

Windmill Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107103
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	377534
Inspection dates	28–29 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Joan McKenna

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	303
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheila Killeen
Headteacher	Peter Escott
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Teaching and learning were observed in 14 lessons, taught by 12 staff. Shorter visits to classrooms were made and observations of other activities took place. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, a local authority representative, a group of parents and carers and a group of pupils. Informal discussions were also held with pupils and some parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised documents including policies, action plans, information about pupils' learning and progress, arrangements for safeguarding and attendance data. Responses to questionnaires returned by pupils and staff and the 100 returned by parents and carers were analysed.

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

- Whether the learning and progress of all groups of pupils are securely satisfactory across the school, including in mathematics.
- Whether teaching and the curriculum meet the needs of all groups of pupils equally effectively.
- Whether pastoral provision and pupils' personal outcomes are good.
- Whether the judgements that leaders make about the school are accurate and whether they are taking effective action to improve it.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a very small number from minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly typical. The school holds Healthy School status and the Achievement for All Quality Mark.

Since the previous inspection a new deputy headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body have been appointed.

The on-site breakfast club and after-school club, which are not managed by the governing body, did not form part of this inspection.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Windmill Hill is providing a satisfactory quality of education. It has strengths in pastoral areas which, along with almost all personal outcomes for pupils, are good. Some other aspects, such as the engagement of parents and carers and the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, are also good. Academic provision and pupils' achievement, however, are satisfactory.

The school is successful in ensuring that pupils are safe, well-cared for, happy, confident and motivated to learn. Pupils are well-known and valued as individuals. Very positive relationships with them and with their parents and carers, and effective, well-targeted support, including for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, help pupils to thrive in the warm, inviting environment. Pupils enjoy school and are proud of it. They behave well and their attendance is above average.

Pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national average, albeit lower in mathematics than in English, and they make satisfactory progress during their time in school. Attainment on entry to the school varies across different cohorts from being in line with to slightly below expectations. There has been an improvement in outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the previous inspection, but this is not the case at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. To rectify this, the school has adopted a new 'learning challenge' curriculum. This has been successful in engaging pupils' interest and in promoting their active involvement in learning. It has not been as effective in ensuring good development of the full range of knowledge, understanding and skills required by pupils. The quality and impact of teaching are satisfactory. Teachers provide tasks that require pupils to make choices and to take on responsibility for what they do. This is sometimes done well with appropriate levels of challenge built in, but this practice is inconsistent. Not all pupils have targets to aim for. Some marking gives helpful guidance on what pupils need to do to improve their work, but this is not always the case. There are early signs that rates of progress are starting to improve across the school.

The headteacher has secured a team approach and strong sense of community within the school. Other senior leaders play a helpful part and the skills and involvement of middle leaders are developing. The school is adopting some well-intentioned approaches to improve the curriculum, although these are at early stages of implementation. An appropriate range of monitoring activities takes place. Evaluation does not focus sharply enough on the outcomes for all pupils, however,

and does not always draw sufficiently on the full range of evidence available. Nevertheless, the school's actions to promote improvement are beginning to have a positive effect and a satisfactory capacity to improve further is being demonstrated.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and especially in mathematics, and ensure consistently good rates of progress across the school by:
 - ensuring that there is sufficient emphasis on the systematic promotion of pupils' knowledge, understanding and basic skills alongside approaches to interest and engage them
 - ensuring that activities and strategies adopted in lessons are closely matched to the full range of pupils' needs and provide appropriate challenge for all, so that all individuals and groups learn equally effectively
 - ensure that pupils are set challenging targets that they understand, and that they receive clear guidance on how to improve their work through marking.

- Improve the effectiveness of evaluation and monitoring by:
 - ensuring that measurable criteria that focus on outcomes for pupils are identified for judging the success of actions
 - ensuring that all available evidence is taken into account when making judgements about the school's effectiveness.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The positive impact of recent changes to the curriculum is seen in pupils' enthusiasm and engagement in lessons. They are keen to learn and are acquiring the confidence to ask questions and make decisions. In the many opportunities they have to work with others in pairs and groups they show maturity and well-developed co-operative skills. They willingly do as they are asked, and show initiative when required. While these positive features are contributing to some faster rates of progress now being seen, pupils' learning is satisfactory overall rather than good. Several factors contribute to this. Sometimes pupils are acquiring the skills of enquiry at the expense of the systematic development of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. For example, they can participate well in discussion and offer reasons for their views, but their extended writing skills are less evident. Pupils are often given the opportunity to make choices about the level of challenge in their work, but this is not always at the appropriate pitch for all, which slows progress. Nevertheless, progress is satisfactory overall across the school, including for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is some variability across different groups. For example, more-able pupils do not always reach high enough levels of attainment and some of the very small numbers of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or from

minority ethnic heritages do less well than others. Progress in mathematics still lags behind that in English. The school is taking action to narrow these gaps.

Pupils speak highly of their school and eagerly extol its virtues. They are appreciative of all it offers them and participate enthusiastically in activities. They make a positive contribution to it through their conduct and through specific roles such as school councillors and playground buddies. Pupils initiated the introduction of 'friendship stops' in the playground. They get on well together and have a sense of responsibility towards others both within the school and beyond, regularly raising funds for charity, for example. Pupils engage in a range of cultural experiences through art and drama. Although the school itself is largely mono-cultural, pupils value opportunities to find out about other cultures and they treat each other with respect. Their spiritual development is less well developed, although the new curriculum is providing increased opportunities for reflection and 'wow' experiences. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy, citing clear examples of both when asked. Pupils develop a wide range of qualities likely to be of benefit to their future economic well-being, but their level of basic skills means that this aspect is satisfactory overall. Attendance is above average and is continuing to rise.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Positive features common to all lessons are the supportive relationships and the stimulating learning environments created by teachers. Another is the way in which teachers provide interesting opportunities and tasks that require pupils to be actively involved in their learning and the encouragement they give to promote this.

Sometimes, this is accompanied with clear information about levels of challenge and accurate targeting of individuals to work that stretches them and promotes good learning. However, too often too much unguided choice is given to pupils and the time spent on tasks that are either too demanding for some or not demanding enough for others limits learning. Generating interest is sometimes emphasised rather than extending the depth of learning. The use of targets to guide pupils as to

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

what they should be aiming for and clear, detailed feedback on how to get there and improve their work is under-developed.

While the school has recognised that there needs to be more systematic development of pupils’ literacy and numeracy skills, the strategy adopted is only being partially effective. The emphasis on building on pupils’ interests and identifying questions they want to answer is securing their engagement and promoting enjoyment. The resulting increased motivation and focus is having a positive impact on learning. However, explanations of how they acquire the full range of expected knowledge and skills in English and mathematics are not explicit enough. There is good enrichment of the curriculum and promotion of their personal development through visits and visitors, such as the community police officer who gives valuable input to pupils on many aspects of safety. Extra-curricular activities, including those for sports and the arts are popular and well attended.

Pupils, parents and carers alike speak highly of the quality of care and pastoral support. Good attention is paid to promoting all aspects of pupils’ well-being. Effective systems are in place to identify the needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and what support to provide, involving external agencies where necessary. Their progress is reviewed regularly by all adults involved and there is good involvement of parents and carers in the process. While intervention and additional support is of good quality, attention to meeting all their learning needs in lessons is not always explicitly planned. Arrangements for transition into and exit from the school as well as movement from class to class are effective. The promotion of attendance and positive behaviour is ensuring good outcomes.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders have had success in improving areas that have been prioritised for attention such as attendance and the Early Years Foundation Stage, and in maintaining pastoral strengths. However, an over-reliance on developing the curriculum to improve attainment means that teaching and assessment have not received enough attention. Pupils’ progress is tracked regularly. However, the best progress has been given more weight than where some groups are not doing as well in coming to judgements about the school’s effectiveness. As a result, some of the judgements the school made about itself are more positive than those of the inspection team. Nevertheless, areas of strength and those requiring development are known and action is being taken to bring about improvement.

The governing body provides satisfactory support and carries out its role conscientiously. The Chair of the Governing Body is taking steps to make their work more effective and has arranged training to develop governors’ understanding of

data about pupils’ performance to sharpen up their levels of challenge. Keeping pupils safe is given a high priority and related statutory requirements are fully met.

Discrimination is not tolerated. The promotion of equal opportunities through action to narrow gaps in pupils’ performance is satisfactory. The school values its relationships with parents and carers. They appreciate the welcome they receive in classrooms every morning and also value the Friday newsletters. The school makes good use of a wide range of partnerships to enhance pupils’ experiences and well-being. The school promotes cohesion within its own community well, drawing on those from a different minority ethnic heritages to do so, but does less to promote it on a wider level.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers value the efforts that start before their children join the Early Years Foundation Stage to help them settle in quickly and well. The warm and welcoming relationships between staff and children and the very good partnerships with parents and carers help children to feel secure, safe and happy. The wide range of attractive resources and activities engages children from the moment they enter in the mornings. The fact that resources are organised in a way that children can access independently means that no time is lost and pupils can begin to learn to make choices about their learning from the outset. There has been much development of the provision as a whole since the last inspection, especially outdoors which was a weakness at that time. Opportunities for imaginative and creative play outside now are much stronger, although the range of activities is not as extensive as those indoors. There is a good balance of activities that children choose for themselves and those that are adult-directed, and adults give good input to extend children’s learning through both. Imaginative ways are sought to make learning fun, such as when the teacher dressed up as ‘Bob the Builder’ to lead a session on counting, using tools to illustrate ‘more than’ and ‘less than’. Improved assessment systems and record-keeping mean that individuals’ progress is tracked regularly and their needs are identified and supported. The resulting data are not fully analysed to spot any gaps between different groups of children. Nevertheless, children make good progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Attainment on

entry varies across different cohorts from being in line with to slightly below expectations, and the proportion reaching a good level of development by the time they leave has increased over the past few years to be above the national figure. The provision is managed well and there are appropriate plans for improving it further.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents and carers returning questionnaires giving their views of the school are very positive about it, with virtually all saying that their children enjoy school. They are happy with their children’s experiences. These positive views were strongly endorsed by the group of parents and carers who met to talk with an inspector, and in other, informal conversations. The questionnaires indicated that a very small minority of parents and carers hold some less positive views, especially about the management of behaviour and rates of progress. Inspection evidence confirmed parents’ and carers’ positive views on a range of issues, including the extent to which pupils are kept safe and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. However, evidence also indicated that some areas, including academic provision and outcomes, are satisfactory rather than good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Windmill Hill Primary 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 100 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 303 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	58	41	41	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	51	46	46	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	47	47	45	45	2	2	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	43	47	47	5	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	60	60	35	35	2	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	51	43	43	1	1	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	50	46	46	1	1	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)	42	42	51	51	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	45	47	47	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	42	48	48	7	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	37	52	52	4	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	56	56	41	41	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	62	62	34	34	1	1	1	1

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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 up 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



30 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Windmill Hill Primary School, Sheffield – S35 1ZD

Thank you for being so very friendly when my colleagues and I inspected your school, and for showing us your work. We enjoyed meeting and talking with you. It was very good to see that you are so confident, including when talking with visitors! We found you to be caring, well-behaved pupils. You get on well together and you make a good contribution to your school by doing as you are asked and through the jobs you do, like being school councillors and playground buddies.

We judge your school to be satisfactory. It has some good features. Adults look after you well and you have good relationships with them. As a result, you feel safe in school and able to talk with adults if you have any worries. The school really tries hard to make work interesting for you and to provide activities that you can get actively involved in. You told us that you enjoy your 'challenges'. This helps you to learn better because you find it fun. You work hard. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start. You are making satisfactory progress in your learning overall in Key Stages 1 and 2 because teaching is satisfactory. You are reaching similar standards to those reached across the country.

Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body want to improve the school for you. There are some things we have asked them to concentrate on to help them do this. We would like them to take action to help you achieve even better by making sure that as well as being fun, all lessons help you to develop your English and mathematics skills well and that work is well matched to all of your needs. We have asked your teachers to set you targets and to give you more information about how you can improve your work. We have also asked your school's leaders to check carefully all of the information about how well you are doing so they know the very best steps to improve the school further for you.

You can help by continuing to work hard and being such positive pupils. I send you and your teachers my very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joan McKenna
Lead Inspector

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