

# The Woodside Academy

Morland Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 6NF

## Inspection dates

11–12 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders, governors and representatives from the trust have worked highly effectively to improve many areas of the school since it opened as an academy.
- The curriculum has been carefully designed to enable pupils to leave the school with a comprehensive range of knowledge and skills.
- This curriculum design shows clear impact in key stage 2, where outcomes for pupils are very strong across many subjects. This is not the case in key stage 1 in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- The local governing body fulfils its role highly effectively. Members have an in-depth understanding of the context of the school and use this to ensure that the right decisions are made.
- Leaders use training and professional development opportunities judiciously to support improvements to teachers' practice and subject knowledge.
- Relationships are exceptionally strong across the school. Leaders have created a really warm, caring environment where pupils feel safe because they know adults will look after them.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely well promoted. Pupils said that one of the main things they will take away from this school is the importance of being kind and respectful.
- Pupils conduct themselves well at all times. They have excellent attitudes to learning which really support the progress that they make.
- Leaders place great importance on attendance. Consequently, pupils attend well. Any pupils whose attendance declines are quickly identified and helped to get back on track.
- Children get off to an excellent start in the highly stimulating early years environment.
- Parents and carers have positive attitudes to the school. Parents who spoke to inspectors were very happy with their children's education.

## **Full report**

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

- Improve the challenge and depth of learning in key stage 1 so that outcomes rise, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils. For example, there has been a strong focus on closing gender gaps.
- Leaders have a very detailed understanding of the quality of education across the school, underpinned by a secure system for gathering evidence.
- Middle leaders are equally effective in their roles. They share and promote the same vision as governors, representatives of the trust and senior leaders. Consequently, they work well as a team.
- The design and implementation of the curriculum ensure that pupils leave Woodside with a body of knowledge across a range of subjects. Pupils who spoke with inspectors remembered significant details about the topics they had studied. For example, they knew that the first bicycle was invented in the 19th century and could cite a range of inventions credited to the Romans that benefit us today.
- The taught curriculum is enriched through trips and other experiences such as visiting speakers and workshops. Pupils visit different places, ranging from local parks and the seaside to museums, theatres and places of worship. Pupils spoke with awe about many of these visits. They appreciated having experienced a simulated earthquake at the Natural History Museum and a full rainforest experience at Kew Gardens.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well thought out. The books pupils read and the topics they study provide them with the chance to debate moral and ethical issues. A recent debate in Year 5, for example, centred on whether one should pay for single use plastic. Pupils regularly raise money for charities, often of their own choosing. They are aware of prominent topical issues such as homelessness. Year 6 camped out in cardboard boxes in the school to develop empathy and raise awareness.
- Providing high-quality training and professional development is one of leaders' key strengths. This is carefully planned to enable the school to meet its identified priorities and secure improvements across the curriculum. For example, training has ensured that teachers are really confident in delivering the good teaching needed for pupils to retain so much information about the topics they have studied.
- Staff are very positive about the training they receive. Those at the very early stages of their career said they feel very well supported. Staff also said that leaders take account of their well-being. The online survey that staff completed during the inspection showed overwhelmingly positive responses.
- The funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used very effectively. It provides in-class support as well as bespoke interventions that lead to strong outcomes for these pupils.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils benefit from a range of experiences that they would otherwise not have. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about visits to the Houses of Parliament and to an outdoor centre, and of

making scrambled eggs, which they saw as a vital life skill. This clearly supports their learning really well and is improving outcomes strongly.

- Leaders ensure that the school makes and sustains productive partnerships. For example, the local authority representative brings an external perspective to evaluating the quality of education. Moreover, working with a cluster of local schools supports teachers' ability to check pupils' standards accurately.
- Many parents, including parents of pupils with SEND, were highly positive about what the school offers and how well their children are doing. In the comments on the free-text facility, parents cited excellent progress, swift and respectful resolution of bullying issues, concerns taken seriously and 'outstanding manners and care' as among reasons they are happy with the school.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors have been instrumental in securing improvements since the school opened as an academy. They know the school and its context really well. This understanding underpins the decisions that they make. They place pupils and families at the heart of their work.
- Governors are very clear about the school's priorities and challenge senior leaders to show that these are being addressed effectively. For example, governors understand that while attendance is in line with national figures overall, some groups of pupils are more at risk of low attendance than others. They question leaders robustly about what is being done to support pupils in these categories.
- Governors have an equally staunch commitment to safeguarding as senior leaders. They ensure that all training is completed and that safeguarding is at the forefront of people's minds.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have recently adopted a new system which has streamlined recording and analysing information about safeguarding so that it is highly efficient. Procedures for vetting staff's appropriateness for working with children are thorough.
- Safeguarding has an extremely high priority in the school. It is a standing item at governors' meetings and senior leaders' meetings. Leaders and governors have an in-depth understanding of the contextual issues that relate to the school and its community which underpins the approaches that they take.
- Training is comprehensive and regularly updated. Leaders source well-regarded training providers to ensure that the input that staff receive is relevant and of high quality.
- The designated safeguarding lead and her deputies are exceptionally tenacious in pursuing cases to a satisfactory conclusion. In this way, the needs of vulnerable families are well met.

- Another measure of the importance of safeguarding in the school is the commitment to first-aid training. Leaders have made sure that a high number of staff are trained first aiders which ensures that, on this large site, any incidents or accidents are swiftly addressed.
- Procedures for administering medicine to pupils with specific medical needs are very well organised. For example, there is a robust system for ensuring that any medications are always within their expiry date.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong, particularly in key stage 2. This leads to well-planned lessons that build progressively on pupils' prior learning.
- There are plenty of opportunities to write across a range of subjects. Pupils in key stage 2 write particularly well. This is because they have a good grasp of the topics they study. This is less evident in key stage 1, where there is less depth in topic work.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do. For example, by the time pupils enter key stage 2, teachers expect them to research topics in depth so that their written work is factually accurate.
- Teachers accurately identify where pupils need additional support. This is provided both in and out of lessons and is carefully targeted to address specific gaps in learning.
- Learning support assistants are well trained and deployed effectively to ensure that they have a positive effect on pupils' outcomes. For example, they support pupils with SEND to access activities in lessons so that they can learn alongside their peers.
- Teachers provide a comprehensive range of resources to support pupils' learning such as exemplar pieces of work. Pupils examine these before they commence their own writing.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. A multi-sensory approach engages pupils. Phonics is the key strategy to enable pupils to become readers. Staff emphasise this.
- Pupils understand what they are working to improve and take responsibility for doing so. The drafting and editing process for written work encourages this approach. Pupils are proud of the final result.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

#### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils talk confidently and at length about their learning. Class ambassadors greet visitors and explain what is being taught in the lesson.
- Pupils are exceptionally proud when they show and talk about their work. Younger pupils said that the best thing about the school is the learning. Older pupils were extremely passionate and animated about the opportunities that they get, for example, to visit exciting places linked to their topics.

- The standard of presentation of pupils' work is exemplary, particularly in key stage 2. The leaflets, pamphlets, books and posters that pupils design to showcase their topic work are detailed and show great thought and care.
- Relationships are very strong. This can be seen, for example, in how much pupils rejoice in each other's successes and how it is second nature for them to help each other when they experience some difficulty in lessons.
- Pupils have the opportunity to debate ideas and are clear that this involves listening to a range of different views. They take a mature approach and genuinely entertain the possibility of changing their mind.
- Pupils have a strong understanding of human rights and believe that respect is of fundamental importance and should be shown to everyone. This prepares them exceptionally well for moving on to secondary school and for their future life in modern Britain.
- There is comprehensive provision in place for supporting pupils' emotional well-being. Various types of therapy and the highly effective pastoral team ensure that needs are well met. The well-planned use of the primary physical education and sport funding has allowed staff to promote pupils' physical well-being and the benefits of an active lifestyle.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and can explain why this is the case. They appreciate that leaders help them to learn how to stay safe in school such as through the lock down procedure and practising evacuating if there is a fire. They value learning about issues outside of school too, such as road safety and 'stranger danger'. Parents and staff also have positive views about safety.
- Pupils have a sophisticated understanding of how to stay safe online. They can explain how those that seek to groom young people operate so are wise to these tactics.
- Pupils understand what bullying is, and are adamant that they would never be a bystander but would intervene if it felt safe to do so, or tell an adult. They say bullying in school is exceptionally rare; most have never heard of it occurring. All the pupils who spoke with inspectors said that adults would deal swiftly and effectively with any concerns they had.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The exceptionally strong relationships between adults and pupils and among pupils underpin the harmonious atmosphere in the school.
- Pupils manage their behaviour well. For example, they line up very sensibly as they wait to be logged in for lunch. Consequently, conduct across the school and at playtimes and lunchtimes is exemplary.
- Pupils understand and value the behaviour system. The chance to get a postcard sent home is a strong motivator. The pupils who spoke to inspectors explained that they would be mortified if they received a sanction. They also said that it was very rare for anyone to end up on the lowest level of the behaviour chart.
- Leaders analyse records of behavioural incidents very carefully, including checking that

no groups are over-represented. This has led to improvements in specific areas. For example, playtimes have recently been changed so that fewer pupils are out at any one time.

- Pupils with particular behavioural needs get effective support to learn how to regulate their behaviour. As a result, instances of serious sanctions, such as exclusions, have reduced.
- Leaders place a very strong emphasis on the importance of good attendance. This includes implementing highly effective systems to improve the attendance of pupils who are in danger of becoming persistent absentees.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Leaders have worked highly effectively to improve pupils' progress. At the end of 2017/18, progress across key stage 2 rose to above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Work in pupils' books shows that there are very strong outcomes across the curriculum, particularly in key stage 2. Pupils from Years 4 and 5, speaking to inspectors, demonstrated that they had retained and understood an impressive amount about the topics they had studied over the last couple of years. For example, they could talk authoritatively about the rainforest and plastic pollution and cite key historical developments.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is at least in line with national figures. This sets pupils up well to go on and become confident readers. The pupils who read with inspectors all used their phonics knowledge to help them decode unfamiliar words.
- The most able pupils in Year 6 spoke for many when they said that they love reading. They understand that being prolific readers helps them to develop a rich vocabulary. They know that this benefits their written work.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress because the systems for supporting their learning are robust.
- Pupils who join the school at the very early stages of learning English get specialist support. This ensures that they quickly gain the skills they need to access learning.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving rapidly, including in reading, writing and mathematics. In some year groups and subjects, including the 2017/18 Year 6 cohort, attainment gaps between them and other pupils nationally have closed completely. Although progress from starting points is good, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who reach greater depth in key stage 1 remains low.

### Early years provision

**Outstanding**

- The early years setting is a language-rich and stimulating learning environment. Through excellent planning, teachers provide exciting activities across the early years curriculum.

- Ensuring that children are as independent as possible is a priority. For example, for certain activities, teachers give children careful guidance but then leave them to complete them on their own. Inspectors saw this when children were making jellyfish on the first day and turtles on the second. This meant that the final products were unique and accomplished because children had followed instructions but also added their own creative slant. The daily challenges also contribute well to building children's independence.
- Staff find highly innovative ways to promote writing. During the inspection, and as part of their ocean/seaside topic, adults had set up a table with a suitcase and piles of different types of clothes. Pupils were checking how much they could fit into the case and keenly writing out checklists to ensure that they had packed everything they needed.
- Relationships are a particular strength in early years. Children are exceptionally kind to each other and collaborate highly effectively when learning. For example, two children in Nursery were seen showing great patience and resilience. They were supporting each other to find a pair of boots that matched and fitted so that they could access the muddy area.
- Leaders provide high-quality training and development so that staff's skills are exceptionally well developed. Staff know when and how to intervene to move children's learning on. They know equally when to stand back and let children explore by themselves.
- Staff are very good at building on children's interests. For example, on the first day of the inspection, inspectors saw children eagerly taking part in an obstacle race which staff had supported them to organise. On the second day, this had evolved into a far more sophisticated race, including donning different items of clothing along the course. This ensured high levels of involvement and presented an excellent challenge in terms of physical development.
- The provision for two-year-olds takes into account their young age and therefore meets their needs very well. Adults provide carefully tailored activities which support children's development optimally. There are regular opportunities for these younger children to mix with older ones in the Nursery which prepares them very well for transition.
- Careful assessment shows that children make strong progress from their starting points which are often low for their age, especially in language and communication skills.
- Safeguarding processes are as effective in early years as they are in the rest of the school. For example, staff check the site daily to ensure that it provides the safest environment possible.

## School details

Unique reference number	143178
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10088839

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	692
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Carley Walker
Headteacher	Claire Howarth
Telephone number	020 8654 5333
Website	<a href="http://www.woodside.croydon.sch.uk/">www.woodside.croydon.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@thewoodsideacademy.org.uk">admin@thewoodsideacademy.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- This school joined the Synaptic Trust in September 2016. Its predecessor school was judged to require improvement at its inspection of June 2016.
- The trust's directors delegate much of the work of running the school to the local governing body. These roles and responsibilities are clearly explained on the trust's website.
- The early years consists of three Reception classes and a Nursery with additional provision for two-year-olds. Year 1 and Year 3 comprise three classes, and Years 2 and 4 to 6 comprise four classes.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is lower than average, although numbers are rising.

- The school serves a very diverse community with almost three quarter of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Many of these pupils are at the very early stages of English acquisition.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes in the school at least once to observe teaching and learning. Most of these visits were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspection team met with staff, including those at the early stage of their careers, middle leaders and senior leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority. The chief executive officer from the trust was present at key points in the inspection. Forty-seven responses to the online staff survey were considered.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their learning both in lessons and in more formal meetings. They also spoke to pupils more informally, for example at lunchtime. Additionally, they listened to pupils from different year groups read.
- The inspection team scrutinised a range of documents including those related to safeguarding, attendance figures, logs of behavioural incidents, minutes of governing body meetings, the school's development plan, reports about how specific funding is used, and information about the curriculum from the school's website.
- Inspectors took account of the 47 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as the 21 comments left on the free-text facility. They also gathered parents' views before and after school.

## Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Meena Walia	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Moller	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Neary	Ofsted Inspector

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