

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Woodford Primary School

Litchaton Way, Plympton, Plymouth, Devon PL7 4RR

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 December 2024

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Katie Patrick. This school is part of Westcountry Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Rob Haring, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Carl Atkinson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils achieve exceptionally well at Woodford Primary School. The curriculum is ambitious and inspires pupils to learn. Pupils have an excellent recall of what they have learned and can apply this to new learning.

The school offers a thoughtful range of enrichment opportunities. For example, visitors from a range of faith communities help pupils to understand different world religions. Leadership roles give pupils opportunities to contribute to school life. The eco-council takes responsibility for keeping the school environment litter-free. Sports leaders and anti-bullying ambassadors enjoy supporting younger pupils during breaktimes. There are a variety of extra-curricular activities, which pupils enjoy. Take-up is high, and pupils who are from disadvantaged backgrounds, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from these experiences. Pupils have various opportunities to represent the school in different ways. Consequently, pupils learn how to be good citizens.

Pupils treat one another with empathy and respect. The recent changes to the behaviour policy have had an impact. Pupils follow the three simple rules of 'ready to learn, respectful and safe'. This makes the school a calm, purposeful environment for learning. In the Reception Year, children show sustained interest in activities. They chat happily, sharing ideas while they play and learn. This sets them up well for Year 1.

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

The school is aspirational for all pupils from the start. Published outcomes in phonics, reading, writing and mathematics show that pupils achieve well above the national average. This means that pupils leave the school exceptionally well prepared for secondary education. They gain knowledge and skills that are beyond many of their peers nationally. This is due to the strength of the curriculum they experience at the school. Reading is central to the curriculum. From Reception to key stage 1, pupils learn to read well. Staff expertly plan and deliver phonics. This results in most pupils learning to read with fluency and understanding. The very few pupils who struggle receive precise support to help them catch up. This means that when pupils move into key stage 2, they have acquired secure reading skills to learn across the curriculum.

Alongside reading, pupils build an ambitious repertoire of vocabulary. In the early years, children are encouraged to use specific vocabulary in their learning. This is promoted throughout the indoor and outdoor spaces. Adults converse with children using the identified words. From this early stage of communication, expectations are high. Across the curriculum, the school has identified the important words pupils should know. When talking about their learning, pupils use these words accurately and confidently.

Wider curriculum subjects are designed to build pupils' knowledge over time. Content is taught in a subject-specific way, but links across subjects are also strong. This helps pupils to understand how knowledge connects. Pupils think deeply and enjoy grappling with big concepts. The school accurately evaluates the curriculum. This leads to continual refinement to make sure it is having the intended impact on pupils' knowledge.

Pupils with SEND receive exceptional support. The school accurately identifies pupils' barriers to learning. Staff skilfully reduce these barriers so that pupils with SEND learn successfully. The school's work to support pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs is excellent. The school has established a small team with expert knowledge and skills. It works alongside external specialists to train staff and to support this group of pupils. Pupils respond well to excellent personalised support. Suspensions are much lower, and the attendance of pupils has risen over the last three years.

The school ensures that pupils' personal development is a priority. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the community. Through assemblies and the curriculum, pupils learn how to look after their physical and mental health. Pupils are understanding and accepting of one another's differences. This is clearly evident in the way they talk about, and play with, each other. Pupils have a mature understanding of both visible and invisible needs and disabilities.

Leadership, including governance, drives the vision for excellence. The hub advisory board and board of trustees challenge and support the school effectively. Staff are reflective and committed to self-improvement. They refer to their practice as 'The Woodford Way'. Staff value leaders' investment in their professional development and consideration of their well-being. The school works well with parents and carers. The vast majority are delighted with their children's experiences at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2019.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	142788
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10344715
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	392
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Carl Atkinson
CEO of the trust	Rob Haring
Headteacher	Katie Patrick
Website	www.woodfordprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, teaching and support staff, members of the trust board, including the chair of trustees, and the director of education.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. She also listened to pupils read to an adult.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, she met with pupils informally and formally to hear their views.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. She also took into consideration responses to the staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation provided by the school.

Inspection team

Angela Folland, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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