

# Windhill Primary and Nursery School

Windhill, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 2NE

## Inspection dates

26–27 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children in Nursery and Reception classes have a successful start to school and make good progress.
- This good progress continues through the school and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. All groups of pupils achieve well.
- Teaching has improved. It is now good with examples of outstanding practice
- Teachers establish strong relationships with pupils and have high expectations of them
- In most lessons, teachers set demanding tasks which help all groups of pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about learning. They behave well in lessons and around the school.
- In the Year 5 and 6 classes, pupils have exemplary attitudes to learning and their behaviour is outstanding.
- Pupils feel very safe and well cared for by staff.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and educational direction.
- A very strong team of key leaders plays a valuable role in improving the school.
- Leaders and managers have made considerable improvements to the quality of teaching and to pupils' achievement since the last inspection.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers sometimes set work which is not well suited to pupils' abilities, especially for more-able pupils.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not move onto the main task quickly enough and the pace of learning slows.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons.
- They held discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) from 65 parents.
- Responses to an inspection questionnaire from 26 staff were analysed.
- Inspectors examined school policies, information about pupils' attainment and progress, teachers' plans, pupils' work and the school's planning for improvement.

## Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Bimla Thakur	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- About two thirds of the pupils come from White British backgrounds. Other pupils come from a range of other heritages including White, Romany or Gypsy, Indian and Black African.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- An above average proportion of the pupils are supported through the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals or those with a parent in the armed services.
- The school educates all pupils onsite. There are no alternative arrangements for learning elsewhere.
- The number of pupils who join and leave the school, other than the normal starting and leaving points, is much higher than average. Some of these pupils join the school speaking little or no English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and ensure that all teaching is at least good by making sure that:
  - teachers always set tasks at the right level for pupils of all abilities, especially for more-able pupils
  - lessons always proceed at a quick pace and that pupils are moved swiftly onto the main learning tasks.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement has improved considerably. Attainment by the end of Year 6 has risen from low to above-average levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children usually enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the areas of learning because of effective teaching and the interesting range of activities offered.
- Good progress continues through the school and some pupils make outstanding progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is of particularly high quality.
- New arrivals, including those who speak little or no English, are carefully assessed and are provided with effective support. They often make rapid progress in acquiring language skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the good teaching and the well-targeted guidance and support that they receive.
- Effective use is made of additional funding to teach and support the pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. In 2012, these pupils in Year 6 reached higher standards than those nationally. Pupils benefiting from pupil premium funding were just over two months ahead of other pupils in the school in reading and writing. In mathematics they were one year behind other pupils in the school. More recent records show pupils supported through the pupil premium are making faster progress than other pupils.
- The more-able pupils are usually challenged and extended and an above-average proportion of pupils attain the higher levels. In some lessons, tasks are too easy and their rate of learning then slows down.
- Pupils make good progress in acquiring and applying speaking and listening skills because of the well-planned opportunities for drama, discussion and role play. For example, in Year 2, pupils made good progress as they used hand-held technology to record their role play of a book character. They used expression and body language effectively in portraying the character.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. They benefit from the well organised and effective programme for teaching letters and the sounds they make (phonics). Older pupils successfully apply more advanced reading skills in independent study.
- Considerable emphasis has been placed on improving pupils' achievement in writing. Pupils write for different audiences and for purposes. Their writing is often imaginative and interesting. Grammar, punctuation and spelling have improved considerably. There are good examples of pupils applying their writing skills in areas other than English.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics and apply their numeracy skills confidently to new situations. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils made exceptional progress in plotting the pulse rates of four different characters. They took care and pride in their presentation and interpreted the data accurately.

**The quality of teaching****is good**

- Improvements to teaching have led to good progress for different groups of pupils and to higher attainment. Expectations of what pupils can achieve have been raised since the last inspection and assessment is used more effectively to plan teaching and learning. There are examples of outstanding practice, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and only a small proportion of teaching that requires improvement.
- Teachers ensure that lessons have a clear purpose and that pupils understand what they are expected to learn. They also set specific steps to success to help guide pupils' learning.
- In almost all lessons, teachers make effective use of the information about pupils' prior attainment to plan their teaching and to match activities to pupils' different abilities. As a result, pupils are challenged well and make clear gains in acquiring knowledge and deepening their understanding. Sometimes, tasks are too easy for the more-able pupils and so they do not make the gains they should.
- Essential reading skills are effectively taught through a well-structured programme. Teachers use drama and role play well to promote ideas for writing. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills to solve problems.
- In Nursery and Reception classes, children are provided with a wide range of activities, inside and outdoors. Role-play areas are imaginative and promote creativity and language well. Children have good opportunities to explore and learn on their own.
- Where teaching and learning are outstanding, pupils are inspired and motivated by the teacher's enthusiasm and strong subject expertise. They respond extremely well to the teacher's high expectations and rose to the challenge of the exciting tasks set. Pupils are fully engaged, highly productive and make rapid gains in their learning.
- In Year 6, for example, pupils produced high-quality writing when they imaginatively described the streets of Victorian London in the style of Charles Dickens. Impressive pencil sketches of London scenes enhanced the writing.
- At times pupils' learning can slow down when teachers' introductions are too long. For example, teachers sometimes spend too long consolidating pupils' previous learning rather than moving them on to the main task that will challenge them with new topics.
- Teachers successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They create a very positive classroom climate in which pupils can learn and establish strong relationships. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who work well with others. They are considerate and respectful when working in pairs or groups.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those who need additional help with language and literacy.
- The marking of pupils' work is constructive, detailed and helpful. Good work is acknowledged and praised. Constructive comments set out the next steps to help pupils improve.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The school has successfully maintained and built on the good behaviour and safety reported in the last inspection. Parents state that their children are safe, well looked after and that the school promotes good behaviour. These views reflect the inspection findings.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes settle well into the school because of the warm and positive atmosphere created by adults. They enjoy the activities offered and they learn and play well with the other children.
- Throughout the school, pupils show enthusiasm and interest in their learning. They are courteous, cooperative and relate well to others. The school is a harmonious community where pupils from different countries learn and socialise successfully together. As the pupils remarked, 'The whole school is very positive' and 'Everybody mixes'. Pupils appreciate the school's international flavour and this contributes very well to their cultural and social development.
- Pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. The school's clear records of incidents show that behaviour has been good for some time. In the Year 5 and Year 6 classes, pupils' attitudes to learning and their conduct were exemplary.
- Pupils have good understanding of bullying and the different forms it can take, including persistent name-calling, physical bullying and cyber bullying. They know what to do should bullying occur. Pupils reported to the inspectors, 'There is just a bit of bullying in the school' but they were confident that staff dealt with bullying very quickly and effectively. The school has effective procedures for dealing with misbehaviour including bullying.
- Attendance has improved from low levels because of the action taken by the school. Attendance is now securely average.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The leadership of the headteacher has been a key factor in the school's considerable improvements since the last inspection. Her ambition, drive and vision to improve the education for all pupils have been successfully conveyed to pupils', staff and parents.
- She and the deputy headteacher have skilfully built a strong leadership team whose members are all passionately focused on raising pupils' achievement and providing high quality teaching. The leaders of English, mathematics, the Early Years Foundation Stage and special educational needs are all highly effective. They lead by example in the classroom and effectively check and improve their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders and other staff show commitment and determination in doing the very best for pupils. A very positive professional culture among the staff has been established and there is a clear sense of pride as staff effectively carry out their duties.
- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate overview of the school's strengths and areas for improvement through the systematic and thorough checking of performance. Planning and action taken to bring about improvements have been very successful.
- Improvements to pupils' achievement, teaching and attendance and effective leadership demonstrate the school's capacity to improve even further.

- The local authority has provided effective support in the school's drive for improvement. The local authority has had concerns about the school's performance in the past but this is no longer the case.
- There is a relentless focus on strengthening teaching and learning. Senior leaders observe classroom practice and provide constructive feedback to teachers. Newly qualified teachers receive coaching and support from more experienced staff. Leading practitioners effectively support teachers at Windhill and those from other local schools.
- Procedures for appraising and developing staff work well. Targets set to help staff improve their practice are well linked to pupils' progress and to the school's improvement priorities. High-quality training in areas such as the teaching of reading and writing has contributed to the good teaching and outstanding teaching.
- Promotion and decisions about salary increases are closely linked to a teacher's responsibilities, the quality of their teaching and the progress that their pupils make.
- An interesting range of subjects and topics are provided to promote good achievement and enjoyment for pupils. Art and music are clear strengths of the school's curriculum. Pupils spoke very positively about the wide range of clubs and educational visits which enrich the curriculum. The school is currently increasing the global dimension to its curriculum and extending pupils' independent study skills.
- The school is rightly proud of its inclusive and international nature. All pupils have full access to all activities provided and the staff strive to ensure that different groups of pupils achieve and develop as well as they can. Discrimination is not tolerated in any form.
- Pupil premium funding has been properly planned and allocated. Effective action is being taken to accelerate the progress of pupils eligible for the funding.
- The results of the online survey 'Parent View' and correspondence received by the inspection team show that most parents are very pleased with the education and care provided for their children.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is effective and supportive. Members of the governing body bring a good range of experience to the school. They have a good understanding of the school's performance and the diverse community it serves. Governors have a clear overview of pupils' attainment and progress and how these compare to schools nationally. They are kept well informed about the quality of teaching. They are up-to-date with recent issues relating to the performance management of staff and check that pay increases are justified by the quality of teaching. Governors provide appropriate challenge in order to hold the school to account. They check how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact the actions have on pupils' achievement. The governing body makes sure that all safeguarding requirements are met.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134682
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402623

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	325
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Beverly May
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Beaumont
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01279 696850
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