

Windwhistle Primary School

Kingsley Road, Weston-Super-Mare, North Somerset, BS23 3TZ

Inspection dates

18–19 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils' achievement has improved significantly since the previous inspection. All groups of pupils now make good progress and achieve well.
- When children start school in Nursery their skills are much lower than normally expected. By the time they leave they have caught up considerably and standards are average because adults provide them with high quality support.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning make a strong contribution to their achievement. Pupils take pride in their school and work.
- Teaching is typically good and some is outstanding. In the best lessons, teachers listen carefully to pupils' responses and reshape activities to match their learning needs very well.
- Pupils' behaviour is well managed. Pupils act and feel safe in school.
- Determined action by the headteacher and senior leaders has brought about improvements to leadership, teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders, all staff and governors share a common, ambitious purpose to provide the best for pupils in the school.
- The care of pupils, particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, is effective and helps them prepare well for learning.
- Adaptions to the curriculum are meeting the academic and personal needs of pupils well.
- Teaching assistants and other adults contribute strongly to the school's success. They support pupils well who need extra help, additional sessions, and at play and lunchtimes.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school. They check its performance regularly and provide a good level of support.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small minority of teaching still requires improvement.
- Whilst pupils' academic standards by the end of Year 2 have improved, they remain below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons or part lessons. Every teacher was observed. Nearly all lessons were carried out jointly with senior leaders at the school.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, curriculum teams, members of the governing body, teaching assistants, inclusion team workers and lunchtime supervisors. A phone call was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with three groups of pupils to discuss their work and explore their views about behaviour and safety at the school. An inspector heard some Year 2 pupils reading.
- A range of documents was examined, including the school’s plans for improvement, records of lesson observations, information on pupils’ progress, lesson plans, work in pupils’ books and reports of behaviour incidents and attendance.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school’s view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Richard Light, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Lindsay Gabriel

Additional Inspector

David Shears

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Windwhistle Primary School is a larger than the average-sized primary school. It became part of a cooperative trust in September 2013 with four other local schools. Each school retains their own headteacher and governing body.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well above average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is well above average. This is additional government funding provided to schools to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those with a parent in the armed services.
- Since the previous inspection the school has received support from a national leader of education (NLE) from Waycroft Academy.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Nursery and Reception classes.
- There is a children's centre on the school site which is not managed by the governing body. This provision was not inspected as part of this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' standards and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so as to raise pupils' achievement further, particularly in Key Stage 1, by making sure learning:
 - focuses on developing pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts
 - enables younger pupils to apply their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) in different activities and subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - increasing pupils' opportunities to write in other subjects as part of the planned curriculum
 - ensuring the school's plans to improve teaching and pupils' achievements contain precise actions that state exactly what teachers and pupils need to do to get better
 - separating monitoring and evaluation activities.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter Nursery with skills well below those expected for their age group, especially in speaking, language and communication. They make good progress during Nursery and Reception because of the high-quality teaching and personal support they receive. Despite good levels of support, last year, children entered Year 1 with reading, writing and number skills lower than other children at the same stage of their schooling.
- Standards achieved by the end of Year 2 remain below average, but are improving quickly. Many pupils in Years 1 and 2 are benefiting from the careful use of pupil premium funding, allowing them to receive support that meets their personal needs well. The nurture groups, Sparkle and Starlight, for pupils with emotional and social worries, is helping them overcome their concerns and be better prepared for learning in lessons.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 have improved dramatically. In 2011, just over half of pupils reached the expected level in writing. This rose to 83% in 2013. Lesson observations and work in pupils' books show this good level of performance is continuing.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress from their starting points. Any gaps in the performance of these pupils and all other pupils are quickly identified. Carefully targeted support from teachers and teaching assistants results in rapid gains to get these pupils back on track. For example, the current Year 6 pupils, who were 10 months behind other pupils nationally when they were in Year 4, have now caught up. The additional funding received is enabling them to achieve standards in line with other pupils for English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Progress is accelerating for all groups. The relatively small number of the most able pupils achieve well when compared to their peers nationally. Learning is adapted effectively to enable these pupils to be challenged and work at a brisk pace.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. The systematic and structured approach to the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) in Year 1 has been successful and raised pupils' achievement. High-quality texts stimulate pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment of reading; the pupils like using the electronic library system to record their book choices and relish the chance to 'read to Rama', the school's 'reading dog'.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs benefit from a large number of specifically tailored programmes that meet their individual needs well. The appointment of general assistants in classes has enabled specialist, skilled, learning support assistants to be released to deliver high-quality work through individual programmes of support.
- The inclusive values of the school enable all pupils to be treated equally and develop good personal qualities. Pupils welcome visitors enthusiastically in a polite, mature manner. They are appreciative of the help and support they receive.
- When learning is effective, pupils listen attentively to teachers and other staff. They sustain their concentration well and are expected to persevere at tasks when working individually. This approach successfully prepares all pupils for their next stage of education.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because teachers make good use of their subject knowledge in planning to meet the learning needs of pupils well. Staff receive frequent, detailed and useful feedback from senior leaders on how to improve their practice. Teachers, therefore, have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and are well supported in their efforts to improve.
- The teaching of writing is well structured and systematically develops pupils' skills. Pupils are enabled to create good quality pieces of written work. For example, teachers explain the impact of word choices and clauses in complex sentence structures well. This enables pupils to consider

and understand the effect their choices have on the reader when crafting their own written work.

- Training on the teaching of mathematical problem solving has had a good impact. For example, Year 6 pupils used a range of problem-solving strategies when rotating shapes around a 45 degree angle. Occasionally, planned activities require pupils to focus on calculations rather than the mathematical concept being taught which limits their ability to gain a better understanding of mathematical concepts such as area.
- In the more effective lessons teachers often check pupils' learning precisely and then adjust activities when necessary. Teaching is not outstanding because occasionally pupils' understanding of key concepts and misconceptions is not checked precisely enough during the intervention groups.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception are provided with a good balance of adult- and child-led sessions. Good links between the two settings ensure a smooth start for those moving into Reception. The outdoor environments are well resourced and used. The study of the life cycle of a frog, for example, develops children's understanding of the wider world well. Sand and water activities are carefully guided by adults to find out 'what might happen if?'
- Throughout the school, targeted group work is successfully raising pupils' achievement. For example, teachers work closely with pupils of different abilities to effectively challenge them and move them on quickly in their learning. Teachers' marking carefully identifies next steps in pupils' learning.
- In reading sessions, older pupils respond well to teachers' effective questioning. High-quality texts enable pupils to engage in some lively discussions and explore moral values in a variety of different activities and topics. This is developing their spoken language skills well. The school recognises that such an approach could also enable younger pupils to apply their developing phonic knowledge in other subjects, settings and activities.
- Teachers make good use of information and communication technology. For example, pupils' work when placed under a 'visualizer' receives immediate feedback during lessons' 'mini-plenaries'. This improves pupils' analytical skills and helps pupils to better identify specific areas for development in their own work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their positive attitude to learning in lessons contributes strongly to their good academic and personal development.
- Pupils regulate their own behaviour well. These good habits are started early when children in the Nursery and Reception are encouraged to form positive relationships with their peers and other adults. Consequently, when they are older, pupils work well on their own or during paired or group work. They consider each other's viewpoints carefully and respond keenly to their teachers' questions and prompts.
- Behaviour is well managed throughout the school. Pupils have a good understanding of the rewards and sanctions system. The procedures for recording behaviour incidents are thorough and used well to analyse any patterns that occur. Pupils spoken to were confident that any incidents would be followed up and resolved.
- The school has successfully improved pupils' attendance and reduced the number of exclusions. A number of strategies has contributed to this success, including attending the breakfast club and help received from inclusion workers and the parent support advisor.
- Pupils move around the school and between lessons safely. They play sensibly outdoors and there is good provision for any who wish to have a quiet period away from the playground noise. Pupils like the range of organised activities and apparatus available to them during playtimes and use it responsibly.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a good grasp of what it means to say they feel safe. They act safely around the school and parents agree that the school is a safe place.

- Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe online. They know who to tell if someone sent them hurtful messages or asked for their personal details and can describe the risks of posting inappropriate content on the internet.

The leadership and management are good

- Determined efforts by the headteacher and senior leaders have resulted in improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection. Parents, pupils and staff are unanimous in their praise for the open and shared manner in which improvements had been made.
- Highly effective teamwork between all members of the school community has been instrumental in bringing about the improvements achieved. The well-considered way in which different members of staff, especially middle leaders, can contribute to school developments through curriculum teams strengthens the overall leadership of the school considerably.
- The information gathered to manage the performance of staff is thorough and based on a wide range of evidence. Coherent plans for staff training, such as the improving teacher programme, link well to these arrangements and provide a range of opportunities to improve skills or gain accredited qualifications.
- The school improvement plan is effective and identifies the right priorities. Actions are based on regular monitoring activities which result in adjustments to ensure improvement. Occasionally, some planned actions lack precision. External evaluations to determine the impact of planned actions, and therefore their success, are sometimes mixed up with monitoring activities.
- The planned curriculum is meeting the academic and personal needs of pupils well. A sharp focus on core skills in English and mathematics is having a positive effect on raising pupils' achievements. Trips to a local farm and the Isle of Wight in Year 6 broaden pupils' horizons and enhance planned activities well. The school is aware that additional opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in subjects other than English would further improve their achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well. Assemblies provide pupils with good opportunities for reflection, for example about the meaning of Easter. Older pupils demonstrate a mature understanding of moral ideas, such as dealing with peer pressure, and often refer to themselves as role models.
- Additional funding to develop pupils' abilities and encourage greater participation in physical education (PE) has had a good impact. Specialist sports coaches deliver additional teaching and new after-school sports clubs for pupils. They combine these sessions with training for staff which is improving their skills and confidence in delivering good quality PE lessons. New arrangements within a cooperative trust of local schools are enabling pupils to participate in an increased number of new competitive sporting activities, such as 'quick sticks'.
- External support provided by the local authority is effective. Following the previous inspection, additional visits to the school were arranged to support the school to become good. Detailed reports provide school leaders with helpful areas for consideration. The improving teacher programme has helped teachers develop their practice. The brokering of a national leader of education to work with the school has enabled school leaders to work alongside each other and learn from effective practice.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's performance in relation to other schools nationally, and the quality of teaching, through attendance at senior leadership team meetings, staff training days and by undertaking regular visits to classes. Governors undertake the performance management of the headteacher effectively. They are aware of the impact of the pupil premium funding and keep abreast of initiatives through detailed reports from the headteacher and other staff, for example on programmes such as Better Reading Partners. Governors are well aware of the link between teachers' performance and their pay progression. Strategic decisions, such as becoming a member of the cooperative trust, have strengthened governors' contribution to the leadership of the school and are benefiting pupils.

Governors are aware that additional external evaluations of the work of the school would enhance their ability to support and challenge the school even more. Their regular programme of monitoring activities ensures that all statutory requirements are met, including those for safeguarding.

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	109099
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	431088

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	430
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terence Covey
Headteacher	Lynette Hunt
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 May 2012
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