

# Willow Fields Community Primary School

Winslow Close, Witherwack, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear

**Inspection dates** 9–10 June 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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.

- The highly effective and experienced headteacher, ably supported by the skilful leadership team, is highly ambitious and determined to continue to further raise the attainment of pupils and improve their well-being.
- Recent actions have ensured that teaching has improved, accelerating the pace of progress pupils make in their learning. Achievement is now good and improving.
- The governing body consistently challenges the school and holds senior leaders to account. It knows the school very well.
- Children in the early years quickly develop skills that allow them to learn and play happily together. They make a good start in their reading, writing and understanding of number.
- Pupils' progress from below average starting points in Year 1 is consistently good and improving. This includes those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs or who are disabled.
- Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding, which results in pupils learning quickly and enjoying their lessons. Teachers usually apply high expectations to all subjects, allowing pupils to use their skills in reading, writing and mathematics in lessons across the curriculum.
- Teaching assistants are skilled in supporting the learning and development of individuals and small groups of pupils. This enables these pupils to learn well.
- The behaviour of pupils is extremely good and they have good attitudes to their work. They are polite and have excellent manners. There are high levels of trust between pupils and adults in the school.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure because the care provided by the school is excellent. They are usually eager to learn. They are very proud of their school building and grounds, and its surroundings.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' levels of achievement over time have not yet been consistently high enough in every year group.
- Occasionally, not enough is demanded of some pupils, especially the most-able pupils, which can slow progress.
- High quality marking and feedback is not consistently seen in every year group. Not all teachers always explain work clearly enough to allow pupils to make progress in their learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons, including two jointly observed with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors listened to some children read, reviewed a sample of their work alongside the headteacher, and made a number of short visits to lessons to check the quality of what is provided for pupils.
- Inspectors held meetings with different groups of people involved with the school. These groups included pupils, the vice-chair of the governing body, the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, other members of the teaching staff and the national leader of education (NLE) linked to the school.
- Inspectors viewed a range of documents, including information on pupils' achievements, the school's data on current and recent progress and attainment, the school's view of how well it is doing, the school's improvement plan, documents relating to safeguarding, and records of behaviour and attendance.
- The inspection team took account of the 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 15 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff. The school's website was also scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Philip Scott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Shearsmith

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Willow Fields Community Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and for whom English is an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- Currently, there is a much higher than average proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding. This funding is to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- Early years provision is full time for Reception and some Nursery children, and part time for other Nursery children.
- The school provides a free breakfast club each day for pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has experienced and is currently experiencing challenging circumstances and some changes in staffing.
- The school has achieved the 'Achievement for All' and 'Eco Schools' awards.
- The school is working in partnership with a national leader of education from Kibblesworth Primary Academy.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that all pupils make rapid progress and reach the highest standards of which they are capable, by:
  - making sure that all pupils are consistently stretched and challenged in their learning, especially the most-able pupils
  - checking that teachers always explain work clearly enough to allow pupils to make progress in their learning
  - ensuring that teachers' marking follows the school's own policy and makes clear how pupils can improve their work
  - ensuring all pupils have time to read the feedback given by teachers, and time to respond to and act upon the guidance given.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior team have worked tirelessly to develop systems and procedures that support and encourage each teacher in school to improve, such as the 'Outstanding Facilitator' programme. This continuing work is successfully tackling underperformance and quickly raising standards. In challenging circumstances, the headteacher has skilfully built and maintained an effective school team who share the same ambition to improve the quality of teaching and tackle and eliminate all underachievement.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of what the school does well and have clear-cut priorities for those areas that require further improvement. Although senior leaders have not yet secured and maintained the highest levels of achievement for all pupils across the school over time, they communicate a sense of drive and urgency to continue to move forward quickly. Leaders have ensured that a period of changes to staffing has not allowed the rates of pupils' progress to slow.
- Procedures to check the quality of teaching across the school are well established and effective, especially the analysis of work in books by the leaders of mathematics and English. Leaders and managers are skilful in ensuring that their analysis and interpretation of pupils' progress information leads to actions which address any areas of concern. These actions include effective use of the pupil premium funding. This is successfully securing support for disadvantaged pupils and quickly improving the quality of provision for eligible children in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Staff performance is managed effectively and ensures that pay progression is not automatic. Staff have challenging objectives for their own professional development which are linked to the school's action plan and to the progress made by pupils. Training for staff is linked to these objectives and also addresses the needs of the whole school.
- Pupils benefit from a lively, broad and well-planned curriculum, constantly under review in light of the new national curriculum. Themes and topics, brought to life by an exciting range of educational visits and visitors to school, link subjects together very well to promote curiosity and teamwork in pupils.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. It reinforces traditional British values, the teaching of which are now woven into the school's curriculum. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Every pupil has a 'Passport', unique to Willow Fields, which records the rich range of experiences and opportunities that the school endeavours to provide for every pupil in their time at school.
- The views of all pupils are valued, and many have an opportunity to play an active part in the life of the school, such as the 'Rights Respecting' council and the school council. The school's inclusive approach fosters good relations and ensures that relationships are strong between all groups of pupils.
- Links with parents are highly positive and their views are valued. Families benefit from the way in which the school involves them, such as parents' attendance at the breakfast club, demonstrating a true community spirit. Parents know that the school gives all children an opportunity to succeed and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind.
- Primary school physical education and sport funding is used very well to raise staff expertise in the teaching of physical education. It also ensures higher levels of pupil participation rates in a range of sports, such as the younger pupils' football club, the 'Little Dribblers'. This leads to many pupils developing healthier lifestyles.
- Extra funds to support disadvantaged pupils are used successfully. Leaders regularly check that there has been a positive impact on the progress of this group of pupils and that their attainment is rising.
- Safeguarding and child protection procedures meet requirements. Procedures are firmly established, with excellent practice seen in the day-to-day management of the school.
- The school has benefited from good support from the local authority. Its partnership work with the national leader for education has been instrumental in securing rapid and sustained improvements in outcomes for pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are well informed. They both challenge and support senior leaders effectively through the work of the 'Challenge Committee' which discusses in detail matters from full governing body meetings.
  - Governors hold leaders and teachers to account for the quality of teaching and learning in the school. They have a good grasp of the school's performance information, check on the impact of the pupil premium funding on the performance of disadvantaged pupils and visit classes regularly.
  - Governors ensure that staff performance management is rigorous and that teachers only receive financial reward if pupils meet their progress and attainment targets. They have a firm grasp of the strategic direction of the school and manage financial resources effectively.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Staff set high standards to which pupils respond well, showing high levels of respect and friendliness to adults, visitors and their classmates. Leaders and staff go to great lengths to ensure a happy, welcoming and harmonious school, committed to success for all its pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour in the playground, in the dining hall, in breakfast club and as they move around school is extremely good. They are polite and courteous, showing excellent manners, and there is very little mean or unkind behaviour. They follow classroom routines very well, and understand and respond to the school's system to manage behaviour.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying they may encounter, including cyber bullying. They are confident that, when occasional incidents do occur, they are quickly and effectively resolved by staff.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are usually very good across school. Occasionally, a few pupils can become disengaged from learning, lose concentration or are slow to respond to instructions from the teacher.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. It is typified by the friendly atmosphere around school which engenders a strong community spirit. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and are well informed about identifying risks and danger, such as cyber bullying.
- Pupils value the range of visitors and the information they receive in lessons and in assemblies to help them stay safe both in and out of school. During the inspection, pupils held discussions during an assembly to successfully identify ways in which lunchtimes could be safer and more enjoyable.
- In their responses to the online inspection questionnaire, virtually all parents indicated that their children are safe and happy in school.
- The school has worked hard with families to promote good attendance. As a result, rates of attendance have improved and are now currently average.

## The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good and at times it is outstanding. Teachers almost always have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They ensure that the pace of learning and level of challenge enables pupils to concentrate and be fully involved in learning.
- When pupils' progress is consistently fast and achievement is high, teaching makes high demands of all pupils. Opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their skills in a variety of ways, often linked to real-life contexts, and tasks are adapted to meet the learning needs of each pupil. Teachers question pupils skilfully, and regularly check pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils' imagination is stimulated in imaginative ways by knowledgeable staff.
- Occasionally, pupils' progress slows or is too variable as a result of insufficient challenge for some pupils, especially the most able. This is because some work is not explained clearly enough by teachers to enable pupils to make good progress in their learning. This variance over time has resulted in standards not being high enough, especially at the higher levels of attainment.
- In mathematics, basic skills are taught well and consolidated regularly. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were working out profit and loss related to a school trip to Beamish Museum using multiplication skills with pounds and pence. Other areas of the curriculum are taught well, such as in a Year 2 lesson investigating three-dimensional shapes through their two-dimensional nets. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to consolidate their number and calculation skills, with an increasing number of opportunities to use mathematical reasoning in more open-ended activities.
- Pupils write enthusiastically and with imagination as a result of good teacher knowledge and exciting links to the topics covered in class. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were able to find and use similes and metaphors in various poems connected to their topic on space, while older pupils made outstanding progress in their ability to write a review following their visit to 'Forbidden Corner'.
- Younger children now make a good start in their early reading because of a rigorous and systematic approach to the teaching of letters and the sounds (phonics) that they make in order to make sense of words. Pupils continue to enjoy and make progress in their reading which is increasingly fluent and expressive. They make good use of the school's library, which is meticulously monitored by older pupils. Pupils read in school for research or for pleasure, but some report that they do not read regularly at

home.

- Marking of work is thorough and regular, and usually of a high standard in both mathematics and English books. This is not yet consistently the case across the whole school. In some classes, marking does not make clear the simple steps a pupil needs to take to improve their work, as found in the school's marking policy, or set further challenges to deepen their understanding. On some occasions, pupils are not given time to either read teachers' feedback or respond to it.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to give timely and constructive advice to pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The quality of support given to pupils is extremely high, which results in significant gains in pupils' academic, emotional and social development.

### **The achievement of pupils**

**is good**

- All pupils now make at least good progress as they move through school; achievement has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The school's own progress information, confirmed by inspection evidence and work in pupils' books, shows that from below average starting points, pupils are making significant gains in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Progress continues to accelerate rapidly so that by the end of Key Stage 2, standards are broadly average. Pupils are now making consistently good and sometimes outstanding progress in every year group in the school. Assessment information and work in books indicate that current standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average, with pupils on track to improve on the school's performance in national tests compared to the previous year.
- The most-able pupils make similar progress to their classmates, although sometimes opportunities are missed to add further to the level of challenge and stretch pupils' thinking, enabling them to move on at an even faster rate. As a result, not enough pupils have reached the higher levels of attainment over time, although evidence from the inspection indicates that more pupils are working at the higher levels this year.
- Early identification of pupils who are at risk of falling behind enables the school to make effective provision for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs. These pupils make good progress because they are given activities well matched to their individual ability and needs, and are supported extremely well, usually based in the classroom.
- Evidence from school assessment information for each year group and work in books analysed by inspectors show that the gap between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged and other pupils is closing quickly across the school. However, the size of the gap does vary from year group to year group.
- Data from 2014 show that disadvantaged pupils were about one term behind their classmates in writing, English grammar, punctuation and spelling and mathematics, but a year behind in reading. They were one term behind all pupils nationally in both reading and English grammar, spelling and punctuation, and two terms behind in mathematics and writing. Their progress was as good as pupils' progress nationally.
- The gap between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates is narrowing across the school because leaders ensure that the pupil premium funding is used very effectively to support individuals and groups of pupils' academic and all-round development in a number of ways.

### **The early years provision**

**is good**

- Children now get off to a flying start in their education in the early years. Most children start Nursery with knowledge and skills which are below those typical for their age, the vast majority having considerable weakness in their speech, language, social and emotional development and mathematical understanding.
- As a result of inspirational leadership, teaching which is always at least good, and a vibrant and exciting learning environment, children quickly learn essential emotional and social skills, especially in becoming independent and learning to take turns and share. This continues throughout Nursery and Reception, and underpins their good progress in all areas of learning. As a result, many are beginning to catch up quickly, although their skills are still sometimes below those typical for their age when they start Year 1.
- Positive relationships between staff, parents and children are strengths of the early years, reflected in the high quality learning journey books to which parents regularly contribute. This helps children develop confidence and a positive attitude to school and learning. During the inspection, children worked and played happily together, sharing equipment and talking confidently.
- Children demonstrate imagination and quickly show independence, tidying equipment away quickly and

without fuss at the end of a session in response to the well-known 'tidy up' music.

- All children are kept extremely safe and secure, and are cherished by staff. This includes those with complex needs and those who may potentially be vulnerable.
- The quality of teaching is always good and increasingly outstanding. Staff encourage children to experiment and become more independent through well-established and consistent routines, taking full advantage of the indoor and outdoor learning environments to promote learning.
- Activities are usually exciting and stir children's imaginations. They provide an effective balance between those led by teachers, and those chosen by children to explore and practise skills as they play. Teachers seize every opportunity to extend children's thinking and curiosity. For instance, one teacher reacted swiftly and with imagination when a baby bird which was learning to fly became attached to her cardigan. She used the unusual occurrence to teach and develop children's respect for the natural world and build upon their fascination and sense of awe.
- Basic skills in reading, writing and number are promoted effectively, including children's speech and language, although there are fewer opportunities for children to investigate shape, space and measuring. Children work with the teacher or in designated areas to write, with many able to form letters and write words by themselves.
- All groups of children make good progress in the early years, including the most able and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. Any specific needs are quickly identified, and activities planned to make sure their needs are met. Links between home and school are very strong. Parents are positively involved with their children's learning and development, and speak highly of their children's experiences in school.
- The leadership and management of the early years are excellent. This high quality leadership has led to marked and significant improvements to provision and outcomes for children since the last inspection. Staff constantly seek improvements, and share a driving passion to provide the very best for the children.
- The early years leader knows the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, and has been instrumental in securing significantly higher quality teaching and learning. Staff accurately measure the progress children are making and have well-thought-through plans to make yet further improvements. School assessment data, verified by inspectors, show that the proportion of children in line to reach a good level of development at the end of Reception is in line with all children nationally.

## 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>	108783
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	462196

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>	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Stewart
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Jonathan Twidle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 June 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 549 1509
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