

Woodford Valley Church of England Aided School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126422
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315540
Inspection date	25 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Martin Kerly

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	151
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Philp
Headteacher	Rebecca Carson
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Middle Woodford Salisbury SP4 6NR
Telephone number	01722 782361
Fax number	01722 782903

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the progress made by pupils of all abilities
- the consistency in the quality of teaching
- the ways in which the curriculum and the care, guidance and support for pupils contribute to the pupils' overall personal development and well-being
- how effectively leaders check the school's performance and their use of information gained in deciding what needs to improve.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average for a primary school. It is full and unable to accept all the applications received for places. Almost half the pupils come from a wide area beyond the three small communities in the Woodford Valley. Pupils are taught in seven classes, two of which make up the Valley Centre which is a specialised learning centre for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a class with a few Year 1 pupils. There is private pre-school provision on site, but this is not run by the school's governing body and so not reported on here. Almost all the pupils are White British and the overwhelming majority speak English as their first language. Apart from the pupils in the Valley Centre, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs, there are relatively few pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school is undergoing a major building project due for completion in June 2009, involving the creation of a new entrance, the addition of a large hall, a classroom and various administrative and domestic rooms.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school, with some quite exceptional features. Leadership and management are outstanding. The relatively new headteacher provides excellent leadership whilst skilfully enabling others to take on major roles of responsibility. All leaders fulfil their roles very well and relish the professional opportunities to introduce and lead new initiatives. This has a very positive influence on the pupils and on the quality of their education. Pupils, including those in the Valley Centre, thrive and flourish within the exceptionally supportive family atmosphere. They are inspired by the wide range of high quality learning experiences planned for them. Pupils eagerly take on the many opportunities to share responsibilities for their learning and supporting one another in their community. Together, these lead to the excellent progress being made by pupils of all abilities throughout the school. Almost all the parents who replied to the inspectors' survey endorsed the school's work, often with glowing tributes. Views such as, 'This is a wonderful school', 'My child is making fantastic progress academically and socially' and 'I couldn't be happier with the teaching and management at this school' are common threads in the comments received.

The school has extensive and innovative ways of checking its work. Leaders and governors have a very accurate and perceptive view of the school's performance, and their skills and commitment ensure that new initiatives are thoroughly prepared and implemented, always with a view to improving experiences for pupils. The school has made exceptional progress in addressing weaknesses identified in the previous inspection, for example improving progress in Years 1 and 2, and is particularly well placed to maintain and build on its high quality provision.

The headteacher has established a shared commitment to high expectations of pupils and staff. This is promoting rapid progress leading to outstanding achievement and higher standards throughout the school. Children's attainment on entry is unusually varied, but overall is as expected nationally, except in personal development where it is above expectations. Standards by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage are above average. By the end of Year 2, standards are already high, especially in reading and writing. In Years 3 to 6, although pupils make excellent progress, overall standards, although above average, have been slower to rise following a period of limited progress by these pupils in the past when in Years 1 and 2. The school has developed very effective systems for assessing and tracking the progress of all pupils. The very good use it is making of these, to set and monitor progress towards challenging targets, is helping to increase standards. Pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 are on track to attain their targets and higher standards by the end of this year. Pupils in the Valley Centre make exceptional progress.

Pupils are enthralled by the exceptional range of high quality experiences within the outstanding curriculum. They are extremely positive about school and proud of their role in making it such a harmonious place. Attendance is well above average, having previously been below. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, with a strong commitment to the rules they helped develop. They are exceptionally considerate, display a strong sense of fairness and justice and are sensitive about the needs of those less fortunate than they are. The outstanding care, guidance and support for all pupils by the whole staff team enables all, including the most vulnerable in the Valley Centre, to be fully involved and feel valued. One parent of such a child wrote, 'My son has progressed beyond belief. He is integrated whenever possible... and I have complete peace of mind in sending him to Woodford.' Work in the Valley Centre has received national acclaim for its excellence. Procedures designed to safeguard pupils are rigorously implemented. The school

has been very careful to ensure pupils' safety during the building work. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and they show a very good grasp of how to take care of themselves. They fully appreciate the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including going cross country running over rugged terrain during lunchtime. The school has Activemark and Healthy School Plus awards in recognition of its commitment to these aspects.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. Their cultural development is good rather than outstanding. This is because although the school has an International School award with many overseas links and is actively involved locally, for example in creative arts projects with the Salisbury Play House, there are relatively few links at national level and the pupils' awareness of Britain's cultural diversity is less well developed. The school is seen as central within the local community. Leaders actively seek to reflect the local community's needs but they are aware of the scope to do more to promote community cohesion at a national level. There is a quite exceptional range of opportunities for pupils to share in responsibilities around the school and the local community. These include being buddies in the Valley Centre or Early Years Foundation Stage, and taking major initiatives as members of the school council, prayer team and healthy schools task force. These experiences, along with such projects as the two week work experience during Year 6, and planning and running fund raising events for charities, contribute to the pupils' outstanding preparation for the next stage of education and adult life.

The headteacher and staff work well to overcome cramped accommodation, but indoor space is very limited. The governors, who fulfil their duties very diligently, have successfully worked to acquire the new building which will provide a large hall, even more learning opportunities and better working conditions for staff. The outdoor area within the Early Years and Foundation Stage is relatively cramped and has no all-weather protection. This limits the range of outdoor experiences and opportunities for children to move in and out of doors independently.

The outstanding teaching is characterised throughout by a commitment to motivating pupils, encouraging collaboration and problem solving, regular assessments of progress and enabling pupils to think carefully about their own learning. Four of the teachers have been formally acknowledged as lead practitioners either at county or national level. The school has a BECTA award in recognition of the exceptional use of computers by teachers and pupils across the curriculum. Teachers ensure classrooms are full of stimulating prompts and support, and there is a whole-school consistent approach to helping pupils think about their learning and next steps. This is a strong contributory factor in the outstanding academic guidance and rising standards. Teachers make excellent use of the skilled and trained teaching assistants and many pupils benefit from very effective additional support as individuals or in small groups. Classrooms are enhanced by high quality art work and the school has the Artsmark Gold award. There are numerous visits, visitors and special events that enrich the curriculum exceptionally well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children get off to an excellent start in a class they share with a few Year 1 pupils. There are close links with parents and with the local pre-school and these help ensure a very smooth transition and start to school. Children quickly begin to build on prior learning, enabling them to make excellent progress in all six areas of learning. The teacher carefully plans activities following detailed observations of the children's responses. By the end of the year, the large majority of pupils attain the learning goals expected for their age and standards are above average. The new leader and her team have worked swiftly to establish a stimulating classroom

in newly designated and refurbished accommodation, and teaching and learning are excellent. The room is carefully organised to provide children with a range of learning situations across the curriculum and a balance of opportunities for independent play as well as activities led by an adult. The newly designated outdoor area is secure, enabling children to move in and out without direct supervision. However, this space is cramped and is not always accessible, having no shelter from rain or hot sun. Another larger area is used from time to time but is too distant to allow independent movement, restricting overall opportunities for playing with large wheeled toys or running freely. The team already work very well together and this is a reflection of the excellent leadership by the teacher, carefully supported by the headteacher. The leader has clear plans for further developments and the school has begun working towards a nationally recognised award for Early Years Foundation Stage provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more planned opportunities for pupils to gain a deeper understanding of Britain's cultural diversity and thereby help promote greater community cohesion.
- Improve the outdoor area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

28 February 2009

Dear Children,

Inspection of Woodford Valley CE Primary School, Salisbury SP4 6NR

- Thank you for the way you made us feel very welcome when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with some of you and visiting your classrooms. We were particularly impressed by the way you behave and take good care of one another. You are lucky enough to go to an excellent school which has won many awards for all the good things it does. Your parents are pleased that you are able to go to Woodford Valley School. There are lots of things that are superb and very few things that need to improve. Here are some more of the highlights we found during our visit:
- You concentrate and try hard in lessons, often working in pairs or small groups, and make very good progress in your work.
- Your teachers are particularly good at helping you to think about what it is you are learning and how you can improve. We were impressed by your learning journey work. Your school has got far more computers than most schools and you get to use them very frequently.
- You told us how much you enjoy school. We think one of the reasons for this is that the teachers are exceptionally good at arranging very interesting activities in lessons and also lots of special events and trips.
- All the adults take particularly good care of you, and there is always someone to help those of you who have problems from time to time.
- It is clear that almost all of you are very keen to help out around school in many different ways, for example as buddies, school councillors, doing work experience or fund raising for charities.
- Your headteacher and all the leaders are very good indeed at checking up on how well the school is doing and always thinking of ways to improve the school.
- We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on two things to make the school even better:
- Find ways of helping you get to know more about people living in other regions of Britain and their different beliefs, customs and values.
- Improve the outdoor area for the children in Lake Class.

We know you will want to continue to help in making the school even better and will have your own ideas for the school council to consider. We hope you enjoy moving into the new school building in the summer and using all that extra space.

Yours faithfully,

Martin Kerly

Lead Inspector