

Willows Primary School

Victoria Road, Timperley, Altrincham, WA15 6PP

Inspection dates 1-2 October 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders have brought about improvements in reading, raised attainment in all subjects in Key Stage 2 and extended the performance of the most able pupils since the last inspection, notably in mathematics.
- The headteacher provides clear direction and has the full support of her staff. She checks effectively on the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils and ensures resources are made available to support wherever needed.
- Pupils' conduct and attitudes are excellent. Their manners are exemplary, they show great respect to others and are always keen to learn. Pupils feel extremely safe and love going to school. This is shown in their high rates of attendance.
- Teachers carefully plan lessons which match the abilities of different pupils, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs. The needs of the most able pupils are also successfully catered for, especially in reading and mathematics, and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels at the end of Year 6 is significantly above the national average.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively and enhances the school's welcoming and harmonious atmosphere.
- All pupils make good progress as they move through the school and achieve well. By end of Year 6, attainment is well above average in reading and mathematics and slightly above average in writing.
- Pupils develop their reading skills very successfully. They read confidently and gain pleasure from a wide range of reading materials.
- The provision for the early years is good and all children make good progress. It is well led and managed and the recent increase in numbers has been handled effectively.
- The governing body provides a good balance of challenge and support to senior leaders. Members have an extremely good knowledge and understanding of how well the school is doing, including about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Staff who lead areas of responsibility do not regularly check on the quality of teaching in these areas or use all of the information available to them to improve the rates of progress pupils make.
- Achievement in writing is not yet as strong as in reading and mathematics; a smaller proportion of pupils reach the higher levels in this subject.
- In some lessons, the most able pupils do not move on to challenging work early enough and, occasionally, teachers accept work which is not a pupil's best effort.
- Occasionally, marking does not tell pupils precisely enough how they can improve their work, especially their writing, or pupils do not respond to this guidance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They saw 17 part-lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils, members of the leadership team, the headteacher, and three members of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 83 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also spoke informally to parents as they brought their children to school.
- Responses to the inspection questionnaire were received from 17 staff and these views were taken into account by inspectors.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read, talked to them about their learning and reviewed the work in their books.
- The inspectors reviewed a number of documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports following lesson observations, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gulfaraz Ahmed

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in September 2012.
- The school is undergoing extensive building work in order to accommodate the increased number of pupils it is allowed to take. From September 2014, the planned admission number increased from 30 pupils to 45.
- The early years provision now comprises a Nursery and two Reception classes.
- Most pupils are White British and almost all speak English as their home language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported through the pupil premium is very much smaller than the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority. There are too few disadvantaged pupils in each year group to comment meaningfully on their attainment compared to other pupils and without identifying individuals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- Before- and after-school care are managed by a private provider and are inspected separately. The report for these settings can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk
- The school meets the government's floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Speed up further the rates of progress made by pupils, especially in writing, by making sure that:
 - pupils move on to more challenging work when they show they are ready, particularly the most able
 - teachers set high expectations and only accept pupils' best efforts at all times
 - pupils receive guidance consistently about how to improve their work, particularly their literacy skills and act on the advice given.
- Build on the effectiveness of leadership and management so that they are outstanding by extending the role of subject leaders to check regularly and rigorously on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong and focused leadership. She is ably supported by governors and other leaders and, together, they have successfully created a strong staff team who are very committed to improving their practice. Effective leadership and regular analysis of information have led to significant improvements in pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics since the last inspection.
- Senior leaders know their school well and their evaluations are accurate. Areas for development are identified with pinpoint accuracy and generate tightly focused action plans to drive forward improvements in the areas identified.
- Currently, the headteacher carries out most of the checks on the quality of teaching and analysis of the information on how well pupils are achieving. She has an accurate view of both of these aspects. Subject leaders are less involved in this process and, as such, are not always able to identify where improvements can be made to raise standards even further in their subject areas.
- Challenging annual targets are set for teaching staff. These are linked to whole-school priorities and staff pay. Only the staff who demonstrate that the pupils they teach make at least good progress receive pay awards.
- The curriculum covers a wide range of subjects which pupils say they greatly enjoy. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is fostered throughout the curriculum by learning about, for example, major world faiths in religious education, the work of famous artists in art and different dance styles in physical education. All leaders promote a culture of excellent behaviour and highly positive attitudes to learning which greatly enhances pupils' moral and social development.
- Pupils have a good appreciation and understanding of other cultures and respect those with different beliefs. As a result, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The sports premium has been used effectively by leaders to provide pupils with different sport experiences, additional resources and to improve the training and confidence of staff in their ability to teach dance. As a result, more pupils participate in a wider range of physical activities and teachers' skills and knowledge in teaching different dance styles have been improved.
- The school has very positive relationships with parents, who are actively encouraged to support their children's learning at home. Grandparents are also warmly invited into the school in order to promote the importance of family links.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school's performance, and rightly has full confidence in its leadership. Local authority officers have provided valuable advice and support to school leaders in order to help secure further improvements to teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an extremely good knowledge of how well the school is doing and support and challenge leaders effectively. They attend training to keep their skills and knowledge up to date and ensure that they fulfil their statutory duties, for example in relation to finance and safeguarding. Governors visit the school regularly in order to determine for themselves how well pupils are doing. For instance, they talk to pupils over lunch.
 - Governors receive regular reports from senior staff, including data on the progress made by all groups of pupils. As a result, they have a good knowledge of how well the staff and pupils are performing. For example, they know how the pupil premium is used and the impact this is having on the learning of disadvantaged pupils. Appointed governors set targets for the headteacher and check that pay increases for teachers and leaders are linked to pupils making good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' excellent conduct and readiness to learn reflect the high expectations placed upon them by leaders, teaching staff and support staff. In discussion, pupils say they enjoy their lessons because teachers make learning fun.
- Behaviour in and around school is always exemplary, including at break times and in the dining hall. Pupils also regularly hold doors open or step to one side for adults and consistently remember to use 'please' and 'thank you' appropriately.
- Pupils have a huge sense of loyalty and pride towards their school. Discussions with Year 6 pupils about moving on to their next school show this clearly. As one pupil said 'there will always be a pocket in my

heart for the Willows.'

- Pupils readily take on additional responsibilities such as head boy and girl or team captains. Pupils from Year 2 onwards are members of the school council and also serve on the eco-committee. This demonstrates pupils' growing maturity and confidence and prepares them well for their future lives.
- Pupils want to do well at school and they work hard. This was evident during mathematics in Year 6 where the most able pupils demonstrated considerable resilience in tackling a challenging algebraic puzzle. Similarly, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs show high levels of concentration and determination in completing tasks set for them in lessons.
- Pupils have a good knowledge about different types of bullying but are adamant that this occurs rarely in their school. Their views are supported by behaviour records kept by the school. Where minor difficulties arise, swift action is taken to address them.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Checks are carried out on all adults to make sure they are suitable to work with children. Robust systems and policies to keep pupils safe are in place. Further steps have been taken while the school is undergoing building work to make sure that the site is secure and staff, pupils and visitors are not at risk.
- Pupils feel very safe at school and know how to stay safe as a result of being taught about potential dangers such as fire, road, water and using the internet. They regularly use technology in lessons but have an excellent understanding of e-safety as they have been taught this well.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and describe it as 'awesome'. As a result, attendance is high and pupils arrive at school on time.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good throughout the school. There is a high degree of consistency in the quality of teaching that results in all groups of pupils making good progress and achieving well over time.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons which build on pupils' previous knowledge and skills. They use the school's accurate and detailed information about pupils' progress to set tasks which meet the needs of different groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Across the school, teachers develop positive relationships with pupils. It is clear that pupils like and respect their teachers, and that their feelings are reciprocated. This has a beneficial impact on pupils' motivation and learning as they are keen to succeed and so apply themselves conscientiously to their work.
- Teaching assistants form a strong partnership with teachers and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They support individuals and small groups both in lessons and outside the classroom. This extra help ensures that any pupils identified as being potentially at risk of falling behind keep up with their classmates and achieve equally well.
- Teaching is good across subjects. For example, pupils reading in Year 4 enjoyed a range of activities to promote the development of successful reading skills. The teacher's high expectations of behaviour, combined with the very exciting and appealing books, supported pupils' high levels of concentration and so pupils focused on reading for enjoyment.
- In the main, teachers plan their lessons well in order to meet the needs of pupils of different capabilities and set high expectations. However, on occasion, some of the most able pupils do not move on swiftly enough to more challenging work when they show that they can do the work set. Additionally, teachers accept work from some pupils which is not of a high enough quality or well presented.
- Marking is thorough and is usually effective and comments are occasionally added to help pupils improve their work. However, pupils do not always respond to the areas identified in their subsequent work.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school. As they are well prepared for learning when they enter Year 1, pupils continue to achieve well and so reach standards which are well above average overall by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils acquire well their early reading skills (phonics). They break down sounds and letters and read accurately any unfamiliar words. As a result, pupils are consistently successful in the phonic screening check at the end of Year 1, with reading skills that meet or exceed the level expected for their age.

Reading is strongly promoted across the school with well-stocked libraries and areas in which they are able to browse through reading material. As a result, pupils develop good reading habits and a love of books.

- Over time, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above the national average and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is now significantly above average, especially in reading and mathematics. While some pupils do not attain the higher levels in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, they make outstanding progress in Key Stage 2 and go on to achieve the higher levels in the national tests in Year 6 in this subject.
- Individual pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make at least good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because they receive effective support both within and outside lessons. These groups are able to keep up with their classmates, demonstrating the school's active promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Progress made by the most able pupils is consistently good in reading and mathematics but not as strong in writing, particularly across Key Stage 2. Pupils do not regularly write at length and tend to do most of their writing in topic books; as a result, marking does not focus on improving pupils' literacy skills. The school's own information shows that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels has increased in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 as the work is challenging and makes pupils think hard.
- There are too few disadvantaged pupils at the school for a meaningful analysis of the data relating to their attainment and progress. However, a review of the school's assessment data, test results and pupils' work confirms that all pupils are making the same good rates of progress in English and in mathematics. No pupils are falling behind others in the school or compared with pupils nationally.

The early years provision

is good

- Children start school with skills, knowledge and understanding which are typical for their age in most areas. Children make good progress in the early years. As a result, they enter Year 1 with skills and abilities that are increasingly above the national average.
- Most children join the school in Nursery but a few join in Reception Year. All children, however, settle very quickly because of the very warm welcome they receive. They feel very secure in the early years. Children participate in exciting activities which help to build their confidence while developing their early skills of reading, writing, communication and number. Children learn how to get on and work together effectively from the outset.
- Teachers and other support staff work closely with children who receive good levels of support during activities. Children's speaking and listening skills develop particularly well as they answer skilful questions about what they are doing. Exciting activities are planned and children are happy to work alongside an adult or to pursue their own learning interests and imaginative play. For example, a group of girls used coloured scarves as part of their imaginary wedding ceremony while others wrote their names on the waiting list to see the 'doctor' in the role play area set up in the classroom.
- Reception classrooms and the outdoor learning environment are bright and support children's learning well. The Nursery classroom has only recently been set up and is separate from the rest of early years provision. Currently, it is less attractive and children do not have reference to as many prompts and visual aids to help their early recognition of letters, sounds or numbers.
- Good leadership and management ensure that children work and play in a safe and purposeful environment where each child is known as an individual. Comprehensive systems are in place to check children's progress and regular observations are carried out to make sure that planning builds on children's current skills. Time and money have been well invested to make sure that both the indoor and outdoor environments promote all areas of learning.

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	106294
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	448299

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	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fiona Bailey
Headteacher	Kirsten Warren
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2009
Telephone number	0161 9807685
Fax number	0161 9125607
Email address	willows.admin@trafford.gov.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 and 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 2014