

Willows Primary School

Anglesey Road, Off Weston Road, Lichfield, WS13 7NU

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school because

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make rapid gains from low starting points. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make outstanding progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics, due to very good support.
- Pupils' attainment is markedly above that reached by pupils in other schools by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They provide demanding activities and mark pupils work skilfully so that the standard of pupils' work improves.
- An imaginatively designed range of learning opportunities makes sure that pupils enjoy their lessons and have excellent opportunities for their spiritual, moral and social development.
- Pupils develop very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy school immensely. The school's highly inclusive values mean that pupils feel safe and behave very well.
- Leadership and management at all levels, including governance, are outstanding. Leaders rigorously monitor the quality of teaching and its contribution to pupils' progress and set demanding improvement targets.
- Leaders ensure that all aspects of the school's work have a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress, and continually improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons. Joint observations were conducted with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, a representative of the local authority, the Chair of the Governing Body and senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors talked to a small number of parents at the start of the school day and took account of their views wherever they could. They took account the 22 responses to the online (Parent View) questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a wide number of documents, including the school’s own data on pupils’ current and recent progress, planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

Inspection team

Steve Nelson, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Janet Bird	Additional inspector
Patricia Hunt	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action, school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The school meets the current floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils attainment and progress at the age of 11.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding because the progress they make from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups are high compared to other schools nationally. Inspection evidence confirms the school's own data that the proportion of pupils making or exceeding the progress pupils should make accelerated last year across all year groups. For example, almost all pupils in Year 6 made or exceeded two National Curriculum levels of progress between Key Stages 1 and 2 in writing, reading and mathematics.
- The outstanding progress is the result of teaching that highly motivates pupils and generates very positive attitudes towards their learning, linking activities to real-life situations. For example, in a mathematics lesson on securing number facts, pupils were enthusiastically using airport noticeboards to identify consecutive numbers in flight information.
- The school is particularly successful at encouraging pupils to read often and widely. Younger pupils demonstrated very good understanding of linking sounds to letters, which helped them to work out unfamiliar words. The best readers in both key stages could confidently discuss their favourite types of books and authors.
- Attainment in writing, reading and mathematics is well above average throughout the school. The recent Year 6 national test results confirm the school's own assessment that pupils achieved or exceeded the expected minimum levels in writing, reading and mathematics.
- Because teaching is outstanding and a strong emphasis is placed on developing literacy and numeracy skills, pupils acquire knowledge and understanding across a wide range of subjects. This ensures that pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Parents and children express highly positive views about learning and progress.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those for whom additional funds provides support make outstanding progress. This is because of the exceptionally well-focused support and the highly effective teaching by teachers and other adults so that pupils' work is set at the right level.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching across the school and in most subjects including English and mathematics is outstanding and results in pupils making rapid and sustained progress.
- Pupils who were interviewed by the inspector said that they enjoyed lessons and felt that teaching motivates them and helps them to progress. Parents also expressed confidence in the quality of teaching.
- The particularly well-designed curriculum supports outstanding teaching and encourages the development of skills across subjects. Lessons are well planned and structured, taking careful account of pupils' previous learning so as to ensure that activities are closely matched to their learning needs. Homework strongly supports pupils' learning.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, high expectations as to what pupils can achieve and use tightly focused questions to challenge and extend pupils' learning and skills. During

lessons, they undertake accurate on-going assessments of pupils' understanding, and adjust their teaching accordingly when misconceptions are identified. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress.

- Outstanding teaching and effective planning are helping to develop communication skills and provide excellent opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. For example, in an outstanding lesson, pupils worked very well together on researching the experiences of evacuees in the Second World War.
- Interactive whiteboards are used expertly by teachers, for example to extend the comprehensive programme of teaching letters and sounds. This is delivered at pace so pupils remain interested and engaged, and learn to read effectively.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught exceptionally well in an atmosphere where all are valued. Work set is suitable for their needs and they have the opportunity to engage in tasks under the guidance of highly skilled adults.
- High-quality marking provides clear and detailed guidance to pupils on how to improve. Teachers make excellent use of 'next step' activities during marking to provide more demanding work and increase standards. Pupils assess their own work and the progress that they are making towards achieving their targets. This successfully encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to assess risks and keep themselves safe in different situations including when using the internet. Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe and well cared for in school and know to whom to turn if they have any concerns. The older pupils are very aware of the different forms that bullying can take such as verbal and cyber-bullying.
- Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual. This is as a result of a concerted effort by the school and external agencies to work with parents to make sure that pupils attend school.
- An analysis of the comprehensive records kept by the school, a scrutiny of risk assessment and observations during the inspection all confirmed that the behaviour and safety of pupils are strengths of the school. This conclusion was reflected in pupils' highly positive attitudes observed in all activities.
- Pupils know the high standards of behaviour expected of them. The school is a very calm, orderly community. In lessons, pupils listen attentively, contribute to discussions confidently and work very hard. Relationships are excellent. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, both in lessons and around school. They are consistently polite to adults and caring towards each other.
- All the parents who responded to the online questionnaire strongly agreed or agreed that the school makes sure the pupils are well behaved and that their child feels safe at school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school benefits from the motivational leadership provided by the headteacher. Along with

governors, leaders communicate a shared vision that is highly ambitious, aspiring to excellence in achievement and personal development for every pupil. Staff morale is high and all are proud to be members of this school community. Parents who completed the online questionnaire agreed that the school is well led and managed.

- The leadership and management of teaching are outstanding. Staff comment favourably about how they have benefitted from training opportunities to enhance their skills. In particular, thorough monitoring of the quality of teaching, coaching and training are sharply focused on helping teachers to improve their practice. The headteacher and senior leaders frequently check the progress of each pupil to identify individuals or small groups who are not doing as well as expected and set demanding improvement targets. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved to outstanding.
- The excellent range of subjects that the school provides is broad and balanced, including a wide range of after-school activities. Extremely well-planned out-of-school activities, such as the residential school and visits to museums and theatres, make sure that what the school offers for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils to use their reading, writing, mathematical and information and communication technology skills.
- All safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. They are securely in place and are rigorously applied. The school is exceptionally successful in developing values, attitudes and beliefs that involve all. It has highly effective systems for eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunities for all pupils to be successful.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors play an outstanding role in using extra funds in order to support pupils' achievement.
 - They have been highly effective in raising pupils' aspirations by working with the school to increase ambition for all Key Stage 2 pupils. In particular, they set ambitious goals as part of the 'Be the Best You Can Be' programme.
 - Members of the governing body use data well to make sure that they have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are effective in improving teaching and rigorous in holding leaders to account for pupils' achievement.
 - Governors possess a valuable range of experience and expertise that is used well, for example in managing the financial resources.
- The local authority has provided effective support and training. Because the school produces consistently high results, the authority's involvement is limited to termly meetings with senior leaders to review and comment on the school's performance.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	124161
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	403548

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	383
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gordon Hudson
Headteacher	Duncan Birds
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2008
Telephone number	01543 510786
Fax number	01543 510786
Email address	ht@willows.staffs.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

