

Inspection of Woodhall Primary School

Woodhall Lane, South Oxhey, Watford, Hertfordshire WD19 6QX

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Woodhall Primary School. Strong pastoral provision is in place. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about all that the school provides. One parent commented, 'Woodhall School is a very nurturing, small, family orientated school. Always willing to help and go the extra step!'

Pupils are polite and well mannered. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils enjoy learning and playing together. Pupils feel safe and say that bullying is rare. Pupils respond well to the clear expectations for behaviour. Underpinning these are positive relationships that exist between pupils and staff.

High aspirations are promoted. Pupils are determined to live up to the school's values of passion, resilience, respectfulness, inclusivity, aspiration and family. They proudly rise to the challenges that staff provide.

Pupils make a strong contribution to the life of the school. For example, they take on responsibilities such as being librarians or members of the school parliament.

Wider personal development is carefully considered. Pupils develop character as a result of the experiences they have through the curriculum content. Pupils know that everyone is different and say this is okay. They understand the importance of tolerance. Pupils are supported to apply these attitudes in their day-to-day lives.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils from Nursery to Year 6. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

In most subjects, leaders have identified the important knowledge that all pupils should learn in each year group. They have ordered this content carefully so that pupils can build on previous learning when presented with new knowledge. Teachers use assessment well. They accurately identify gaps in pupils' learning and address them swiftly. In many areas of the curriculum, pupils are given opportunities to progress through the curriculum well, knowing more and remembering more over time.

In a few subjects, where leaders are not as clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn, there are times when teachers are hampered when they deliver the curriculum content. Consequently, in these areas of the curriculum, some pupils do not achieve as well as they might.

Leaders have ensured that reading and phonics are planned effectively across the school. Teachers use this planning to ensure that pupils learn new sounds quickly. Reading is actively promoted throughout the school. Leaders support pupils' reading

development through a range of different initiatives, including buying each pupil a book when it is their birthday. Pupils enjoy learning to read and most engage enthusiastically. Books are well matched to the sounds that pupils know. Teachers reinforce new sounds with pupils in lessons during the day. Pupils who find phonics and reading difficult get effective support to help them catch up. By Year 6, pupils are fluent and confident readers. They enjoy and understand what they are reading.

Leaders' high ambition for pupils begins in the early years. From Nursery, children quickly learn new routines. They play happily together and demonstrate well-developed social skills. The activities they complete are purposeful. Adults provide good support. They model the use of language well and encourage children to speak in full sentences. Leaders identify that children start the school with communication skills lower than their peers nationally. Although leaders have ensured that reading is taught well in early years, this is not reflected as effectively throughout the early years environment, for example in the outdoor learning area.

Pupils with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND) are well supported because leaders identify the children that require additional support as soon as they start school. Teachers deploy a range of effective strategies to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Pupils are ably supported by well-trained teaching assistants. Pupils that require further support have access to the school's 'ROWAN' provision where they receive additional support to enable them to access learning.

Leaders provide pupils with a broad range of opportunities to support their personal development. These include educational trips and visits which complement and support the curriculum knowledge pupils learn. For example, the school recently visited the Royal Opera House. In addition to this, pupils regularly participate in community events.

Governors have the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively hold leaders to account. They understand and carry out their statutory roles, for example to safeguard pupils effectively.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the actions that governors and leaders have taken to reduce their workload, such as providing well-being days for all staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff know how to keep pupils safe. When staff have a concern about a pupil, concerns are carefully recorded and followed through.

Staff receive timely and helpful training, enabling them to identify and support pupils who are at risk of harm. Leaders liaise well with external agencies to ensure pupils receive the support they need.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding checks on adults are undertaken with suitable rigour.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet and when walking to and from school. This helps them to recognise potential risks when they may be placed in unsafe situations. As a result, there is a culture of safeguarding throughout the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For some areas of the curriculum, leaders have not fully defined the knowledge they would like pupils to learn by the time they get to the end of Year 6. As a result, in these subjects, pupils are not building the full knowledge base that they need for the next stages of their education. Leaders should ensure that in every subject the knowledge they want pupils to learn is clearly and fully defined, especially end points, so pupils are well prepared for secondary school.
- Children starting in early years require a language-rich curriculum. Currently, the environment that children learn in, especially the outside area, is not language-rich enough. As a result, some children are not learning key vocabulary quickly enough to prepare them for Year 1. Leaders should ensure that they provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop their language skills so that children quickly acquire the key vocabulary they need for the next stage of their education.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	117194
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10241118
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	123
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Graham Denman
Headteacher	Michelle Lake
Website	http://www.woodhall.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 – 27 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There has been significant change in the number of pupils on the school roll since the previous inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken into that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and the school's senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, the early years foundation stage leader, the designated safeguarding leads, groups of staff and members of the local governing body. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. They reviewed how well the designated safeguarding leads act upon concerns about pupils' welfare. Inspectors talked to staff, governors and pupils about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors considered the 21 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 21 free-text responses and 13 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Joseph Figg, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Simon Harbrow

Ofsted Inspector

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