

# Woodeaton Manor School

Woodeaton, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX3 9TS

## Inspection dates

14–15 May 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils at the school. They have established a well-balanced, individualised approach that means pupils thrive at Woodeaton Manor.
- The school is making good use of external support and training to further develop the skills of new senior and middle leaders. Nevertheless, these leaders do not yet have the capacity to contribute fully to the school's development.
- All staff are highly committed to the school's ethos of care and support. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils quickly learn to trust staff and enjoy being part of the school's nurturing community, often after an unsuccessful previous experience of education.
- The curriculum enables pupils to study a broad range of subjects. However, the narrow focus on GCSE examinations limits the opportunities for some pupils to gain accreditations that reflect their future aspirations.
- Safeguarding is effective. There is a strong whole-school focus on the well-being of pupils. Staff work closely with families and external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Governors are enthusiastic and committed. They support and challenge leaders well.
- Staff know the individual needs of pupils extremely well. The support and understanding provided by staff mean that pupils' self-esteem and aspirations rapidly improve. Consequently, pupils' personal, social and emotional progress is outstanding.
- Teaching and learning are typically good. Staff are swift to recognise when pupils need additional support or time to be ready to learn. However, teachers and teaching assistants make limited use of information about what pupils know, understand and can do to adapt their teaching to the individual learning needs of some pupils.
- High expectations and consistent approaches throughout the school enable all pupils to improve their behaviour from typically low starting points. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent.
- Students attending the post-16 provision access a range of experiences that enable them to become more independent and mature. This ensures they are well prepared for life beyond school.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of leadership and management, by:
  - enhancing the skills and expertise of leaders at all levels so that they can contribute more strongly to the school's overall development
  - extending the curriculum so that all pupils can obtain the skills, knowledge and understanding that are appropriate for their future lives.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching, by:
  - making incisive use of pupils' performance information so that learning tasks are well matched to the different needs of pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher, who is well supported by senior leaders, has a clear vision for the school. His moral purpose and ambition for pupils are shared widely across the staff team. The ethos of the school, summarised as, 'By reducing barriers we will expand horizons', underpins all leadership decisions. Leaders' commitment to the school has ensured that the school's effectiveness has been sustained through a period of significant change.
- Staff who have taken on additional leadership responsibilities are being supported to develop their skills and expertise well. They are enthusiastic and show a secure understanding of their roles. Many are committed to gaining external accreditations. However, leadership capacity remains limited as the new leadership structure is not yet embedded. Consequently, some senior and middle leaders are not yet having a significant impact on the school's development and future direction.
- Leaders have high expectations of staff. The recent introduction of regular monitoring and review procedures has enabled leaders to gain a good understanding of the quality of teaching across the school.
- Specialist staff, including the school's educational psychologist, provide effective training for all staff. Daily briefings ensure that there is a shared understanding of pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs and how best to meet them. Staff use this information well to strike a balance between the demands they place on pupils and the maintenance of the positive relationships that are in place.
- The curriculum covers a broad range of subjects and activities. Leaders actively seek out opportunities to enrich pupils' learning. For example, pupils told inspectors about a recent trip to Bristol to support their understanding of geography. Nevertheless, the focus on GCSE qualifications means that pupils with more diverse learning needs, including those who are most able and those with more complex difficulties, cannot always access accreditations relevant to their abilities and future aspirations. Leaders have recognised that the curriculum needs further development to better meet the needs of all pupils. However, work to address this is in its infancy.
- Leaders make considered use of the pupil premium funding. They are determined that no pupil should be left behind. Carefully planned interventions promote pupils' well-being and academic progress. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils make good progress in all subjects.
- Leaders use of the primary physical education and sports premium is effective. Pupils participate in a wide range of sporting activities and events. For instance, pupils were keen to tell inspectors about their recent visit to watch the Women's Football Association Cup Final. Pupils develop their abilities in a variety of sports and take part in competitions. As a result, their self-esteem and self-confidence improve. In addition, pupils develop a more positive attitude to leading a healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted throughout all aspects of school life. The values of tolerance and respect are deeply ingrained because pupils are taught to ask themselves, 'What can I do to make things better for

everyone, including myself?'

- Most parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, or who spoke to inspectors, are highly supportive of the school. Parents value the good lines of communication and appreciate how well staff understand their children. Parents are confident that their children are safe and happy at school.
- Leaders are currently reviewing the school's approach to assessment as they recognise limitations in its effectiveness.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are committed to the development of the school. They recognise the positive impact it has on the lives of pupils and their families. They have successfully maintained the school's ethos and moral purpose during a period of significant change, through diligent succession planning and carefully considered appointments.
- Governors are aware of the school's strengths and areas which require further improvement. They make good use of reports from the headteacher and other senior leaders to keep themselves well informed about the school. Governors ask challenging questions, for instance about the impact of additional funding on pupils' progress. Regular visits to the school enable governors to observe the quality of education and its impact for themselves.
- Governors have recently established new strategies and approaches, for example setting up a website working party, to ensure they stringently hold leaders to account and successfully fulfil their statutory duties.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have established robust safeguarding procedures. Records are detailed and of high quality. Staff have a shared understanding of the need to protect pupils because leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Staff are alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and are swift to take appropriate action if they have any concerns.
- Appropriate background checks are made on all adults in school. All staff receive regular and appropriate safeguarding training. The school's induction programme for new staff is detailed and timely. This means that staff fully understand their responsibilities, know what to do and who to report to.
- Leaders are proactive in their work with external agencies and have built strong working relationships, for example, with the local authority and the police. Leaders are relentless in following up referrals so that families receive the support they need to keep their children safe.
- Pupils who spoke to an inspector were unanimous in saying that they feel safe in school. The clear majority of parents who responded to Parent View confirmed that their children are happy and feel safe. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers and teaching assistants share leaders' aspirations for pupils. They appreciate the difference that the school makes to pupils' lives and talk passionately about the social, emotional and academic journey that pupils take, as they move through the school.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Staff make skilled use of the strong relationships they have with pupils to build self-esteem and re-engage pupils in learning. This is often after significant periods of disengagement from education, before pupils joined Woodeaton Manor.
- Most pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and engage well in lessons. Teachers' good subject knowledge, supported by well-resourced activities, ensures that tasks are appealing to pupils and that their interest in learning is maintained.
- All staff are ambitious for pupils. Nevertheless, they do not consistently use information about pupils' prior learning to adapt tasks to each individual's academic needs. Staff do not use opportunities systematically when pupils with more complex needs are 'ready to learn' to fully engage them in academic tasks. Similarly, staff do not spot dependably when the most able pupils are ready to move on more quickly with their academic learning. Consequently, these pupils do not always make the academic progress they are capable of.
- Teachers and teaching assistants support learning effectively outside the classroom. For example, when sitting down together at breakfast and lunchtime, staff develop pupils' social and personal skills well by engaging them in discussions and conversations.
- Staff are supported well. They make good use of the wide range of training and resources provided to enhance their skills. The carefully planned induction programme enables staff who are new to the school to quickly understand the needs of the pupils and be able to support their learning effectively.
- Assemblies and reward systems are used well to acknowledge pupils' success. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the 'top banana' accolade and earning house points for good work. Pupils respond well to verbal praise and positive comments on their work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school has an exceptional understanding of the unique nature of each pupil. Pupils thrive at the school because there is a firm belief that every pupil who joins the school can be successful. This means that staff are steadfast in their determination to develop the self-confidence and self-esteem of each pupil.
- Exceptionally strong relationships enable pupils to build trust in the adults who work with them. Pupils become increasingly confident to take risks and try new experiences because they feel safe and cared for. Pupils know they can ask for help when they

need it. One pupil told an inspector, 'I will miss the staff the most when I leave this school.'

- Pupils develop a sense of pride in their achievements because of the unrelenting positive attitudes that staff have towards them. Pupils appreciate the core values of the 'Woodeaton Way' and quickly learn that staff always expect them to do their best. As a result, pupils' behaviour, attendance and attitudes to learning improve significantly.
- Parents rightly feel very well supported. A key strength of the school is the commitment of staff to work closely with families and find solutions to any concerns about a pupil's well-being. One parent commented: 'I cannot begin to express the excellent support and communication we as a family have received.' Another noted: 'This school has changed my son's life. They have been supportive to us as a whole family and I cannot praise the staff enough.'
- Pupils learn about a variety of careers by talking to guest speakers who visit the school and through visits to different work placements, such as the local hospital. Staff work with pupils and their families individually to ensure that pupils make informed decisions about their next steps. The curriculum supports pupils to develop the skills they need to access their chosen career path successfully. For example, pupils are taught how to complete application forms.
- Pupils who spoke to an inspector agreed that they value being at the school because staff are supportive and understand their needs. Pupils commented that incidents of bullying and of inappropriate behaviour in school are rare, and that when incidents do occur staff always deal with them quickly.
- Leaders have ensured that opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding are woven throughout each school day, including at circle time, breakfast time and breaktime. As an example, during a morning circle time, pupils took part in a discussion about plastic waste.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Many pupils arrive with a history of difficulty in moderating their own behaviour and making the right choices. Pupils rapidly make improvements due to the expert, individualised support they receive. Consistent approaches and high expectations across the school support pupils to sustain their improved behaviour.
- Pupils display respect for each other and for staff. They recognise that others are at school to learn. Consequently, pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Pupils who spoke to inspectors commented on how much they appreciate the motivating reward systems. They enjoy receiving stickers and certificates, and value the phone calls staff make to inform parents of these achievements.
- Pupils have frequently missed long periods of education. On joining the school, their attendance rapidly improves. One parent commented on the difference the school has made, stating: 'My child was not able to access education for two years due to having autism spectrum disorder and high anxiety... [she] has transformed from a child who could not leave the house to a child who hates to miss a day of school.'
- Careful recording and analysis of incidents ensure that leaders and governors have a

clear overview of patterns and trends in behaviour. This enables leaders to take timely action, for example by increasing the level of support for an identified pupil so that they can manage their own behaviour more effectively.

- Leaders and staff work very closely with pupils, their families and external agencies to support pupils to attend school. Leaders believe, and inspectors agree, there is nothing more that staff could do to improve the attendance of pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Many join Woodeaton Manor having experienced significant periods of disrupted schooling and disengagement from education. The careful attention staff give to each pupil's individual needs means pupils quickly re-engage with learning. Consequently, over time, pupils make good academic progress from their, often low, starting points.
- Leaders monitor the progress of pupils closely. Through the school's own assessment system, leaders track pupils' individual progress carefully. They give due consideration to whole-school academic progress by subject, key stage and group. This shows that all groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress in a range of subjects.
- As pupils settle in to the 'Woodeaton Way', they develop a more positive attitude to learning and improve their attendance. Accordingly, pupils in key stage 2 make good and often rapid progress in English, mathematics and science.
- In key stages 3 and 4 pupils benefit from the school's specialist rooms and from teachers' subject-specific knowledge. As a result, pupils achieve well in a range of subjects. Progress in music in key stage 3 and in art and design in key stage 4 is strong.
- Leaders make good use of additional funding to provide further support and targeted interventions, in addition to pupils' EHC plans. Strategies such as personalised timetables are highly effective, enabling pupils to make considerable progress.
- Pupils' destinations are positive. Over the last three years, all pupils have moved on to relevant college courses. This is because staff work closely with pupils to ensure that they select a college course that is right for them.
- Leaders are currently reviewing the school's approach to assessment. They recognise that the current system requires amendments so that pupils' attainment can be tracked with increased accuracy.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

**Good**

- The recently established post-16 provision has enabled a small cohort of students to remain at the school for an additional year. The provision offers a distinct learning environment which prepares students effectively for life after school.
- The post-16 leader has a clear vision for the provision. She is determined that all students will develop the skills and level of maturity they need to move on to successful college placements.

- Students continue to study GCSE English, mathematics and science. Good teaching and high expectations mean that students are well supported to improve upon their end-of-key-stage-4 assessments.
- The post-16 curriculum places a strong emphasis on promoting students' independence. Through structured activities, including hiking and camping, students are enabled to take risks, tackle new experiences and build resilience as they prepare for adulthood. Staff make good use of naturally arising opportunities to encourage students to take responsibility. For instance, inspectors saw students capably moving between lessons without adult support.
- All students undertake weekly work experience, either independently or accompanied by a family member. This helps to boost students' confidence and self-esteem, as well as developing important work-related skills. Close monitoring by staff ensures that placements remain successful.
- Students use 'moving on, moving up' meetings to discuss their future aspirations with staff and identify an appropriate college course. The post-16 leader has rapidly built positive relationships with colleges. This has enabled well-planned and timely transition packages to be established. Consequently, all current post-16 students have been offered a college placement when they leave school.
- Relationships between teachers and students are strong. Students trust staff. Students are safe and feel safe. Their attitudes to learning are positive.

## School details

Unique reference number	123329
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10088179

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation special
Age range of pupils	7 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	6
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs June Nisbet
Headteacher	Mr Simon Bishop
Telephone number	01865 558722
Website	<a href="http://www.woodeaton.oxon.sch.uk">http://www.woodeaton.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office.7002@woodeaton.oxon.sch.uk">office.7002@woodeaton.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2018

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there has been a change to the school's leadership. The previous headteacher left in August 2018. The school's assistant headteacher was appointed as headteacher in September 2018.
- The school provides education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, including: attachment disorder; autism spectrum disorder; anxiety; dyspraxia; obsessive compulsive disorder; specific learning difficulties; and speech and language disorder. The school does not cater for pupils with an attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder diagnosis.
- All pupils have an EHC plan.

- Currently, the school has six students in the post-16 provision.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, educational psychologist, phase leaders, subject leaders and teaching assistants. The lead inspector also met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors visited 15 part-lessons, all with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors observed circle time, breakfast time, breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally and met with a group of seven pupils.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and discussed pupils' progress and attainment with leaders.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the school improvement consultant.
- Inspectors had telephone conversations with two parents and took account of 42 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including nine free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation, including: information available on the school's website; records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance; records of leaders' monitoring activities; and school improvement plans. Information on governance, including minutes of the governing body's meetings, was scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Janis Rogers, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ross Macdonald

Ofsted Inspector

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