

Woodside Primary School

Whitchurch Way, Halton Lodge Estate, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 5YP

Inspection dates

17–18 July 2018

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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 was well below the national average in 2016 and 2017.
- Pupils do not make good enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching and learning is variable throughout the school. Not all teachers and governors have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Governors do not give leaders enough challenge about the work of the school, including the spending of the pupil premium to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Teachers do not challenge the most able pupils enough.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are not linked closely enough to the priorities for improving the school. Subject leaders have an underdeveloped understanding of how successfully pupils learn in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Teachers in the early years do not plan activities that enable children, especially the most able, to apply their reading and writing skills independently. Staff do not model language consistently well for children.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders have created a nurturing school environment. Pupils said that they feel safe and that staff care for them well. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.
- Unvalidated results of the 2018 key stage 1 and key stage 2 national tests indicate that pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics have increased significantly this year.
- The teaching of phonics is improving.
- Pupils' attendance at school is improving significantly. Previously high rates of persistent absence have fallen.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders and staff develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils enjoy the broad and exciting curriculum.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite, courteous and respectful towards others.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in key stages 1 and 2, so that a greater proportion of pupils reach and exceed the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
 - increasing teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve for their age and ability
 - ensuring that teachers provide greater challenge to the most able pupils in different subjects.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - improving how leaders and governors measure the impact of the pupil premium spending on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils
 - sharpening the focus of monitoring activities so that the actions taken match closely to the school's agreed priorities
 - making sure that governors have high expectations for pupils' achievement and know to challenge leaders about the work of the school
 - developing the roles of subject leaders, so that they can check the quality of pupils' learning in different subjects.
- Improve children's outcomes in the early years by ensuring that:
 - staff plan activities that help children, especially the most able, become more independent, as well as practise their reading and writing skills
 - all staff effectively model spoken language to children.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders, staff and governors were disappointed with the weak achievement of pupils in 2016 and 2017. They recognised that leadership, teaching and learning were not good enough. Working closely with the local authority, leaders have put in place clear plans to bring about improvements. As a result of a wide range of actions by leaders and staff this year, the quality of education at the school is improving. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is rising in key stages 1 and 2.
- Leaders have focused closely on improving pupils' attendance. For example, they have made sure that the school's educational welfare officer regularly challenges parents when pupils are late or absent. Pupils' attendance has risen and is now in line with the national average. Leaders have been very successful at reducing the high rates of pupils' persistent absences from school, which are now lower than the national average.
- Leaders make sure that Woodside is a nurturing school where pupils say that they feel safe and that staff care for them. Parents with whom inspectors spoke, and those that responded to the Ofsted Parent View survey, were overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Parents said that staff make them feel welcome at the school. They value the support for their children from the school's leaders. One parent, whose view was typical of many, said, 'This school has literally given my child skills for life, they have taught my child to read and write. Children at the school are polite, well mannered, nurtured and cared for.'
- Leaders' work to improve pupils' achievement has ensured that current pupils make adequate progress in all year groups. Nonetheless, this is not good enough to ensure that pupils' attainment matches that of other pupils nationally.
- The activities that leaders undertake to check on the work of the school, including the quality of teaching, do not link closely enough to the priorities set out in their improvement plan. Some subject leaders do not hold a comprehensive view of the quality of pupils' work across different subjects and classes because their role is underdeveloped.
- The leadership of mathematics is improving. Leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Their links with other schools, through a local mathematics group, have helped them to introduce more advanced ways of teaching mathematics at Woodside. The quality of pupils' work in mathematics is improving but it is too early to judge the full impact of this work on pupils' progress.
- The leaders of English have successfully led improvements in teaching and pupils' learning across the school. Leaders are well informed about how pupils should be taught to talk, read and write. Leaders' support and training for staff is improving the teaching of phonics strongly. Pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check rose in 2018 to a new high for the school. The attainment of pupils leaving key stages 1 and 2 also improved in reading and writing in 2018.
- Leaders make sure that pupils have many varied chances to develop their abilities across the curriculum. The quality of pupils' art work, displayed across the school, is

high. Pupils also apply their creative skills well, through science, and design and technology activities. For instance, in Year 6, pupils designed and built periscopes as part of their science work. During the inspection, inspectors saw pupils in key stage 2 apply their musical skills to take part in an assembly, displaying their guitar-playing skills and ability to read musical notation. Their behaviour showed that these pupils have become resilient and confident enough to perform publicly.

- Pupils benefit from many exciting and interesting topics taught by teachers. They enjoy a wide range of extra activities. For instance, some pupils spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about their recent trip to the zoo.
- Leaders and staff prepare pupils well for their life in modern Britain. For example, leaders ensure that pupils develop their understanding of the main religions practised in Britain. Pupils learn much from listening to appropriate speakers from religious organisations and by making visits to places of worship. Staff select novels carefully for pupils to read, including stories about a range of moral and cultural topics. Leaders make sure that staff give pupils many opportunities to learn about the world around them and to explore different views and opinions through their lessons.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities receive good support from school leaders. Leaders double-check that staff identify the needs of pupils early. School leaders work well with partner agencies to give prompt and relevant support for individual pupils. Parents whose children have received help from the school commented very positively on the difference that this has made to their children's progress.
- The specially resourced provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is led well. The leaders of SEN make sure that staff give pupils skilled support. Leaders have ensured that several pupils have rejoined their mainstream classes smoothly.
- Leaders spend the pupil premium funding on extra help for pupils, but they are uncertain what difference this makes to the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils.

Governance of the school

- Governors give their time to support school events as volunteers, as well as helping to supervise pupils on school trips.
- Governors recognise that the school is successful at developing pupils' confidence, safety and well-being. They check what leaders tell them about the quality of education by talking to pupils and asking staff to explain pupils' learning. However, governors do not challenge leaders enough about teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Governors use their insights to contribute to reviews of the school's work. They know about recent improvements in how well pupils learn phonics, attend school and how much pupils gain from learning outdoors. Governors understand that pupils' progress and attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 are improving, but they also recognise that pupils do not do as well as they should. Some governors do not have high enough aspirations for pupils' achievement.
- Governors keep a close check on expenditure of the primary school physical education (PE) and sport funding. However, they do not give enough attention to reviewing the impact of the pupil premium funding on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff complete appropriate training to enable them to be confident in keeping pupils safe. Members of staff with whom inspectors spoke were clear about the school's procedures for safeguarding children.
- Leaders keep detailed records of staff concerns about pupils' care and protection. Documentation reviewed by inspectors showed that leaders' referrals to children's social care are prompt and proportionate. Leaders keep careful records of their work with external agencies.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They understand how to protect themselves from harm online and while away from school. Inspectors saw older pupils apply their knowledge successfully to present a safety assembly to other pupils in key stage 2.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving because of the determined work of leaders and staff. As a result, weaker teaching has been eradicated and pupils are making adequate progress in their learning.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school. The secure subject knowledge of teachers and teaching assistants helps staff to teach pupils well. As a result, more pupils are reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Teachers use careful questioning to probe and challenge pupils to think deeply about their answers. Staff link pupils' work across subject areas. For example, in Year 6, pupils responded knowledgeably to a text about the Second World War and staff helped them to link this work well to their knowledge of Judaism.
- The teaching of writing is improving. Pupils' books show that the quality of presentation in their work is typically good. Pupils are aware of different types of sentence structures and how to use paragraphs effectively. Staff enable younger pupils to apply their spelling knowledge to independent writing activities. Even so, staff are not challenging the most able pupils to develop their work in enough depth. Pupils are keen to try to spell unfamiliar words in their work.
- The teaching of reading is improving across the school. This is because teachers are making better use of a range of fiction and non-fiction to inspire pupils.
- Teachers use their subject knowledge to enable pupils across the school to have a good grasp of basic skills in mathematics. However, work seen in pupils' mathematics books shows a lack of consistent challenge for the most able pupils.
- Teaching and learning in science are good. Pupils develop their understanding of science through a broad range of topics covered each year. Evidence shows that pupils' investigative skills are developing well across all year groups.
- Teachers have created classroom environments that are bright and stimulating. Staff celebrate pupils' work positively in classrooms and in displays on walls around the school.

- Pupils' work demonstrates that teachers plan and deliver a broad and interesting curriculum. However, not all staff have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. This accounts for pupils making steady rather than good progress in different subjects and classes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff and leaders have created a nurturing and welcoming school environment. Through the specially resourced provision, they have created a safe space in school for pupils with behavioural, social and emotional needs.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the work of staff to foster and promote pupils' welfare. Parents said that their children are safe in school, that pupils behave well and that leaders deal effectively with bullying.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They appreciate all that is on offer to help them to learn and grow as citizens. They are aware of the needs of others, for example pupils told inspectors they had taken part in fundraising in support of a national cancer charity.
- Pupils enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities available, such as football, basketball, rugby, tennis and rounders.
- Pupils have high aspirations. They talked enthusiastically to inspectors about their intended careers, for example in engineering, hotel management, astrophysics and the police.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about a wide range of safeguarding issues and they know how to stay safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and friendly. They treat each other with respect and are courteous. Pupils understand and respect diversity. Pupils with whom inspectors spoke, were articulate in their understanding, such as one pupil commenting that nobody should judge another person by how they look.
- Pupils manage their own behaviour well. School leaders ensure that staff take a consistent and positive approach to the management of pupils' behaviour across the school.
- School leaders keep exact records of incidents of pupils' poor behaviour, including in the specially resourced provision. Leaders review information carefully, so that they and staff can make improvements in their support for individual pupils.
- Pupils, including those in the specially resourced provision, behave well in activities. However, in different classes, when their work is too easy and lacks focus, some pupils become distracted and their attention wains.

- Leaders' and staff's actions have ensured that pupils' attendance is improving year-on-year. The headteacher and the education welfare officer greet pupils at the gate each morning as they arrive for school. Previous high rates of persistent absence have fallen considerably. Pupils' punctuality is good.
- Pupils in the school, including those in the specially resourced provision, look after the school environment thoughtfully. Teachers celebrate the work of pupils positively throughout the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In recent years, leaders have not been successful in sustaining pupils' good achievement. Pupils' attainment and progress fluctuate year-on-year. For example, in 2016, the progress of pupils in Year 6 in reading and writing was similar to that of other pupils nationally. Their progress in mathematics was well above average. In 2017, pupils' progress in reading remained average, but their progress in mathematics and writing declined and was below that of other pupils nationally. In 2016 and 2017, the proportion of pupils in Year 6 reaching at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined was low.
- The 2018 unvalidated results point to an improving picture overall. As a result of steadier progress, the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving the expected standard by the end of key stage 2 has risen sharply. This is due to the recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Nonetheless, despite these improvements, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics remains below the unvalidated national average.
- Unvalidated data for pupils' attainment in key stage 1 in 2018 also shows a marked improvement in pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Throughout key stage 1 and key stage 2, a greater proportion of current pupils are far more successful in their learning than has been the case in the past. Consequently, an increasing number of pupils are ready for the next stage of their education.
- The results of the Year 1 phonics screening check have improved this year from 65% in 2017 to 71% in 2018 because of improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils gain a clear understanding of audience and context for their writing in English. Across the school, pupils use punctuation and grammar with increasing accuracy in their work.
- Pupils know how to use their mathematical skills in geography and science. For example, in science, pupils can create and use tables and graphs to display their findings.
- Current pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those supported by the pupil premium funding make at least adequate progress. There are no noticeable differences in the attainment of these groups in the school.
- Pupils make appropriate progress in their reading skills. They are enthusiastic about their reading. Pupils spoke confidently to inspectors about the range of novels that they have read as part of their whole-class work. They have an adequate knowledge of a variety of authors.

- Pupils in the specially resourced provision benefit from a calm and positive learning environment. They make good progress from their individual starting points because staff support them well. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- A large proportion of children do not have the skills and knowledge typically associated with their age when they enter the early years. From viewing samples of children's work and seeing their learning, it was clear to inspectors that children make adequate and sometimes good progress from their starting points. By the end of Reception, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is below the national average.
- Staff and leaders have developed clear routines that children follow confidently. Staff give children effective support in planned activities. Staff assist children through many worthwhile chances to extend their learning outdoors. They make sure that children practise using their small and large muscles to move and control their bodies and objects. Children gain from regular opportunities to collaborate, and work together to solve different challenges. For example, inspectors observed pupils using large blocks and lengths of material to create a large model of a boat.
- Despite these positive features, teaching in the early years requires improvement. This is because staff do not build well enough on children's existing knowledge. They do not give children, especially the most able, sufficient challenge in activities. For instance, children do not have good opportunities to apply their reading and writing skills in their independent activities. A significant proportion of children enter the early years with poor speech and language skills. However, staff do not always model spoken language accurately, and this prevents children from developing their communication skills securely.
- The new early years leaders have acted quickly to improve the quality of provision, such as seeking support from a local teaching school alliance. Leaders have formulated a clear action plan to improve leadership, teaching and learning in the early years. As a result, the work of staff and leaders is improving.
- Relationships between children and staff in the early years are strong. Children's behaviour is developing positively. However, some children lack the skills they need to work independently for sustained periods of time.
- Staff care for children well. Staff ensure that children are fully supervised and safe in the classroom and in the outdoor provision.
- Links with partner nursery providers are strong. Throughout the year, teachers keep parents well informed of their children's learning through an electronic recording system.

School details

Unique reference number	111125
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10045163

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Thomas Hall
Headteacher	Richard Collings
Telephone number	01928 564031
Website	www.woodside.halton.sch.uk
Email address	head.woodside@halton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 October 2013

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school runs a seven-place key stage 2 specially resourced provision for pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across a range of subjects in all key stages, including in the specially resourced provision.
- Inspectors evaluated a range of school documentation, including the school self-evaluation, the school's raising attainment plan and minutes from meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors reviewed samples of pupils' work in English, mathematics and the foundation subjects.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's records of safeguarding, including the school's single central record, evidence of the safe recruitment of staff and information about staff attendance at relevant training.
- Inspectors considered the 41 responses and 20 free-text responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors considered 21 responses from staff to an Ofsted survey.
- Inspectors met with parents before school on the first day of the inspection.
- Inspectors met with pupils, formally and informally, throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors listened to a group of pupils from key stage 2 read.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the senior and middle leadership teams.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with a representative of Halton local authority.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and three other members of the governing body.

Inspection team

John Donald, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tina Cleugh

Ofsted Inspector

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