

Willoughton Primary School

Northfield Lane, Willoughton, Gainsborough, DN21 5RT

Inspection dates 8–9 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	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.

- The executive headteacher's unstinting efforts to ensure the school does its best for every pupil have significantly improved teaching and learning since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' progress is good and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are rising as a result of good teaching.
- Reception-age children get a good start to school life in Class 1. Exciting activities ensure they settle quickly and become enthusiastic learners who make good progress.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They feel safe and have a good knowledge about how to keep safe.
- This is a happy school where pupils enjoy learning and playing together. Pupils are polite and courteous and welcome visitors to their school.
- The executive headteacher, staff and governors work closely together. They make an effective team that is committed to, and successful in, improving teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Strong partnership working with other local schools means staff can learn from other teachers and continue to improve their own skills.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always move pupils on to harder work quickly enough in lessons.
- Occasionally work is too easy or too hard for pupils, especially in mathematics.
- Teachers' marking does not help pupils enough to improve the standard of their work.
- Subject leaders are not yet fully effective in improving teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited nine lessons, six of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. The written work of pupils in all year groups was scrutinised in order to evaluate teaching over time.
- The inspector spoke to pupils during lessons and held meetings with groups of pupils to find out their views on behaviour, safety and bullying. The inspector also spoke to pupils about their reading habits.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, class teachers, subject leaders and two governors. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Information from the scrutiny of a range of documentation was used to help form inspection judgments. These documents included the school's own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and the resulting improvement plans, monitoring of teachers' performance, information on pupils' attainment and progress, records of governors' meetings and information relating to safeguarding and attendance.
- The inspector looked at reports by the local authority and Her Majesty's Inspectors on the school's progress towards improvement since the previous inspection.
- The 11 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered to evaluate parents' views of the school's work. An analysis of the six responses to the staff questionnaire, along with discussions with staff during the inspection, gave the inspector an insight into their views.

Inspection team

Lois Furness, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- In this much smaller than average primary school almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- An average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The percentage who have a statement of special educational needs or are supported at school action plus is well above average.
- The school's most recent end of Year 6 results cannot be compared with the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics, because there were too few pupils to make such comparisons meaningful.
- There are currently three classes: Class 1 for Reception-aged children and Year 1 pupils, Class 2 for Year 2 and 3 pupils, and Class 3 for Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils.
- The school is led by an executive headteacher, who divides her time equally between this school and an infant school in Lincoln. The school also works in a collaborative partnership with four other Lincolnshire primary schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress further by:
 - making sure that the work given is not too easy or too hard for pupils, especially in mathematics
 - moving pupils on to harder work as soon as they are capable of meeting the challenge
 - focusing sharply in marking on how pupils can improve the standard of their work, and checking that pupils respond and go over work again if necessary to clarify any misunderstandings.
- Develop the role of subject leaders by ensuring they are fully effective in improving teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge that are typical overall for their age, although this can vary considerably with such small numbers. They get off to a good start and learn new skills rapidly. Good teaching makes sure that children make good progress and are well prepared for their work in Year 1.
- Pupils are successfully encouraged to read accurately from an early age. More pupils reach the expected standard in the Year 1 check on phonics (the sounds that letters make) each year, and for the last two years all have attained at least the expected standard. Older pupils say they get lots of opportunities to read and they enjoy reading. They are able to speak about their favourite books, and one pupil proudly told the inspector about reading 100 books at home!
- The school's current information shows that attainment in Year 2 is slightly higher than last year, with all pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The work in pupils' books shows that they have made good progress. In Year 6, all pupils have attained at least the expected levels for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. This reflects good progress from their starting points in Year 3.
- Pupils' books and the school's accurate information about pupils' learning over time show the majority of pupils in all year groups make good progress in their work. However, in all classes a few pupils are held back when work is sometimes too hard or too easy for them, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils use their reading, writing and mathematical skills well in other subjects. Every effort is made to incorporate different aspects of writing into topic work. For example, Year 6 pupils used their knowledge of diary writing to record a visit to the pyramids.
- The very few pupils who are supported by pupil premium funding make good progress and this reflects the school's commitment to equality of opportunity. The funding is used to provide additional one-to-one and small-group support by teaching assistants, so that any relative underachievement is addressed well. There were too few eligible pupils in last year's Year 6 to be able to compare their results with those of other pupils without risk of identifying individuals.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs get sensitive and timely support from teachers and teaching assistants, so they make the same good progress as their peers.
- The most able pupils are given work that mainly makes them think hard. This ensures they make good overall progress. Occasionally, however, their progress slows when they spend too long on work that does not challenge them.

The quality of teaching is good

- The headteacher has focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching, as shown by the school's own records and by observations undertaken with the local authority's education adviser. Inspection evidence confirms this.
- Lessons start promptly and routines are well established. Pupils' attitudes to learning and to each other are good, and they are eager to do their best. They respond well to their teachers' instructions. Classrooms are attractive with useful prompts on walls to support learning.

Teaching assistants work closely with teachers. They make a strong contribution during lessons through specific, well-chosen and effective support.

- In Reception, stimulating activities enable children to develop confidence and clarity in talking and thinking about what is going on around them. There is good liaison between the teacher and the skilled teaching assistant. Both the indoor and outdoor environments support children's development well.
- Teachers monitor pupils' responses to questions well in lessons, and use this information to adapt the work. However, very occasionally, pupils who are capable of tackling harder work are not moved onto this quickly enough. This was seen in mathematics and writing when more able pupils spent too much time on work that was too easy for them, so their progress did not accelerate as it should. Also, at times pupils are given work that is too hard, and although pupils completed the task their mathematical understanding had not been improved.
- Marking is thorough and all staff conscientiously mark pupils' work. They often explain to them what they have done well and how they can get better. However pupils do not always respond to the useful comments made. In mathematics, the comments about making corrections are often helpful but few extend pupils' understanding or suggest they apply their knowledge in a different way. In writing, comments do not focus on exactly what each individual needs to do to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are courteous, care for each other and treat other people with friendship and respect. They take responsibility very seriously and are proud of their contribution to the school, for example as school councillors or as home safety or road safety officers. Three pupils are proud to be chosen as 'carbon ambassadors', which means they keep an 'eye out' for any wastage of water or electricity, and if need be, impose fines!
- Good behaviour starts in Class 1, where staff work successfully to promote children's good personal, social and emotional development. Consequently, children are happy, settle down well to routines, are eager to learn and enjoy school life. This was seen as children eagerly discussed the clothes Barnaby Bear needed on his trip to the Swiss Alps.
- This enjoyment continues in Classes 2 and 3 and is reflected in pupils' attendance, which is above average. Pupils say they enjoy school and work with enthusiasm. They support each other well, for example when working with a partner or in a larger group. They listen carefully to others and respect each other's views. They have good relationships with adults and take a pride in the presentation of their work and in their school. A positive ethos is evident in and around school. They look after equipment and treat resources properly.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is also good. All parents who responded to the online questionnaire agreed their children are kept safe in school. Pupils feel safe and say that although they may fall out, there is very little bullying. School records confirm this. They are aware of the different forms of bullying, such as physical, name-calling and cyber-bullying. They also say that if bullying did occur, they are confident that teachers and other adults would deal with it quickly and effectively. They have a good understanding of internet safety.
- Staff are now applying the behaviour policy consistently well, and they and the pupils say they understand the system for rewards and sanctions. Pupils value 'golden time' and try their hardest not to lose this time through misbehaviour. However, not all parents understand the school's policy, as indicated by a letter received during the inspection. The executive

headteacher recognises this, and a leaflet is to be sent to all parents in September with full and clear details of the school's policy for managing behaviour.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher and other leaders have driven forward good improvements since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has risen and more pupils are now making good progress. The executive headteacher is pivotal to the improvements made and staff, parents, pupils and governors are very appreciative of her commitment and determination to make this school outstanding.
- Regular monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observations, reviews of work and pupil progress meetings ensures that every pupil's progress is tracked carefully and action taken if necessary. The systems leaders use for managing teachers' performance, are good. Teachers' individual targets are based appropriately on pupils' progress and linked to pay rises and promotion. Any underperformance is tackled well, and effective training provided where necessary.
- Leaders accurately know the school's strengths and weaknesses, and this results in appropriate objectives for future improvement being set. These include the continued improvement of teaching, ensuring more able pupils are challenged well and subject leaders continuing to develop their roles and responsibilities.
- The work of subject leaders has improved vastly since the previous inspection. They regularly monitor and know the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning in their subjects. The English leader has instigated the reading 'pods', the 'bug club' and the taking of reading 'selfies', all of which have raised the profile of reading in the school. The mathematics leader has worked closely with teachers from other schools to prepare staff for the new mathematics curriculum in September. However, they do not check carefully what impact such actions are having on pupils' learning and achievement.
- Interesting displays throughout the school celebrate pupils' work and show the good breadth of learning that takes place. A well-planned range of subjects underpins all of this. The opportunities pupils have to work together and the visits and visitor programmes contribute well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school has used the primary school sports funding effectively to engage the services of a sports coach. This has widened the range of sporting opportunities for pupils, increased the amount of time given to teaching physical education and provided additional sport-based clubs. This is having an impact on pupils' opinions of sport and improving their health and well-being.
- Good partnership work with other schools has resulted in a wide range of training opportunities being available for staff to help them improve their teaching and leadership skills. The local authority has an accurate view of the school and has confidence in the leadership team. The education adviser has provided valuable support to both leaders and teachers in order to help raise standards.
- Most parents have positive opinions of the school and its work. There is good evidence of how the executive headteacher and other leaders have worked successfully with parents who sometimes find working with school difficult.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has significantly improved its role since the previous inspection. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and effectively hold leaders to account.

They have benefited from training to develop their role in challenging pupils' achievement. Governors know that published results are not that helpful to them in making comparisons about school effectiveness, as such small numbers of pupils are involved. They check data that shows pupils' ongoing achievement carefully. They have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching, including how good performance is rewarded and any underperformance tackled. The efficiency of spending is regularly scrutinised, including the effectiveness of the use of primary sports funding and the pupil premium. Governors ensure that statutory 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

Unique reference number	120487
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	441962

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	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tina Ramsay
Headteacher	Julia Marshall (Executive)
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2012
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