

The Woodsetton School

Tipton Road, Woodsetton, Dudley, DY3 1BY

Inspection dates 19–20 September 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Although the starting point of all pupils is low because of their learning disabilities and special educational needs, they do well and many make better than expected progress.
- Detailed monitoring of progress ensures that the learning needs of every pupil are very well known. If progress slows, teachers quickly put new strategies into place to increase the effectiveness of learning.
- The best teaching reflects the high expectations of staff who know their pupils very well and encourage them to do their very best.
- Although many pupils have challenging behaviour when they first join the school, they very quickly learn much more positive attitudes and so very little time is lost in lessons.
- Pupils participate in a range of sporting, musical and artistic events that support their wider learning and enjoyment.
- Senior leaders are very experienced and lead by positive example. Newly appointed subject leaders show effective enthusiasm in further developing teaching and learning.
- Effective support for staff from the school's leadership helps them to do a good job and to improve their own professional skills over time.
- The school provides good support and expertise to local mainstream schools to help them extend their expertise with pupils with special educational needs.
- Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and have a clear picture of its strengths and areas for development. They play an effective role in challenging and supporting.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Subject leaders are still developing their roles and are not yet fully involved in monitoring and supporting teachers in classrooms.
- The school's policy for marking and assessment of work is not yet being fully used by all staff.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not ask enough questions that show pupils' understanding of their work or make them think more deeply about what they are doing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a total of 10 lessons and saw every teacher at work.
- They looked at pupils' work from across the school and listened to some of them reading. A meeting was held with representative pupils in order to gather their views and informal discussions were held with pupils in lessons and throughout the inspection.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and a representative of the local authority.
- A total of 21 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire were analysed and replies to the school's own parent surveys taken into account.
- The views of staff were gathered from discussions and from the 32 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A range of documents were scrutinised, including those on the monitoring of pupils' progress through the school, teachers' planning and assessment, the school's analysis of its own strengths, areas for development and key priorities for the future, and key policies and procedures including those for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Barnfield

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Woodsetton School is for pupils with moderate learning. In recent years the complexity of the learning difficulties of pupils has increased, with increasing numbers of pupils having behavioural and emotional needs, speech, language and communication difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders, or a complex mix of needs.
- No pupils are supported through school action because all have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils who are believed to be eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority) is well above average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic communities or who speak English as an additional language are broadly in line with the national averages.
- In February 2013, the school created three new leadership posts to support the teaching of English, mathematics and science throughout the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning to outstanding by:
 - fully developing the roles of the new subject leaders so they regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms
 - raising the quality of all teachers' questioning skills to that of the best
 - making sure that the school's marking and assessment policy is fully implemented by all staff at all times.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When pupils join the school, their current levels are measured carefully and used as a baseline against which progress is measured. For those who join in Reception the careful monitoring of progress enables them to make good progress from the start, even though this is from a low baseline. At whatever point they join the school, this is generally effective in maximising achievement but on a few occasions teachers are not making the most of this information to individualise the challenge for all pupils. This means a few are not fully stretched so achievement is not yet outstanding overall.
- Challenging individual targets are set for English, mathematics and science. These are monitored carefully and analysed to check that expectations have been met. The proportion of pupils making expected progress in English and mathematics is above that found in many similar schools, and some pupils are making outstanding progress.
- Pupils not making expected progress are identified quickly and additional support put into effect to enable them to make up lost ground and then make good progress.
- For learning undertaken through topic work, the school's own framework allows teachers to measure very small steps in progress. Over time, this gives the school a very clear picture of the performance of every pupil.
- There is a positive focus on physical education and sport that pupils enjoy very much. This is because care is taken to pitch activities at just the right level so that there is challenge but also a feeling of accomplishment. Pupils respond in a positive way and demonstrate good progress from their starting points. In addition, success in building their confidence and working together is helping them progress in other lessons.
- Attainment is low, reflecting pupils' wider learning difficulties, but they make strong progress from individual starting points, so achievement is good. This is also the case for different groups of pupils, such as those believed to be eligible for free school meals, those from minority ethnic communities, or who speak English as an additional language.
- Pupil premium funding is allocated carefully, for example to provide family support, counselling, additional speech and language therapy, music making and additional support with learning. This is supporting pupils' good progress in English and mathematics, and those who receive it are making progress at least in line with that of others.
- The school focuses on improving language and communication skills, reflected in two newly-built specialist rooms. The use of the pupil premium to train four teaching assistants to provide extra help and support in implementing speech programs has supported good developments in this area. These, in turn, are helping pupils to gain confidence as learners and apply themselves to their work, thus supporting their greater rate of progress.
- Reading is supported through the use of phonics (the understanding of letters and their sounds). The school has a new range of reading books that support this and while results from the national screening of phonics shows that results are below the national expectation for all pupils at the end of Year 1, it was clear from listening to pupils reading that they enjoy it and make progress in line with their ability.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, is at least good. From the start teachers take care to challenge so, for example, during the inspection the Reception staff were busy assessing the levels at which children are operating so that they can be fully challenged for the rest of the year. As they move to Year 1, pupils are well prepared for their future learning and, while some teaching is stronger in some classes than in others, across the school pupils can demonstrate good progress. No inadequate teaching was seen during the inspection, supporting the school's evidence that teaching and learning over time is at least good.
- Teaching effectively meets the needs of all pupils, including those who receive the pupil premium and those identified as being the most able, helping them make good and sometimes outstanding progress over time.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because the school's policy on marking and assessment of pupils' work is not equally well implemented and this impacts adversely on teachers' full grasp of individual progress. The school intends to address this through the recently appointed subject heads monitoring and supporting the work of staff.
- Teachers generally have high expectations. On the whole they measure understanding by asking effective questions. This also makes pupils think and increases their understanding. While most teachers and teaching assistants assess pupils' progress carefully, not all are yet equally skilled in questioning or in using assessment to individualise learning and raise attainment.
- The best learning takes place when the adults in a class work together, planning and collaborating closely. This enables classes to be divided into groups, each working at a different level, meeting individual needs. However, where this is not happening in a minority of lessons pupils' level of engagement and enjoyment of learning is not so great.
- At its best, teaching creates a real buzz of excitement and learning, which helps create very positive attitudes to learning. Even in lessons where behaviour is more passive, pupils still want to learn. In an outstanding Year 5 mathematics lesson on the use of money and value of coins, pupils were divided into ability groups and worked together at just the right level, helping each other and getting tremendous enjoyment while learning and understanding effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Many pupils join the school showing very challenging behaviour. There are high expectations and the effective behaviour policy, coupled with a calm and purposeful atmosphere, soon help pupils to adopt more positive attitudes. As a result, behaviour in lessons and around school is good and little time is lost, so pupils are able to learn without distraction. In most lessons, pupils are fully engaged and show positive attitudes to learning.
- In the minority of lessons where pupils are not fully engaged they become passive. This means that behaviour cannot yet be seen as outstanding throughout the school.
- Pupils, staff, parents and carers all agree that this is a safe school where pupils get on very well with each other and with staff. They enjoy coming to school and attendance is above the level found in special schools nationally.
- Care is taken to help pupils realise that bullying is very negative and that it can take various

forms, including cyber-bullying. Pupils themselves say because they go to a small school where they get on so well and where there is a positive 'family atmosphere' bullying is not an issue.

- There are lots of trips and visits, as well as opportunities to participate regularly in a range of activities outside school. Care is taken to ensure that these activities take place safely with minimum risk. These activities include musical, artistic and dramatic events. Such provision, coupled with the impressive ways in which pupils help and support each other, reflects the strong promotion of spiritual, moral and social development throughout the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and his deputy have long experience at the school and are widely respected. They have created an effective school in which the school community takes pride.
- The expertise available is also effective in supporting local mainstream schools, which is valued by these schools. It is one way in which the school demonstrates its commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Leadership has been improved by the creation of subject leader posts in English, mathematics and science, adding to the existing effective leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This has enhanced training and support throughout the school, with plans for greater involvement in supporting classroom monitoring ready to be implemented. However, until this happens the range and extent of monitoring is not fully supporting teachers in their classrooms.
- Effective lesson observations are undertaken by the headteacher and his deputy, supporting the process for managing the effectiveness of teaching and teachers' professional development. They are aware of the links between pay and performance, and those with extra allowances willingly accept higher levels of responsibility.
- The range of subjects meets the needs of pupils, with visits and trips extending learning into the community. It helps strengthen their enjoyment of learning and creates positive attitudes to learning, evident in pupils' good progress. A lot is done through topic work and generally there is a focus on language and communication which helps develop understanding of spoken and written language.
- Careful planning has gone into the use of the new funding to support sporting activities. In a school where this is already an important element, it is intended that provision will be further enhanced by funding the teaching of dance and in extending sporting opportunities between local special schools.
- The school understands its strengths and areas for development, and prioritises areas for future developments. The needs of staff and of the school are taken into account when planning professional development.
- Links with pupils' homes are very strong, helping parents and carers support their children's learning. Support varies from help for individual families at home to group activities in school, such as 'stay and play' sessions for Reception parents every week. This enables parents and carers to better understand the learning needs of their children and to feel supported themselves.
- There are positive links with the local authority. For example, it funds the software that helps the

school to analyse its pupil progress data. It also supports a specialist educational psychologist who works with all the special schools to ensure equality of judgements when looking at pupils' work and progress across the different special schools.

- There are positive links with other professionals working to support families, with the school often taking the lead, for example, in getting professionals together to agree a common approach to supporting families and their wider needs.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body carries out all its statutory duties, including those for safeguarding. Governors know about the achievement of pupils and they monitor the curriculum through direct contact. They can see what is going on in teaching as a result, and understand the links between the effectiveness of teaching and pay, including procedures for tackling under-performance. The targets they set for the headteacher reflect the good advice of an external consultant and governors monitor progress during the year. They also keep a close eye on school funding and have a good understanding of the way in which the pupil premium is used to raise the attainment of those pupils who benefit from it.

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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	103879
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	426904

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Steen
Headteacher	Philip Rhind-Tutt
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2010
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