

# Woodlane High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100379
<b>Local Authority</b>	London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
<b>Inspection number</b>	354844
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Goodchild

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	82
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Liz St Clair-Legge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Harwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4–5 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Du Cane Road Hammersmith London W12 0TN
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 743 5668
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 15 lessons and 13 teachers. They held meetings with staff, students and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at information about students' attainment and progress, evidence of monitoring and self-evaluation, and documents indicating how well the school safeguards its students. They analysed 12 responses to the parental questionnaire, as well as those from 16 members of staff and 58 students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Inspectors explored how well different groups of students achieve, including those in the Medical Needs Unit.
- They looked at how well teachers use assessment information to match tasks and approaches to students' diverse learning needs.
- They considered the effectiveness of leaders at all levels in monitoring and evaluating the school's work in order to drive improvement.

## Information about the school

This is a secondary special school for students with complex learning needs. Many have speech, communication and language difficulties; others have autistic spectrum disorders, physical disabilities, moderate learning difficulties and/or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Although most students are White British, the proportion who are of minority ethnic heritage is above average. No students are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. There has been a significant increase in the number of students on roll since the last inspection and there are more boys than girls. The school has a Medical Needs Unit for up to eight students with serious mental and physical health issues. The coordinator of the Medical Needs Unit provides outreach and support to other schools across the local authority. Woodlane High has been accredited by the British Dyslexia Association as a 'dyslexia friendly school'. It has National Healthy Schools status.

**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: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is an outstanding school. It enables students to achieve well and the high quality care, guidance and support helps them to make exceptionally good progress in their personal development. Students say that they very much enjoy school and their outstanding behaviour and readiness to apply themselves are consistently positive features of their learning. They speak knowledgeably about healthy living and are active participants in a wide range of sporting activities. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, evident particularly in an increase in their self-esteem and independence skills. Students in the Medical Needs Unit make outstanding gains in confidence as a result of the highly sensitive and skilled support they receive. The school has exceptionally thorough safeguarding procedures, which mean that most students say they feel very safe. There is an active and influential school council and students make a very good contribution to the school and local area. They have more limited opportunities to connect with communities where people's lifestyles are different from their own.

Students make good progress in their learning: nearly all reach and many exceed their targets and they all leave school at the end of Year 11 with a range of recognised qualifications. Students' academic and personal development is promoted by a varied and stimulating curriculum, matched exceptionally well to their individual needs. Although there are consistent strengths in lessons across the school and some are outstanding, teaching is good overall. This is because teachers do not always plan their lessons thoroughly enough or use the best possible strategies to meet students' learning needs. For example, they do not always provide enough opportunities for students to speak and communicate at length, and they do not consistently deploy their teaching assistants to full effect.

Senior leaders provide a strong drive for improvement and have a clear shared vision. Their high expectations are evident in the quality of thinking that has gone into the development of an exemplary school website which provides highly accessible information for parents, carers and students. This also reflects the importance the school places on partnership with parents and carers, which is an outstanding feature of its work. A parental comment confirmed this: 'I have high quality and very good communication with my child's teachers. I feel confident and a lot more relaxed now my child is at this school.' Collaboration with other organisations and agencies makes an outstanding contribution to students' learning and well-being. The school has improved on a number of fronts since the last inspection. A great deal of work has been done to extend the amount of assessment

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information the school collects and this is used increasingly well to monitor students' progress and to inform judgements about school effectiveness. The leadership of teaching and learning is good. There is a regular programme of lesson observation and other checks on teachers' work, but leaders do not keep as close and continuous an overview of teaching as they might. The school's capacity to improve further is, therefore, good.

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

- Raise students' achievement and increase the amount of teaching that is outstanding by:
  - ensuring all teachers plan their lessons to include the best possible approaches and strategies to meet students' needs
  - providing more opportunities for students to develop their speaking and communication skills in lessons
  - developing the role of teaching assistants and ensure they are consistently deployed to best effect
  - placing greater focus by leaders at all levels on establishing excellent teaching.
- Increase opportunities for students to find out about the lives of people in contrasting communities in the United Kingdom and overseas.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

While the few more-able students perform in line with national expectations, the inspection did not judge overall attainment because the complex needs of the vast majority mean that they are unable to reach average standards. Although there is some variation between the performances of individual students, there is no marked difference between the progress of the many different groups. For example, where the more-able students gain a number of GCSE passes at A\* to G and sometimes A\* to C grades, others leave with a wide range of qualifications which are matched closely to their capability and similarly reflect the good progress they have made. Students make the most progress in lessons where learning is closely linked to real-life contexts. This was evident in two outstanding lessons in Year 10. In a functional literacy lesson, students applied themselves exceptionally well and successfully analysed the effectiveness of a television presenter's communication skills. In a mathematics lesson, by linking the topic of 'probability' to things that might happen in everyday life, the teacher captured students' imagination so that they engaged in a lively discussion and worked at a rapid pace. Where students' progress is good rather than outstanding, they do well in parts of a lesson but some opportunities are missed, including those that would best develop their speaking and listening skills. Nevertheless, even where some activities are intrinsically less interesting to them, students still work hard, collaborate effectively and behave exceptionally well.

Students develop a mature understanding of the importance of making healthy choices and respond with enthusiasm to the extensive opportunities to take part in

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physical activities. For older students, this includes helping to run sports clubs as part of the Sports Leader scheme. Students demonstrate their growing confidence and awareness of keeping safe not only in school but also when learning to travel independently, for instance going to college and taking part in work-related activities. They appreciate this very much and, talking about the development of independence skills, one student said, 'I'm proud and thankful at how the school has helped me.' They develop environmental awareness, and a wide range of personal and enterprise skills that are highly relevant to the next phase of their lives. Most attend school regularly, although the attendance rate is average. This is because a few students have significant periods of absence, mostly related to their mental health issues. As a result, preparation for future economic well-being is good. Many students develop a range of skills and attitudes that prepare them exceptionally well for moving on to sixth form college, in most cases, or to training and employment.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Throughout the school, teachers manage students' behaviour exceptionally well and have very positive relationships with them. Teachers' good subject knowledge and regular use of information and communication technology make a good contribution to students' motivation. Teachers provide varied activities that usually involve students actively in their learning. As a result, students say that learning is 'fun'. Teachers also offer a great deal of encouragement and promote students' personal

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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and independence skills consistently well. When planning their lessons, teachers identify what they want different groups to learn and they share this information well with students. They make clear to them how well they are progressing and, in the words of one boy, ‘Teachers talk about how we are doing and if we make a mistake, they tell us how to fix it.’ A key difference between teaching that is outstanding and that which is good, however, lies not only in the detail teachers include in their written plans but more importantly in the extent to which they identify the most effective strategies to use. In the best lessons, teachers direct and shape students’ learning experiences through a series of tightly structured activities matched very precisely to their learning needs. They plan how teaching assistants will contribute to students’ learning and provide motivating opportunities for students to speak at length. In less effective lessons, these features are not established so well, despite the fact that teaching assistants have been trained to support students’ speech and language development. In addition, in these lessons, teachers do not vary their questions enough or provide activities that stimulate in-depth communication.

Arrangements are exceptionally thorough for settling students in when they join in Year 7 and in preparation for leaving school. Links with the neighbouring academy provide excellent opportunities for students to learn for part of the time alongside their mainstream peers. This highly flexible and reciprocal arrangement not only benefits the school’s own students but also those from the academy who spend some of their time at Woodlane High. Outstanding links with organisations and businesses do much to extend and enrich students’ experiences. The wide range of accreditation in Year 11, work-related learning opportunities and college placements are matched closely to students’ individual interests and aspirations. Students in the Medical Needs Unit have a programme of activities and specialist support that meet their needs exceptionally well. After-school clubs are varied and the curriculum is enlivened by stimulating visits, visitors and special events.

The school has a warm, positive environment, with a strong sense of care and trust. It provides students with very well targeted support based on a deep understanding of their individual and complex needs. It works in close partnership with a range of therapists and other agencies and ensures that specialist advice is carried through into classroom practice. The management of students’ behaviour is outstanding and students feel extremely well supported. One said, ‘We feel safe because teachers watch out for us and they sort out any trouble straight away’; another said, ‘There is always an adult we can talk to about our worries.’ The breakfast club provides those who use it with a nourishing and positive start to the day. Although the attendance rate is satisfactory, the school’s rigorous target setting and work with parents, carers, students and other agencies have seen outstanding all-round improvements for a number of students.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2

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<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The overall drive for improvement is outstanding because members of the senior leadership team work very well together and have clearly defined roles. The headteacher describes everyone as being ‘on a journey together with a shared vision’ and there is a strong sense of purpose amongst the staff. There are also very good opportunities for individual leaders to develop their particular skills for the benefit of the students. As a result, a number of aspects of the school’s work are led exceptionally well. Senior leaders regularly monitor teaching and learning and provide feedback to teachers. Some probing analysis of findings takes place, but efforts to improve teaching from good to outstanding are not as rigorous or strategic as they could be. This is why the school’s capacity to improve is good rather than outstanding. However, the plan to give a senior leader overall responsibility for improving teaching is a positive development. Subject leaders, who are often also the only teacher of their subject, make a good contribution to improving students’ learning. The school now has a wealth of performance data and uses this to very good effect in tracking students’ progress and tackling any potential underachievement. This helps to ensure that all groups of students have equal opportunities to succeed. Governance is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection under the excellent leadership of a newly appointed Chair of the Governing Body. Members of the governing body share with senior leaders a desire to make the school as good as possible. They offer good support and provide increasing challenge.

The school’s systems for keeping students safe far exceed statutory requirements. Staff training in child protection is updated annually and support for students whose circumstances may make them particularly vulnerable, including those with medical and mental health needs, is of very high quality. The school’s promotion of community cohesion is good. School leaders are outward-looking in involving students in local events and work very well in partnership with national organisations such as the BBC. They have plans to develop links with a school in France but, at present, there are limited opportunities for students to find out about and contribute to contrasting communities in the United Kingdom and overseas.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities</b>	<b>2</b>

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<b>met</b>	
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Fewer parents and carers returned the questionnaire than in similar schools nationally. Nearly all of those who did so agreed or strongly agreed with all the statements. Respondents particularly appreciate the way the school develops their children’s independence and life skills, and meets their individual needs. They praise the approachability of the staff and the happy environment they provide for students. Inspection findings endorse parents’ and carers’ positive views, and these reflect surveys carried out by the school, which have elicited much higher return rates. The very few comments that were critical of aspects of the school’s work were shared, anonymously, with the school and the Chair of the Governing Body.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodlane High School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 12 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 82 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	4	33	7	58	0	0	1	8
The school keeps my child safe	6	50	6	50	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	5	42	5	42	0	0	1	8
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	58	4	33	0	0	1	8
The teaching is good at this school	7	58	5	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	6	50	5	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	67	4	33	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	6	50	4	33	0	0	1	8
The school meets my child’s particular needs	7	58	4	33	0	0	1	8
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	75	2	17	0	0	1	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	50	5	42	0	0	1	8
The school is led and managed effectively	6	50	5	42	0	0	1	8
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	8	67	3	25	0	0	1	8

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



26 May 2011

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Woodlane High School, London, W12 0TN**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school. We very much enjoyed our visit, finding out about all the interesting things you do and looking at your learning in lessons. I am delighted to tell you that Woodlane High is an outstanding school. There are many really good things about your school and here are some of the most important.

- You make good progress with your learning and some of you do really well.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you get on very well with your teachers.
- You help with many jobs around the school and find out so much about different types of work.
- You have many interesting experiences and excellent opportunities to learn for some of your time in the Burlington Danes Academy and at college.
- The staff care about you a great deal and provide you with outstanding support, especially those of you in the Medical Needs Unit.
- Teaching is good and the school pays really careful attention to your individual needs.
- The senior leaders work very well together and want to make the school even better for you.

We want to help them with this and so we have asked them to increase the amount of teaching that is outstanding. We also want them to give you more opportunities to find out about what it is like to live in different parts of this country and in other parts of the world. You can help by working hard, as you already do, attending school regularly and enjoying the rest of your time at Woodlane High.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Goodchild  
Lead inspector

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