

Willoughton Primary School

Northfield Lane, Willoughton, Gainsborough, DN21 5RT

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching and work are not carefully enough planned to match accurately the next steps in pupils' learning. This results in pupils not being able to make consistently good progress throughout the school.
- It also leads to too few pupils making better than expected progress for their age.
- Subject leaders are not checking the quality of learning in their subjects in order to speed-up pupils' progress.
- The governors do not find out enough for themselves about how well pupils are performing and so it is more difficult for them to challenge the school's actions and help it to improve.

The school has the following strengths

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs or who are eligible for additional funding make good progress because support for them is well matched to the skills they need to improve in literacy and numeracy.
- Standards are rising overall. Writing standards have risen by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 for the last three years.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, at play and around the school, is good.
- The executive headteacher provides strong leadership for the school.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe, within an environment in which pupils build up a strong sense of right and wrong and show respect and care for others.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, all of which were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, senior and subject leaders, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took into account the eight responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and carrying out the inspection.
- She observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's information about the progress of individual pupils through each year group, the school's improvement planning, samples of pupils' work and records relating to attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a very small school compared with others of its type. Pupils learn in three mixed-age classes.
- Almost pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional funding (the pupil premium) is just above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by school action is average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just above average.
- The school's most recent results cannot be compared with the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress, because there were not enough pupils to make such comparisons meaningful.
- The school is led by an executive headteacher, who divides her time equally between Willoughton Primary School and Tealby Primary School.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better in all subjects and enables pupils to make good progress, and a greater proportion to make better than expected progress, by ensuring that all groups of pupils are provided with teaching and tasks that are well matched to their needs.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by making sure that:
 - subject leaders have a greater focus on checking and assessing the quality of learning in their areas, in order to improve achievement
 - the governing body finds out more for itself about how effectively the school is raising the achievement of pupils so that it is better able to challenge leaders and influence its direction.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because the rate of progress varies for different groups. In Year 6, for example, pupils of average ability made good progress last year but some of those capable of reaching higher levels made less than expected progress. This variability continues because in several lessons, pupils are taught as a whole class for a good part of the time and teaching is too hard for some, and more often, too easy for others.
- Too few pupils reach standards higher than expected for their age especially in writing throughout the school and in mathematics. While pupils regularly write at length, their work shows frequent spelling errors. Sentences are not consistently powerful enough to demonstrate the skills needed for higher levels of attainment.
- Children start Reception with levels of knowledge and skills that are broadly average. They leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with average standards. There are many opportunities for them to develop their speaking skills, most of which encourage them to extend their vocabulary. One boy described 'the crunchy leaves' following his discovery outside of how leaves change their texture.
- Year 1 pupils are taught in the same class as children in Reception and planning of learning does not always ensure that both groups develop the knowledge of words and numbers that they are capable of. Pupils in Year 1 have below average skills in sounding out letters and in their knowledge of sounds (phonics) and some revert to guessing what words say. More able pupils read with good expression and can explain what is happening in the story.
- Standards are average overall by the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. The standards that pupils reach by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics are average and over time, the gap between the school's standards and those nationally is narrowing. Writing standards have risen for the last three years at Key Stages 1 and 2 and in reading by the end of Year 6.
- In a Year 2 numeracy lesson, pupils achieved well in changing addition number sentences to multiplication number sentences. However, more able pupils could have been challenged even more by having trickier problems to solve.
- Pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs make good progress because the help they are given, which is often in small groups and sometimes on an individual basis, is sharply focused on what they need to know to develop their particular reading, writing and number skills. Additional funding (the pupil premium) is spent on raising pupils' achievement in specific areas where they need extra support time and resources. These pupils make good progress as a result, for example, in deciphering words and in their understanding of what numbers stand for.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Some teaching is good but too much needs improvement to enable pupils to make good progress over time.
- It is inconsistencies in teaching that slow down pupils' progress over time. In particular, too much teaching in the mixed-age and mixed-ability groups is to all of the class. This means that it

is difficult for teachers to make sure that pupils of all abilities have the opportunity to make quick progress in their learning. Sometimes, tasks are too easy, particularly for pupils capable of reaching higher levels.

- Achievement in writing has improved because pupils have more opportunities to write at length and to practise their punctuation and grammar. However, not enough pupils reach higher levels in writing because they are not always sure exactly what skills they should be practising.
- The daily teaching of letters and sounds is giving children in Reception a secure understanding of the sounds that groups of letters make and how words can be spelt. In good teaching, pupils throughout the school are reminded of this when they are trying to read texts and spell.
- Teachers and support staff often ask questions from Reception onwards that encourage pupils to make further progress. Support assistants provide skilful, specific support to individual disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and to small groups, which helps them to fill gaps in their learning in, for example, counting and matching letters to sounds.
- In a few lessons, particularly in the Year 2/3 class, the pace of learning is very brisk and pupils really enjoy grappling with problems that are a good match for their skills. Summaries of learning help teachers to work out how well pupils have understood the teaching.
- A common strength in teaching is the relationship between staff and pupils which provides a productive atmosphere for learning.
- Marking of pupils' work is also a stronger aspect of teaching. Most tells pupils what they have done well. Some marking and advice given in lessons includes helpful advice about what pupils need to do next.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good throughout the day. They know the rules and keep to them. A few pupils sometimes need help to manage their behaviour and the staff work successfully with them to do this.
- Pupils know each other well through learning in mixed-age classes and they learn and play together harmoniously. Older pupils support and guide the younger ones as they join Reception and move up through the school. All pupils take pride in their responsibilities, ranging from 'junior home safety leaders' to 'milk monitors' and 'bench buddies'.
- Assemblies and lessons support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The 'values' tree focuses pupils on specific qualities and pupils who demonstrate them well are named on the tree. Pupils also know the importance of trying to treat everyone as equal, whatever their background or belief.
- The staff's expectations of pupils' conduct and regular teaching about being and keeping safe mean that from Reception onwards, pupils know, for example road safety rules and why it is important not to talk to strangers. The school regularly reminds pupils of the dangers of the internet and takes appropriate steps to make sure that pupils cannot access material that could put them in danger.
- Pupils and their parents and carers say that the school keeps them secure and safe. Pupils say that although sometimes pupils 'break friendships', there is very little bullying and when it happens they know what to do. They say that the staff support them with any difficulties, and

help them to stay happy at school.

- Attendance is average and improving, because it is checked every day and the school works with parents and carers to improve it.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the role of most subject leaders and the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator are at quite an early stage of development. As a result, they do not oversee their areas and take enough responsibility for school improvement. They focus very helpfully on improving teachers' skills in, for example, the teaching of phonics but do not yet check pupils' standards, progress and the quality of teaching for themselves.
- The executive headteacher has an accurate understanding of what the school needs to do to improve and this is reflected in its priorities for improvement. She provides strong leadership. Since the last inspection, the school has collected information about achievement in much greater detail, and teachers now have greater responsibility for their pupils' progress. The business manager holds a senior role, overseeing behaviour, safety and the pastoral care of pupils, very effectively.
- The very regular checking of pupils' progress is the starting point in raising the quality of teaching, which remains the major focus. Standards are rising steadily, particularly in reading and writing. Teaching is now better organised to give pupils more time and a much better balance of teaching to practise what they have learnt.
- The curriculum is based on raising achievement in literacy and numeracy and also provides learning through themes, such as the Second World War. Tasks are not consistently closely enough matched to pupils' levels of ability to promote good progress. Pupils get some opportunities to practise their literacy skills in other subjects. They are delighted with the broad range of after-school activities which help them develop new skills. A good aspect of the curriculum is the enterprise project for older pupils, based on journalism, which supports the development of many skills, especially literacy and numeracy.
- The yearly targets that staff are given to improve their performance are a good match to the priorities in the improvement plan, in particular, the relationship to the quality of teaching, which is checked very regularly. The staff's progress towards their targets is reviewed regularly. No teachers get a pay rise unless there is good evidence that they have achieved their targets.
- The local authority is providing effective broad-ranging support to the school, particularly in helping staff to develop more consistency in how they teach. The partnership with Tealby Primary School is enabling the staff to strengthen their teaching and leadership practices, through observing others teach and through training opportunities.
- Parents and carers support the school's work. They now know a lot more about their children's education and how to support them, through the new emphasis on giving them information about their children's levels of achievement and their targets, and via workshops.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Several governors are new to their role, including the Chair. As a result, not all have a full understanding yet of procedures and expectations of their roles or understand what data is saying about the progress of pupils throughout the school. They do, however, show great determination to help the school to improve and are visible around the school. The Vice Chair has held discussions with subject leaders but,

overall, governors do not find out enough for themselves about, for example, the quality of teaching and learning, to be able to question school leaders in detail. Governors make sure that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and have a firm hold on the budget. They know about the additional funding granted to the school, how it is allocated and the reasons why. Governors make the final decision on whether the performance of individual teachers against their targets justifies a pay rise.

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	120487
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	401942

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	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tina Ramsay
Executive Headteacher	Denise Popplewell
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2010
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