

Woodhouses Voluntary Controlled Church of England and Free Church Primary School

Ashton Road, Woodhouses, Failsworth, Manchester, M35 9WL

Inspection dates

4–5 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement requires improvement. The standards pupils achieve at the end of both key stages are only broadly average in English and mathematics.
- Progress is not consistently good in reading, writing and mathematics for all pupils. Not enough pupils make better than the expected rate of progress in reading and writing.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Teachers do not always use assessment information effectively to plan lessons which are well matched to the pupils' abilities.
- Teachers' feedback and marking do not always give pupils clear advice about how to improve their work.
- Pupils of all ages have gaps in their understanding of the links between letters and sounds. Their spelling is weak.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their mathematical skills through other subjects.
- Middle leaders do not have enough impact on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching.
- Governors have not held the school to account over its performance robustly enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Children often make better than expected progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because the quality of teaching is good.
- The proportion of pupils making better than expected progress is increasing.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they feel safe in school. Positive relationships abound.
- The new headteacher has accurately identified weaknesses in the quality of teaching and achievement and has made significant improvements in a short period of time.
- The senior leader with responsibility for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs ensures that these pupils receive high quality support and achieve well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or part lessons, three of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of 48 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and talked to one parent who requested a telephone interview.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including: assessment data, the school's evaluation of its work, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documentation, reports from school improvement partners, information about the management of teachers' performance, monitoring records and the school's improvement plan.
- She listened to pupils read and also reviewed samples of their work.
- The inspector reviewed 14 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- She observed pupils' behaviour at playtime, around the school and in lessons.
- The inspector also observed an assembly led by a senior leader.

Inspection team

Clare Daniel, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is well-below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- A small number of pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- A below average proportion of pupils is supported through school action.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The headteacher took up her post in January 2013, which was after the previous inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all is good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers always have an accurate view of where pupils are up to in their learning, so that they can plan and deliver lessons that build on pupils' existing knowledge, skills and understanding
 - checking that the feedback teachers give in lessons and the marking in pupils' books always evaluate the progress they have made, and give them very clear guidance about how to improve their work
 - making sure that lessons contain a suitable level of challenge so that more pupils make better than the expected amount of progress, especially in reading and writing
 - developing a whole-school structured approach to the teaching of phonics (the links between letters and sounds) and spelling.
- Further improve leadership and management in order to raise achievement by:
 - ensuring that strategies for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and achievement are used effectively by all leaders so that all pupils achieve as well as they can
 - ensuring that all staff who hold specific posts of responsibility are fully accountable to senior leaders and governors for the achievement of pupils
 - increasing the number of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills through other subjects, particularly in mathematics
 - maintaining high expectations of what pupils can achieve and communicating these effectively to pupils, parents and staff.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils requires improvement because it is not consistently good across the school.
- The quality of teaching has not been sufficiently well monitored to ensure that all pupils make good progress; this is especially true of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. Since the current headteacher took up post in 2013, there have been improvements in achievement for most pupils but these have not yet been sustained over time.
- The majority of children join the Reception class with broadly typical skills for their age; apart from in reading and writing, where they are slightly lower. Most make good progress and the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development in 2013 was higher than the national proportion.
- Most pupils enter Year 1 with average attainment. Standards reached by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have been variable since the time of the last inspection and were broadly average in 2013.
- In 2013 a broadly average proportion of pupils achieved the expected standard in the check of Year 1 pupils' understanding of the links between letters and sounds (phonics). The pupils' use of phonics in their spelling is inconsistent in Key Stages 1 and 2 and too many pupils are not confident when using common spelling patterns in their writing.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and read regularly at home and at school, although they are not always challenged by the level of difficulty of their books.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average in English and mathematics. In 2013 all pupils made the expected amount of progress in reading and writing, and almost all in mathematics; however the proportions of pupils making better than expected progress in reading and writing were low.
- Current assessment data and work in pupils' books indicate that most pupils in the school are now making better than expected progress. The standards attained by Year 2 pupils in 2014 are higher than in 2013. However, the predicted attainment for Year 6 in 2014 is broadly average and the proportions of pupils on track to achieve the expected levels are still below average in other classes. This is why, despite improvements, achievement still requires improvement.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is generally good because of the high quality support that they receive. Their learning needs are clearly understood by adults working with them.
- Higher-ability pupils make the expected amount of progress in reading and writing, and some make better than expected progress in mathematics.
- The majority of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium make good progress, particularly those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The majority of such pupils are currently working above the standards expected for their age. In 2013 at the end of Year 6, the achievement of pupils entitled to free school meals was approximately one year behind that of their peers in reading and writing and almost two and a half years behind in mathematics.
- The school does not yet ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed, because progress and attainment vary between groups.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement, because not enough is good or better. Consequently, too few pupils make consistently better than expected progress, particularly in reading and writing.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. All adults plan and lead learning activities which are well matched to the needs of the children. As a result of high quality questioning and support, most children achieve well.

- Although there are some examples of good teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2, too much teaching does not build on pupils' current skills, and the feedback given to pupils does not give them clear guidance about how to improve their work. Similarly, although some marking accurately evaluates pupils' progress and provides clear steps for improvement, this is not always the case. Weaknesses in spelling are not effectively addressed. As a result, pupils often repeat mistakes, especially in their writing, and are not always secure in their understanding of important concepts in mathematics.
- Where teaching is not yet good, teachers do not have a thorough understanding of what all pupils can already do, or do not have sufficiently high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. They do not check pupils' understanding often enough during lessons and, as a result, they do not always recognise when pupils have not fully understood what is expected of them or are ready to move on. This means that their progress slows.
- Where teaching is good, pupils are engaged in their work because it is well planned, so that pupils of all abilities are challenged and motivated to do well. The subject matter or theme is exciting and resources are used well to maintain pupils' attention throughout.
- In a Years 3 and 4 writing session, pupils had watched a short film clip of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. This opportunity to learn visually motivated them to make imaginative choices in the vocabulary they used to describe entering Charlie Bucket's house. They then shared ideas and used a thesaurus successfully to generate a range of interesting adjectives for use later in a piece of descriptive writing. In this lesson they learned well.
- Additional adults support pupils well in individual sessions, group work and class work, and because their sessions are focused accurately on the needs of their pupils, most make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons pupils listen respectfully to staff and to each other and, once engaged in activities, their attitude to learning is good.
- Pupils say that they think behaviour is not as good at playtime as it is in lesson time, but that it is still good overall. This is because the boys sometimes take over the playground for football and more physical games and the girls do not have enough to do. In general, pupils play well together.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Relationships between pupils and adults are positive and pupils trust the school's staff to help them if they have any problems or concerns.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in school, there are very few incidents of bullying and that staff deal with them well. They demonstrate a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe both physically and, for example, when using the Internet.
- All staff and parents who responded via Parent View said that they felt pupils were well-behaved, and most said that bullying was effectively dealt with. Staff manage behaviour well and the school keeps detailed records of how it manages any incidents.
- There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.
- Effective procedures are in place to keep vulnerable pupils safe and the school could provide clear evidence of how it had worked with other agencies to protect and nurture pupils.
- Attendance is consistently above average.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Although the headteacher and governors have identified the right priorities for improvement, the pace of change since the last inspection has been too slow. As a result, the quality of teaching has not improved sufficiently quickly to raise achievement swiftly for all pupils.

- There is now evidence of an improvement in the proportion of pupils making and exceeding the progress expected of them. This demonstrates the positive impact of leaders in improving previous inconsistencies in performance.
- The monitoring of teaching is now more thorough, although middle leaders are not yet having enough impact on improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement. Previously, monitoring has not been rigorous enough to sustain good teaching, which is why much teaching still requires improvement in order to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- The headteacher has effectively used information about pupil progress to identify specific groups that need additional support, such as disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The middle leader with responsibility for this area is effective in monitoring their progress and, as a result, these pupils are achieving well.
- Teachers and school leaders have targets based on their performance and pupils' progress. Regular meetings take place to review and monitor the progress of all pupils, although these are not always linked closely to the quality of teaching. An effective appraisal system is also in place for teaching assistants.
- Safeguarding requirements are met.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and is enriched with clubs and visits. This includes, for example, visitors to talk about different careers during the school's Aspiration Week. Pupils do not have as many opportunities to develop their mathematical skills through other subjects, as they do in reading and writing.
- The school has plans to spend new primary sport funding to increase participation in physical education, to improve the quality of teaching through the use of sports coaches and to deliver further professional development to teaching staff. The impact of this is not yet evident.
- The local authority has provided light-touch support for the school and has been focused on providing training and further professional development for governors. As a consequence, it has not been sufficiently aware of weaknesses in the achievement of pupils or the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very supportive of the work of the school and has a well-informed awareness of the weaknesses in achievement and the quality of teaching. However, it has not previously held the school to account robustly enough for weaknesses in its performance. This is starting to improve as the recruitment process for new governors has focused on strengthening the skills of the governing body. The headteacher ensures that information given to governors is accurate, and governors are beginning to challenge the school more effectively, but still not strongly enough. Governors understand how to use teachers' performance management to improve the quality of teaching and improve achievement, but have not ensured that improvements have been swift and sustained in the past. They visit the school to observe aspects of its work and meet with specific staff. The governors have a good understanding of how the school spends pupil premium funding and the impact on pupils' achievement.

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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	105688
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	442325

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Bentley
Headteacher	Rachael Bentham
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2012
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