



# Woodhall Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 117194  
**Local Authority** HERTFORDSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 290750  
**Inspection dates** 19–20 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. John Paull

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Woodhall Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		South Oxhey, South Oxhey
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Watford, Hertfordshire
			WD19 6QX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 428 3447
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	0	<b>Fax number</b>	0208 421 4765
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr. Roy Millard
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Lesley Spence
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
3–11	19–20 September 2006	290750

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Woodhall Primary, although situated near Watford, serves part of a large housing estate that was built by the then London County Council in the years after World War II. The purpose was to re-house families from the East End. The school's proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need, is above average. Nearly all pupils are from a white British heritage, although a few are from ethnic minorities and speak English as an additional language. Attainment on entry is often well below average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

Woodhall Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education and is beginning to demonstrate a strong capacity to improve. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Many more are working at or close to the levels of which they are capable than was the case a year or two ago. This is indicated in information gathered from the school's systems for tracking progress, which are used well. It is also apparent from the much higher proportion of pupils who attained the expected level for their age in all three subjects in the Year 6 national tests of 2006. These test results have risen from those of 2004 and 2005, which were well below average. The main reason for such improvement is that the headteacher's good leadership has resulted in the whole-hearted introduction of several teaching schemes and recent national and local initiatives of proven good quality. These schemes meet the specific requirements of the school's pupils, helping them to reach the realistic targets for 2006 that were agreed with the local authority. Writing has been identified as a particular weakness and a scheme known as 'Big Writing' has been employed successfully to increase pupils' rates of progress, which are satisfactory through the school. Many children display standards that are lower than those usually seen on entry to the Nursery. Progress is satisfactory and remains so through Years 1 and 2. At this stage, teacher assessments vary from year to year, but this is mainly owing to differences within subsequent year groups. A national initiative, known as 'Intensifying Support Programme' (ISP), aimed at ensuring that as many pupils as possible work at a level that is appropriate for their age, has also been introduced. These schemes and the associated training have had a positive impact on reducing the amount of inadequate teaching, so the quality is satisfactory overall and includes several good lessons. However, these good lessons are not occurring frequently enough to ensure that more able pupils consistently achieve as well as they could. While effective systems to monitor teaching are well established, a specific focus on provision for higher attainers is lacking. Other groups are served well. For example, pupils with emotional or similar difficulties thrive in the 'Acorn' class, which provides a nurturing and caring environment, so that many of the targeted pupils are able to return successfully to mainstream classes. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified accurately and individual targets are drawn up and shared with them and their parents. Good provision then helps them to progress well towards their targets. Personal development is satisfactory, as is pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, attendance is poor, even though the vast majority of pupils, when asked, say that they enjoy school and, in questionnaires, nearly all their parents confirm this view. High levels of absence are clearly a contributory factor to the poor test results of 2005, as attendance was particularly low in that year.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Use the school's good systems for the evaluation of teaching, so increasing the proportion of high quality teaching and learning is now the aim, rather than that of satisfactory teaching. - Increase the focus on provision and challenge for higher

attaining pupils, so they consistently achieve as well as possible. – Ensure that parents and pupils are fully aware of the link between attendance and progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The school keeps a close check on pupils' progress and uses the information well to ensure that pupils work at the expected level for their age. As a result, standards by the time pupils leave the school are rising. The 2006 national test results for pupils in Year 6 illustrate this well, especially when compared with 2005. Although national comparisons are not yet available for 2006, indications are that these results are broadly average, whereas in 2005 they were considerably below that of most other schools. The school's assessment records of pupils' work indicate that improvement is being sustained. Standards at the end of the Reception year are often below those that are normally expected, and at the end of Year 2 are often well below average. Nevertheless, teaching and learning are improving in classes for these younger pupils, for the same reasons as in older age groups. Rates of progress are satisfactory and increasing.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils' satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to satisfactory behaviour and a calm and orderly climate around the school. Although a few pupils find it difficult to conform to rules of behaviour, lapses are infrequent and are dealt with effectively by staff. Many pupils make a good contribution to the community. They understand how to effect change through their School Council and older pupils are proud to be 'Peer Mediators' and 'Buddies' to younger children at playtimes. These roles are taken seriously. They are involved regularly in work for charities. Pupils make good progress in learning to work together. Most of them are happy and interested in lessons, so concentrate on their work without interruptions. They learn to use equipment safely and effectively and to take care of their diet and physical fitness. Playtimes are nearly always pleasant occasions and are monitored well.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory and inadequate teaching is rare. Teaching has been evaluated and developed effectively. Records indicate considerable success in reducing the occurrence of inadequate lessons. Much training in the use of programmes and techniques that are tailored to the specific learning requirements of the school's pupils has been undertaken. Monitoring checks on the effectiveness of these strategies are consistent with the findings of the inspection, indicating a pattern of steady

improvement at all stages through the school. This is one of the main reasons that standards are rising. Nevertheless, sufficiently challenging work for more able pupils is not set frequently enough. This is the main reason that good lessons do not occur more frequently than they do, as the staff possess all the necessary skills to hold pupils' interest.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. It has been reviewed recently and a programme has been put in place to ensure that all pupils who are capable of it work at a level appropriate for their age. Provision has improved. For example, exciting and interesting artefacts are often used well to grab pupils' interest, which has a positive impact on pupils' progress and personal development. In this way, pupils learn skills that will benefit them in later life. Extra-curricular activities make a good contribution to pupils' social development through the inclusion of innovatory opportunities for pupils to pursue particular interests together. For example, one pupil in Year 5 summed up a typical view about the 'Dr Who Club', explaining '...School is great because we are going to make a Dalek!' There is also a newly formed 'Authors' Club' run for younger pupils by members of Year 6.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils' happiness and safety are promoted effectively. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, with care taken to seek their views and those of their parents. Provision for pupils in the Acorn class is also good and has had a strong impact on raising pupils' self esteem across the whole school. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is much improved, so staff have a good grasp of standards and progress across the school. Attendance is carefully monitored and the school has tried many initiatives to improve punctuality and the regularity with which pupils come to school. However, the level of attendance remains poor. Health and welfare are promoted well and pupils are nearly always willing to listen to advice.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and its self-evaluation and targets for improvement accurately reflect its present stage of development. Good leadership on the part of the headteacher has established effective systems for managing the core areas of English, mathematics and science, and the relevant co-ordinators carry out their responsibilities with increasing effectiveness. This has had a positive impact in raising standards recently. The school improvement plan is correct to highlight the development of leadership in other subjects as a focus for the forthcoming year. New ways to check, evaluate and improve standards are good, but

have not yet had time to have a full impact, especially on the work of higher attainers. Governors are involved in and very supportive of the school. However, recruitment is difficult and vacancies are sometimes unfilled for some time. As a result, expertise understandably fluctuates. Nevertheless, an experienced chair offers effective support and challenge to the headteacher and senior staff. As a result of significant improvements made to systems of management and provision, including pertinent improvement planning by the headteacher, in a good partnership with the local authority, the school has a good capacity to sustain improvement.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

21 September 2006 Dear Children Woodhall Primary School, Woodhall Lane, South Oxhey, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD19 6QX Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when Mrs Barnes and I visited your school. You helped such a lot to make the two days go smoothly. We enjoyed speaking to you and seeing your work. It is great that many of you told us that you like school and that your teachers look after you well while you are there. We agree with you about these ideas. We believe that what your school provides for you is satisfactory and that it is getting better. Here are some good things about your school: - Your headteacher knows your school well and has good ideas about how to improve it; - The number of good lessons is going up, so your test results are going up too; - Many of the older children enjoy helping younger ones: for example, they run an 'Authors' Club' and take their jobs as 'Peer Mediators' and 'Buddies' very seriously; - Your teachers, teaching assistants and other adults in school care a lot about you and give you good advice and support. Some things that we have asked your headteacher, teachers and school governors to do: - Use all that they find out about what you know to help them to teach you even more effectively; - Make sure that those children who can do harder work always have it set for them; - Make sure that you and your parents understand the close link between school attendance and good work. Yours sincerely John William Paull (Lead inspector)