

Inspection of Woodfall Primary and Nursery School

Woodfall Lane, Little Neston, Neston, Cheshire CH64 4BT

Inspection dates:	10 and 11 June 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of the school is Helen Hough. This school is part of the Cheshire Academies 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), Steve Ellis, and is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Emlyn Wright.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Woodfall Primary and Nursery School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Woodfall Primary School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as Woodfall Primary and Nursery School as a result of conversion to academy status. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a warm and friendly place. Pupils feel safe and love coming to school. They rise to the high expectations that the school has for them. They enjoy learning and achieve well in a wide range of subjects.

Children in the early years develop their language and communication exceptionally well. They are articulate and confident to share their learning. They are very well prepared for the next phase of learning.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff foster very positive relationships with children from the Nursery class through to older pupils in Year 6. Pupils value the morning 'CREW' time sessions. This gives them an opportunity to reflect, put things right and be responsible and respectful to others. Pupils and children show consistently high levels of motivation and resilience. They play happily and cheerfully during their social times.

Pupils enjoy taking part in sports, such as tennis, football and hockey. They speak enthusiastically about outdoor education visits and trips to art galleries and museums. Pupils know how to look after their physical and mental health. They are proud to take on a range of leadership responsibilities, such as peer counsellors, team captains and the eco crew. The school council has a positive impact on the school community, such as introducing a wider choice for school meals.

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

The school is ambitious for pupils, including children in the early years. Pupils follow a broad curriculum. The school has thought carefully about how the curriculum is constructed to ensure that it meets the needs of its pupils. For example, the school provides tailored support for some pupils in small, nurturing classes. Pupils learn the curriculum well.

The school's curriculum clearly sets out the essential knowledge that children and pupils should acquire from the Nursery class, including the provision for two-year-old children, to Year 6. The school has carefully ordered learning so that children and pupils can build knowledge securely over time.

Staff use their secure subject knowledge to present and explain new ideas clearly to pupils. Staff select appropriate activities that help pupils to learn. In the main, staff use a range of checks to see what pupils remember. However, sometimes pupils' misconceptions are not identified precisely and so are not addressed quickly enough, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). When this happens, gaps in pupils' knowledge persist and so they struggle to embed new or more complex concepts securely.

Reading is promoted well throughout the school. Pupils read widely and often. They speak excitedly about their favourite books. Pupils who find reading difficult receive extra support from well-trained staff. Staff ensure that the books that pupils read are carefully

matched to the sounds that they are learning. This means that pupils gain the phonics knowledge that they need to become confident and fluent readers.

Children in the Nursery develop their language and communication skills exceptionally well. They enjoy listening to rhymes and singing songs. They work together harmoniously and take turns and support one another very well. Children deepen their learning exceptionally well using a wide range of high-quality resources.

The school's systems for identifying the needs of pupils with SEND are swift and well established. Information about the needs of these pupils is shared with staff and they receive appropriate training. This helps pupils with SEND to achieve well.

Pupils behave exceptionally in class and around the school. Routines and expectations are very well embedded. The school ensures that pupils with additional needs are able to manage their behaviour extremely effectively. The school works constructively with families to promote pupils' attendance. This is helping to improve how regularly many pupils attend school, including those with barriers to learning.

The school places a strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils learn about positive relationships in an age-appropriate way. Pupils find out about fundamental British values, such as democracy and what is right and wrong. They develop a mature understanding of tolerance and respect for others. However, some do not have a deep enough understanding of different faiths and cultures.

Staff are positive about the support that the school gives them to manage their own workload and well-being. Staff appreciate the ongoing training that they receive, including from the trust, to deliver curriculums and also share good practice with other local schools. The CEO, local governors and trustees provide effective support and challenge in equal measure.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, in some subjects, pupils' misconceptions are not addressed quickly enough, including for pupils with SEND. This hinders how deeply some pupils learn. The school should ensure that staff identify and remedy pupils' misconceptions more consistently, so that pupils can build a rich, connected body of knowledge over time.

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	150118
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10378051
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	489
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Emlyn Wright
CEO of the trust	Steve Ellis
Principal	Helen Hough
Website	www.woodfall.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Woodfall Primary and Nursery School converted to become an academy school in June 2024. When its predecessor school, Woodfall Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school is part of the Cheshire Academies Trust.
- The school opened a Nursery in 2016. The Nursery provides for children from the age of two years upwards.
- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school provision for pupils.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This is the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of staff.
- The inspector spoke with the CEO and members of the local governing body and board of trustees. He also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences in school and their views on behaviour and bullying. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation documents and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, computing and religious education. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also looked at the curriculum and pupils' work in some other subjects.
- An inspector observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments.
- No responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils were received.

Inspection team

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