

Woodberry Down Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	100248
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	395381
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2012
Lead inspector	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	405
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Passam MBE
Executive Principal	Greg Wallace
Head of School	Sarah Mather
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 November 2008
School address	Woodberry Grove Finsbury Park London N4 1SY
Telephone number	020 8800 5758
Fax number	020 8211 0029
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	14–15 June 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Glynis Bradley-Peat

Additional inspector

Madeleine Gerard

Additional inspector

Peter Dannheisser

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 28 part lessons taught by 16 teachers and talked with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documents associated with safeguarding procedures and self-evaluation. They examined data and other information about pupils' progress, listened to pupils read and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors scrutinised the school's improvement plans as well as the curriculum and teachers' planning for lessons. Inspectors analysed the questionnaires returned by 21 parents and carers during the inspection.

Information about the school

Most of the pupils at this larger than average sized primary school are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The majority of pupils are learning English as an additional language. A significant minority of these are at the early stages of language acquisition. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Many more pupils than in most schools join or leave partway through their primary school education. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. A large minority of pupils are refugees. The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school is federated with four other schools in Hackney and is working in partnership with another. A full-time counsellor has an office within the school and supports those whose circumstances make them most vulnerable and their families.

The school has won a number of awards and is an Investor in People. There is a breakfast and after-school club run by the school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school where the life chances of all pupils are maximised. All staff, without exception, have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils leave the school with high levels of confidence and are excited about the next stage of their education. Occasionally, the school does not engage parents and carers as successfully as it would like in supporting their children’s education at home.
- Pupils’ achievement is outstanding. From their very low starting points, they make excellent progress towards above average attainment by the end of Year 6. Exceptional provision for pupils who speak no English on entry to the school and for those who may only attend the school for a short space of time promotes rapid progress.
- Outstanding teaching over time ensures that all pupils engage avidly in their learning. Typically, teaching is characterised by high expectations, a rapid pace of learning, probing questioning and high quality marking. Children receive an excellent start to their education. The systematic teaching of the sounds letters make ensures children make great strides in their reading.
- Superb attitudes to learning and excellent standards of behaviour feature throughout the school. No time is wasted and learning is seldom interrupted. Pupils feel very safe and are confident to approach adults to solve issues.
- Outstanding teaching is underpinned by a rigorous calendar of monitoring. Teachers’ performance is regularly checked and steps are routinely taken to support and coach. Best practice is shared extremely efficiently across the federation, resulting in professional development which is tailored effectively to the needs of individual teachers. The school’s tracking data clearly identifies pupils who are in danger of underachieving. An innovative curriculum, focused on enhancing pupils’ basic skills, contributes well to their excellent achievement and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon the good work already started to engage parents and carers in supporting their children’s achievement at home.

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Main report

Achievement of pupils

When children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, their levels of skills are exceptionally low compared to those of most three-year-olds. Many children speak little or no English but because of a real focus on speaking and listening and a relentless desire to develop basic skills, children make exceptional progress. They soon develop the capacity to communicate effectively and become confident learners.

The standards pupils reach by the time they leave the school have been rising steadily. Currently, the school's tracking data, work in pupils' exercise books and lesson observations all demonstrate above average attainment for older pupils. Although pupils did not achieve quite as well last year, this was because half of them arrived in the school after the Reception Year. A significant proportion arrived in Key Stage 2, some speaking little or no English. The vast majority of pupils make excellent progress because the school ensures that teaching meets the needs of all learners. Those pupils with English as an additional language achieve exceptionally well because all staff are aware of the best strategies to support their learning. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve equally well. This is because of the school's rigorous approach to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Relentless attention to vocabulary and language development in all lessons ensures pupils' literacy skills are driven forward systematically. In addition, they are able to make an active contribution in lessons because they are supported effectively by well-trained staff. Attainment in reading is broadly average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. This is because the teaching of phonics, the sounds that letters make, is outstanding.

Inspectors saw pupils in Years 1 and 2 make rapid gains in their learning in a short space of time through lively interactions and the use of a wide range of resources. Pupils make particularly strong progress in mathematics. Teachers have extremely high expectations of what pupils can achieve and their excellent subject knowledge promotes a thirst for learning. In a Year 6 class, pupils enthusiastically and successfully tackled the complex task of plotting of linear algebraic expressions on graphs. They thoroughly enjoyed the high level of challenge.

Pupils' progress is carefully mapped and ensures that any gaps in performance between different groups are swiftly closed. Pupils joining the school partway through their education also make excellent progress as teachers ensure their individual needs are met. Those pupils eligible for free school meals achieve very well when compared to this group nationally. The progress of refugee children is excellent because the school understands their needs completely. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable receive tailored support which ensures they too achieve outstandingly well.

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Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is outstanding. All staff inspire and foster curiosity in learning. It is clear that teachers are passionate about ensuring that all pupils reach their potential and achieve as well as possible. Pace, passion and purpose are three of the '7 Ps' the school regards as essential ingredients for any lesson.

The quality of paired and group work is high. Pupils are provided with ample opportunity to deliberate and develop their ideas in lessons. In Year 5, pupils worked hard to improve their written work and discussed how the use of 'drop-in clauses' could make their sentences more interesting. In addition to the extremely successful teaching of phonics lower down the school, a huge focus across the school on developing vocabulary promotes pupils' reading skills extremely well. In another Year 5 group, the teacher provided pupils with amusing strategies to help with their spelling. As a result, they remembered well and were able to confidently spell some challenging words. Teachers' questioning skills consistently promote pupils' thinking skills. As a result, pupils are confident to attempt questions in unknown contexts. Teachers' 'no hands up' approach to questioning and the development of a risk-taking culture ensures all pupils prepare answers to questions and are willing to 'have a go' without fear of ridicule. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well by teaching assistants who encourage their independence. Work is closely matched to their needs and progress is closely monitored. Consequently they become increasingly confident and participate wholeheartedly in their learning.

Teachers are adept at pitching lessons at the right level for all pupils. This ensures that progress is made by all from the start of the lesson. In addition, regular assessment during learning ensures teachers re-shape tasks in order to maximise progress. Misconceptions are quickly tackled and next steps in learning are identified. Marking is exemplary. The use of stickers with specific focused comments linked to the success criteria motivates pupils very well. In turn, they respond to the extension and improvement points indicated by their teacher. It is clear that the feedback provided by the teacher has a highly positive impact. Teachers regularly involve pupils in marking and evaluating each other's work. Pupils are well placed to critique their own work as a result.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' above average attendance levels and ethic of hard work evident in lessons are testament to their thorough enjoyment of school. The behaviour policy assumes that all pupils will behave well and points can be lost rather than gained during the school day. As a result, pupils are polite and courteous at all times. Their behaviour is typically outstanding and promotes a calm, productive climate in class. Scrutiny of behavioural records and discussions show this is the case over time too. It contributes exceptionally positively to their learning and progress. Pupils are determined to do well and produce their best. They make a strong contribution to school life and assume a variety of roles and responsibilities. They say that they feel

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very safe in school and understand well the various types of bullying behaviour which can occur; they expressed confidence in the school to deal with any such issues quickly and effectively. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including when using new technologies.

Pupils understand and value the school's system for behaviour management and it is clear from their questionnaire responses that they appreciate its impact. Although very few in number, parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were also positive about the standard of behaviour and safety in the school.

Leadership and management

Outstanding leadership has ensured that the school has gone from strength to strength since the previous inspection. The ambitious vision, shared by all, sets high standards for quality and performance. Self-evaluation is perceptive and contributes exceptionally well to clearly focused improvement plans. Maintaining the quality of teaching at the highest level is the school's top priority. There is no room for complacency and less than the best is not acceptable. Monitoring of the quality of teaching leads to an exemplary programme of professional development for teachers. The excellent practice found across the federation is used to best effect through extensive coaching sessions, demonstration lessons and team teaching. Thorough programmes for new teachers ensure they are able to fit in to the Woodberry Down teaching methodology with no time wasted. All aspects of the school's work are subject to detailed scrutiny, and well-planned actions lead to rapid improvement. Since the previous inspection, standards continue to rise over time and outstanding performance has been maintained. Leaders and managers have tremendous capacity to improve and maintain excellence.

The rich memorable curriculum meets the interests and aptitudes of the pupils exceptionally well, promoting equality and tackling discrimination. No groups of pupils underachieve. Excellent adaptations to the curriculum make it highly relevant to the school population. For example, a significant proportion of the children are refugees. The school ensures that the curriculum focuses on developing the understanding of all children about the issues refugee children face. Other cross-curricular themes are implemented rigorously and are carefully planned to reflect the diversity within the school. A range of federation projects, which are educationally rigorous, promote the best practice in teaching Black history. This contributes exceptionally well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and helps them to prepare for life in modern Britain.

The governing body successfully holds the senior leaders to account for all areas of performance. Their work is clearly valued across the school. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and ensure that the school is a safe place for everyone. Nothing is overlooked. The school constantly seeks ways to engage parents and carers in their children's learning but realises that there is more work to be done to ensure greater participation.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodberry Down Community Primary School, London, N4 1SY

Thank you very much for being polite and courteous when we visited your school recently. We were extremely impressed with how well you behaved. You are a credit to your school. We could easily see how much you enjoy school by your interest and motivation to learn in your lessons. You learn very quickly, make excellent progress and reach above average standards by the time you leave the school. We enjoyed listening to some of the younger children read very well. We loved the beautiful art work you had produced which was displayed throughout the school, it was delightful. It was also good to see the high standard of topic work in corridors and classrooms.

We found your school to be outstanding. This means it is really super! Your teachers do a brilliant job of teaching you. They are enthusiastic and very happy in their work. They have your best interests at heart. We enjoyed watching you in your lessons and talking to you about your work. Your Head of School and Executive Principal do a fantastic job of leading and managing your school.

Although your school is excellent, there are always things which can be done a little better. We have asked leaders and managers to involve your parents and carers as much as they can in helping you to learn at home. You can help with this by talking to your parents and carers about what you do in school.

Thank you again for making our visit enjoyable.

Yours sincerely

Glynis Bradley-Peat
Lead inspector

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