisory board, including the chair and trust system leader, and other lead teachers from the trust. Discussions explored a wide range of subjects, including safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including: the school's self-evaluation of current performance and plans for improvement; information relating to the safeguarding of pupils; the school's most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; trust review documents; performance management records and the school's most recent information relating to the attendance of pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. They took account of the 33 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 24 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Lawson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Heather Hawkes

Ofsted Inspector

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