

Woodlands Infant and Nursery School

Whitethorn Grove, Birchwood, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN6 0PF

Inspection dates

2–3 February 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress from their different starting points. Leaders do not check pupils' progress in sufficient detail to identify any underachievement quickly enough and make any changes to teaching that are needed.
- The quality of teaching is improving. New leaders are providing teachers and teaching assistants with relevant training. Some teachers, however, do not yet have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and do not set work that is sufficiently challenging.
- New middle leaders are taking action to improve their areas of responsibility. Some of the teaching programmes they have introduced, however, are not being reviewed to check their effectiveness.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making faster progress but it still varies in different year groups and it does not yet match the progress made by other pupils nationally.
- Children in the early years are making faster progress. Some children need further challenge, however, and their communication and mathematical skills are not as well developed as their other skills.
- Pupils' attendance is below national figures. Leaders have recently taken action to improve this, and attendance is beginning to improve, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors are developing the role they play but do not focus their work well enough on assuring themselves that the quality of teaching is good and that pupils are making fast enough progress.

The school has the following strengths

- New senior leaders are highly committed to improving the school. They have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Clear action plans are in place to bring this improvement about.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils make good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - governors assure themselves that leaders are making accurate evaluations of the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress
 - the school's tracking system is used to show how much progress pupils are making from their different starting points and to identify quickly any additional support or changes in teaching that may be required
 - leaders provide support and training for staff to eliminate the current inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - revising the teaching programmes used in reading to ensure that they provide pupils with sufficient challenge and help increase their understanding of what they are reading
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and consistently challenging pupils to achieve higher standards
 - giving greater support to disadvantaged pupils to ensure that they make accelerated progress and catch up with other pupils quickly.
- Improving pupils' attendance by working with parents to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.
- Improve the provision in the early years by:
 - building more opportunities into the curriculum for children to develop their communication skills and mathematical knowledge
 - challenging the most able children sufficiently.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not secured sufficient improvement since the last inspection and standards have declined. They have not focused well enough on ensuring that the quality of teaching is consistently good and that pupils make consistently good progress.
- New leaders have a well-informed and accurate picture of the school's strengths and the areas requiring improvement. They are determined, realistic and ambitious for the pupils. Leaders' action plans are sharply focused on moving the school forward.
- Recently appointed middle leaders are knowledgeable in the areas for which they hold responsibility. They provide both support for and challenge to other staff. Their work is clearly linked to accelerating pupils' progress. Recent actions have led to pupils making faster progress but it is not clear whether these early improvements can be sustained.
- Procedures to check the quality of teaching have been improved. These are now closely linked to the management of teachers' performance. Staff are provided with appropriate training to help them improve their practice and they are well supported by senior leaders. Working with a teaching alliance partnership and external consultants has created opportunities for middle leaders and teachers to develop professionally. This approach is increasing staff confidence and empowering them to be successful in their respective roles. Senior leaders recognise that this approach has not yet become a strong enough part of the school's routine work to secure further improvements in the quality of teaching. Newly qualified teachers are provided with high-quality support to help them develop into strong practitioners.
- Leaders have simplified the system used to track pupils' achievement. The system is providing reliable and accurate information on how well pupils are doing. This information is used to provide pupils with any additional help they may need to catch up. The system does not, however, provide leaders with sufficient information on the progress pupils make from their different starting points. Leaders are therefore not able to highlight where the teaching programmes need to be modified to remedy any underachievement.
- A sharper focus and targeted support are ensuring that the needs of disadvantaged pupils are being better met than in the past. This improvement has not been as rapid as it needed to be to help disadvantaged pupils catch up with other pupils with the same starting points. Leaders are not yet able to measure adequately what impact the additional help they provide has had on pupils' progress.
- The school's curriculum, underpinned by the school's core values, provides a broad range of subjects. Pupils also benefit from a range of extra-curricular opportunities, such as street dance and art clubs. Enrichment sessions provide a variety of opportunities for pupils to practise the skills they acquire in their more structured learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.

- The leadership of the school's work with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. The leader has an accurate view of the provision and of the outcomes of individual pupils and the school as a whole. Funding is used effectively to provide additional small-group and one-to-one teaching.
- Senior leaders communicate well with parents. Parents show a high level of satisfaction in the work of the school through their responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own parent surveys and discussions with inspectors.
- Arrangements to support the school using leadership from another local school and high-quality input from the local authority are securing improved standards for pupils. The school's own tracking records indicate improvements for many of the pupils currently in the school.
- Leaders make effective use of the school's additional funding for physical education and sport and pupils take part in a range of sporting activities.

Governance of the school

- Since the last inspection, governors have not challenged the school's leaders robustly enough. The governing body's view of the school's strengths and weaknesses has not been accurate. A recent review of governance, together with support from the local authority, have improved governors' understanding of where their focus needs to be. New leadership has been put in place to tackle the areas where improvements are still required.
- Governors have improved the way in which they record their visits to the school and how this information is shared with one another so that they are more fully informed of the school's work.
- Minutes of meetings of the governing body have become more detailed. They show an increasing level of challenge and a greater degree of accountability being asked of leaders. The governing body has not paid enough attention to ensuring that the quality of teaching is good enough to ensure that pupils make good progress from their various starting points.
- The school is using its pupil premium funding to help disadvantaged pupils to catch up. There is some improvement in the standards reached by these pupils, but the governing body has not ensured that the funding has been used well enough to eliminate differences in standards between disadvantaged pupils and those of other pupils nationally.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are well maintained. The staff are kept up to date about safeguarding matters through a well-organised programme of training and briefings. Policies are well understood by staff, who understand how to report any concerns, including those associated with radicalisation and extremism.

- Partnership working with parents and external agencies is effective in making sure that all pupils are safe and, when necessary, are supported. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel safe in the school and that staff are accessible to them should they need to raise a concern. The learning opportunities provided through the school's curriculum help pupils develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. Parents, through Ofsted's online questionnaire and the school's own parent surveys, agreed that their children are safe and well cared for. This opinion was mirrored by parents spoken with during the inspection.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has not been good enough since the last inspection to maintain standards at a high enough level. Teaching is improving, but is not yet consistently good.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. They do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to do harder and more challenging work. For example, the work a teacher set for a class in key stage 1 on number bonds was not sufficiently challenging and pupils made slower progress than they should have done. Some teachers use accurate assessments to match work to pupils' needs and, in these classes, pupils move forward at a rapid pace. For example, a teacher provided a range of activities to engage and stretch all pupils in their understanding of division for pupils in Year 2.
- Teachers often do not ask pupils questions that would deepen their understanding. For example, pupils in Year 2 recalled the features of a good performance but were not asked to explain why the features made it a good performance. A few teachers use their good subject knowledge to great effect when they ask questions that encourage pupils to think more deeply about their answers.
- The teaching of phonics is improving. This improvement has led to pupils gaining better phonic skills. Pupils who read to the inspectors did so with confidence and fluency. Pupils' comprehension has not seen the same improvement, however, as they were unable to explain adequately what they were reading about. The books they were reading also did not provide them with enough opportunities to tackle more difficult words and apply their phonic skills.
- Teachers set homework that is relevant and appropriate, and most pupils complete it. Some pupils, however, do not understand well enough how their homework is being used to support their other learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Teaching assistants support pupils who have specific learning difficulties well. For example, pupils were given more structured tasks and additional guidance to help them improve their understanding of the activities they were completing.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils take great pride in being a part of their school. They are courteous, well-mannered and respectful to each other and to adults.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are increasing their knowledge about eating healthily and are provided with opportunities to keep fit through the school's physical education programme and a selection of sporting activities.
- The school's records show that bullying and racist incidents are infrequent. Pupils told inspectors that bullying does not take place but that, if it did, they know that adults would deal with it effectively.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, supported through the values-based curriculum, is strong. Each pupil is assigned to a community-based team to encourage them to develop a sense of appreciation and responsibility. They show this appreciation during assemblies where they readily praise and support one another's achievements. Pupils may take on a selection of responsibilities, which they treat seriously. These include those of head boy and head girl, librarian and student council member.
- Pupils' understanding of British values is well developed. For example, they speak confidently about democratic elections. Displays around the school are used effectively to show how the pupils are integrating British values into their daily routines.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' conduct in lessons is generally positive. Sometimes they are not fully engaged in their learning, however, and become distracted.
- Leaders have introduced a new behaviour policy and tracking system. Although it is still in its early days, leaders have recorded a reduction in the number of behaviour incidents. Some pupils are not yet sufficiently clear in their understanding of some aspects of the new behaviour policy. Leaders are not yet using the new recording system well enough to highlight any patterns in behaviour incidents.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average. Leaders are taking action to rectify this and their hard work is being rewarded by small increases in attendance rates. The number of pupils who are persistently absent has significantly decreased, especially for disadvantaged pupils. However, the rates of persistent absence for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities continue to be above national figures.
- Pupils' behaviour is good at other times of the day. They cooperate and play well together, especially during their playtimes. Parents, staff and pupils did not raise any concerns about pupils' behaviour during discussions, through Ofsted's online questionnaire or the school's own survey.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2016, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 fell to well below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's new leaders are now working hard to reverse this decline.
- Leaders' actions mean that pupils are now making faster progress. Current information shows that more pupils are now working towards age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics in both Year 1 and Year 2. In mathematics, pupils in Year 2 have caught back up with other pupils nationally, but too few pupils are working at age-related expectations in reading and writing.
- Attainment in the phonics screening checks has been rising towards the national average for the past two years. An increased understanding and application of the phonics teaching programme are ensuring that this trend is set to continue for pupils in the current Year 1.
- Disadvantaged pupils are achieving higher standards. They make progress that matches that of others in the school and it is moving closer to that of other pupils nationally. However, this increase is not consistent across all subjects.
- While the most able pupils reach expected standards in their learning, they do not make rapid enough progress to achieve the higher standards of which they are capable. Almost all lower attaining pupils are making good progress. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and they make good progress from their different starting points.
- The historical gap in achievement between boys and girls is closing. However, these differences in achievement are not yet diminishing in both year groups. The small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are making similar progress to that of their peers.
- The quality of work in pupils' exercise books confirms their faster, but inconsistent, progress. This is especially true for the most able pupils.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Leadership of the early years provision has not sustained children's good achievement since the previous inspection. The school's new leaders have a good understanding of the areas in need of development and are taking effective action to tackle them.
- Children join the school with abilities that are below those typical for their age. Historically, they have made good progress in many of their learning goals but this has slowed in literacy and mathematics. Children are making faster progress again and the school's tracking system indicates that more children in the current Reception Year will achieve the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Children in the early years are becoming better prepared for their transition to key stage 1.

- The quality of teaching in the early years is improving. Staff are using a more structured approach to learning effectively to engage and motivate the children so that they develop the skills they need to improve. For example, children in a Reception class were excited by the approach the teacher was taking to enhance their counting skills. In the same lesson, the teacher did not challenge some children and they became distracted from their learning.
- Sometimes adults do not develop children's communication skills well enough or encourage children to hold conversations about their experiences. For example, the adults in a Nursery class did not interact with the children in a timely manner or model the use of vocabulary to improve their language development.
- Leaders have worked hard to make the learning environment structured and stimulating. They have incorporated the outdoor learning area well to support and extend writing and some mathematics learning. The curriculum is broad and promotes enjoyment in learning. Some activities do not have enough focus on the development of a particular skill, however, especially in mathematics.
- Leaders have a good awareness of the progress different groups of children are making in the early years. Disadvantaged children are making similar progress to that of other children in the school but have not yet caught up with national expectations.
- Children are provided with a high level of support from other adults. For example, teaching assistants made effective use of additional resources and provided targeted support to small groups of children to increase their understanding of number recognition.
- The children are happy in their learning environment and relationships with adults are good. The children cooperate well in their work and play. Leaders and other adults take care to ensure that the children are kept safe. They work well with external organisations to ensure that the children are provided with any additional support they may need. Leaders engage parents in contributing to their children's learning. Statutory requirements in the early years are met and safeguarding is effective.

School details

Unique reference number	120436
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10023203

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Todd
Headteacher	Joanna Blackburn
Telephone number	01522 683557
Website	www.woodlands-infants.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@woodlands.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 June 2013

Information about this school

- Woodland Infant and Nursery School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A large majority of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is small. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- The current executive headteacher, from neighbouring junior and infant schools, has been in post since September 2016 to provide additional support for the school. There have been a number of other staffing changes since the last inspection.
- The school is a member of the KYRA teaching school alliance.
- The school provides a breakfast club for its pupils.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 11 lessons. Some of this learning was observed together with the executive headteacher.
- Discussions took place with school staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors met with a group of pupils, talked with pupils informally, observed registration time and attended an assembly. They also listened to pupils in Year 2 reading.
- The responses to a questionnaire completed by 16 staff and the 14 responses submitted by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account. Inspectors also spoke informally with parents at the beginning of the school day and reviewed the school's own surveys.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a broad range of evidence, including: the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses; planning and monitoring documentation; the work in pupils' books; records relating to attendance and behaviour; and the school's own information on pupils' current attainment and progress.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised. A review of the school's website was made to check whether it met the requirements on the publication of statutory information.

Inspection team

Vondra Mays, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Weston	Ofsted Inspector
Vic Wilkinson	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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