

# Windmill Primary School

Fernlea Drive, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 3DR

<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 May 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher is determined and committed. Staff share her ambition to secure the best possible education for all pupils in this '21st-century' school. New pupils are welcomed and well catered for.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to set high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Consequently, across the school, pupils from a wide range of backgrounds make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils with differing needs are well supported. Disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs or disability, the most able and those with English as an additional language are achieving well.
- The curriculum is interesting and includes memorable experiences. A wide range of extra-curricular clubs provide further enrichment.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding. Pupils have many opportunities to develop confidence, and build learning and life skills. The school's values also help pupils to adopt the right attitudes and behaviours. Consequently, the school is a flourishing community.
- Social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is threaded through the curriculum. British values are well promoted. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Children in the early years make good progress. Last year, the large majority of children were well prepared for Year 1. The early years leader is highly focused on securing the best possible outcomes for children.
- Pupils feel safe at school and learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Safeguarding is effective. Staff care for pupils well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Governors are not sufficiently strategic. They do not yet take an active role in planning and guiding school leaders to make further improvements.
- Many teaching assistants are new. They do not yet have the skills and expertise to have a compelling impact on pupils' learning.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not as strong as it is in other subjects. This is because teachers do not always use pupils' assessment information well enough to provide enough challenge in mathematics.

## Full report

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

- Ensure that governors make the best use of information about the school's performance to take a more active role in the strategic development of the school.
- Further improve pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - ensuring that all teachers use assessment information well to provide pupils with more challenging tasks, particularly in mathematics
  - strengthening teaching assistants' skills and abilities to extend pupils' learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The executive headteacher is ambitious and highly committed to securing the best possible outcomes for all pupils in a school that leaders promote as a '21st-century village community'. She is ably supported by both assistant headteachers. Together they have put in place effective provision and care, and ensure equal opportunities for the dynamic school population. Staff share the executive headteacher's vision and consequently strive to do their best for each pupil. One staff member said, 'the headteacher really inspires me to be passionate about the education of every child'.
- The school development plan demonstrates leaders' determination to provide an excellent education for all. Rightly, senior leaders have used information about the school's performance to identify appropriate actions to raise achievement. The plan includes measurable milestones that leaders use to check that they are on track to meet their goals. For example, there are actions to raise pupils' attainment in phonics (letters and the sounds they represent). As a result of actions taken, leaders know that pupils across the school are making better progress in phonics.
- The executive headteacher shares leadership and provides many opportunities for senior and middle leaders to develop their skills. Leaders benefit from a range of training and close working with the academy trust. In this growing school, middle leaders are relatively new to their roles. They are starting to check the quality of teaching and learning and to make changes to the curriculum. However, it is too early to see the impact of their work. For example, the mathematics leader has identified the need to develop pupils' mathematical reasoning. Pupils' mathematics books show that teachers are starting to provide pupils with more problem-solving and investigative activities.
- There are effective systems in place to develop teaching. Leaders use information from regular checks on teaching and learning to identify appropriate next steps for staff and any necessary training. Teachers are able to visit other schools within and beyond the academy trust to develop their practice. Consequently, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good.
- The pupil premium funding is spent well. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from valuable additional support with their learning. They also have opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities. Across the school, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress and gaps in attainment between them and their classmates are starting to close.
- The curriculum is interesting and supports pupils' wider development within the school 'village' community. Each topic starts with a memorable experience such as flying a kite on the beach. Topics such as 'street detectives', 'zoom to the moon' and 'splash' enable pupils to learn a broad range of subjects. Extra-curricular activities further enrich pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy a range of clubs, including gymnastics, board games, Spanish, computer and choir.
- Opportunities for social, moral, cultural and spiritual development and to learn British values are threaded through the curriculum and school life. Special events such as international week help to promote pupils' cultural development and tolerance. Links with a local gardening group for adults with learning needs further pupils' social development and allow them to start to recognise the importance of individual liberty. The school's values of respect, aspiration, integrity and resilience strengthen this work. Consequently, pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The inclusion leader has ensured that provision is in place to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Those with special educational needs or disability receive help that is enabling them to make good progress from their starting points. More recently, leaders have considered ways to extend the most-able pupils. For example, the most-able Year 2 pupils write the 'village' newspaper. Disadvantaged pupils who are achieving well are also part of the news team. The most-able pupils are making good progress. Nevertheless, leaders recognise that there is still some work to do and have appropriate plans in hand to ensure that the most-able pupils are fully challenged.
- Leaders make good use of the additional sports funding. Pupils benefit from specialist teachers. The funding also provides further extra-curricular sporting activities. As a result, participation in sports has increased.
- The academy trust provides effective challenge and support to leaders. Regular visits, joint monitoring activities and training have ensured that standards in phonics and the early years provision have risen.
- Parents work in close partnership with the school. Leaders regularly take feedback from parents and make good use of it to tailor activities that increase parents' involvement. For example, the 'maths morning' was a chance for parents to see how they could support their child at home. It included a question and answer session to address concerns that parents had raised about the mathematics curriculum. Parents value this relationship. One parent said, 'They care'.

## ■ The governance of the school

- Governors have worked to improve their skills and increase their effectiveness. They carried out a detailed audit of their work and used it to develop an action plan. Following training and the appointment of some new governors, they are providing greater challenge and support to leaders.
  - The governing body has maintained careful oversight of spending and welfare arrangements. Through the detailed reports that they receive from the executive headteacher and other leaders, governors have a growing understanding of the school's effectiveness. However, they are not yet using this to set a clear strategic direction for the school. Governors do not yet play an active enough part in school development planning.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a culture of care and vigilance in the school. The executive headteacher rightly recognises the importance of keeping pupils safe and prioritises this work, ensuring that systems are rigorous and up to date. Leaders work well with other professionals to address any concerns that they have about a pupil's well-being.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Pupils' achievements reflect the good teaching that they receive.
- Teachers make helpful links between different subjects. This enables pupils to learn and practise skills, deepen their knowledge and understanding, as well as further their personal development. For example, Year 2 pupils have been learning about Chinese celebrations. One pupil was proud to act as the class consultant and share their knowledge with the other pupils. Pupils then used this to write a persuasive text, inviting a friend to come and share in a festival. Pupils' writing used engaging descriptions to capture the reader's interest. One pupil wrote to describe the sight of 'dragons that will twirl and twist around you'.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects that they teach. Recent training in phonics has ensured that teachers use phonics well to support pupils' reading and writing. The Year 1 teacher reminded pupils to say sounds correctly, demonstrating correctly and explicitly. When pupils were asked to use these sounds to write sentences including tricky words, the teacher set high expectations, reminding pupils to spell carefully sounds that they had previously learned. This enabled them to succeed. As a result of good teaching, pupils' attainment in phonics has risen.
- From the early years onwards, children have plenty of opportunities to write at length. In the Reception class, the teacher worked with small groups of children to develop their writing. The children had enjoyed the story 'The bog baby' and made their own bog babies using Play-Doh, twigs and feathers. The teacher helped the children to write what their bog baby needed. One girl wrote, 'The baby needs toys and a friend', forming her letters well and making good use of phonics.
- Homework extends pupils' learning well. Pupils have regular tasks that build on learning that has taken place in class. Most parents think that their child receives appropriate homework for their age. One parent described it as 'comprehensive — covering all subjects well'.
- In some mathematics lessons, teachers provide tasks that deepen pupils' understanding. For example, children in Reception worked with their parents on 'maths morning' to find different ways to make 10 using number blocks. This helped them to recognise the value of each number and learn some addition bonds. Nevertheless, mathematics lessons do not always provide sufficient challenge to pupils. Teachers do not always make the best use of assessment information to plan tasks that closely match pupils' learning needs. As a result, pupils are not making as strong progress in mathematics as they are in writing and reading.
- Teaching assistants have warm relationships with pupils and use these to support learning. For example, one teaching assistant encouraged some boys in Reception to make prices for a shop and practise using their numbers. After one boy wrote '100231203p' a rich discussion took place about the size of numbers. However, many teaching assistants are relatively new to their roles. They do not have the skills and expertise yet to have a strong impact on pupils' learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## is outstanding

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- There is an important and deliberate focus on ensuring that pupils are confident and ready to learn. As soon as children join the school in Reception, staff seek to promote their personal, social and emotional

development. As they move into key stage 1, personal, social and health education has a prominent place. Throughout the school day and across the curriculum, staff take advantage of opportunities to foster pupils' personal development. Pupils who are new to the school soon benefit from this approach. Consequently, pupils are self-assured and very well-equipped learners.

- Bullying is very rare. Pupils know that bullying is when 'someone makes you feel not safe'. They are confident that adults will support them if they have a problem. Consequently, pupils feel very safe at school.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of safety and keeping healthy from their regular personal, social and health education lessons. They know how to stay safe on the internet and that their parents have also learned about this too. Pupils also know about 'stranger danger' and that they can stay healthy by looking after their mind and body. Regular 'mindfulness' thinking sessions teach pupils one way that they can look after their minds.
- Pupils are proud of their school 'village' and their roles in it. Year 1 pupils take their postal delivery work very seriously. The school council recently purchased a popular mirror ball for school discos. Through contributions to the development and smooth running of their school, pupils show a keen sense of responsibility and citizenship.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- In class, pupils listen very carefully to their teachers. They settle to work quickly and show great determination to succeed. Pupils enjoy 'tricky' work and relish challenges. Attitudes to learning are excellent and enable pupils to make good progress.
- Around the school, pupils conduct themselves extremely well. In the dining hall, pupils of all ages sit together and share a conversation over their meal. Pupils take time to welcome visitors, asking them if they are 'having a nice day'. When walking through the corridors, pupils remember to wear their 'marshmallow shoes' and walk very quietly. Consequently, the school is a welcoming and orderly community.
- Leaders have ensured that there is effective support in place for pupils who find it more difficult to manage their behaviour. As a result, incidents of poor behaviour have reduced. There have been almost no exclusions since the school opened.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school every day. Rates of absence are similar to the national average. Very few pupils are persistently absent. Leaders work closely with families to enable any necessary improvements in attendance.

### Outcomes for pupils

### are good

- Across the school, pupils are making good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This is because leaders have placed a strong emphasis on enabling all pupils, regardless of their starting points, to achieve well.
- Pupils currently in Year 2 have made accelerated progress this year. In the past they have not achieved as well and many have joined the school over the past two years. Leaders and teachers have focused on ensuring that these pupils are well prepared for key stage 2. As a result, a high proportion of pupils are reaching the standards expected for their age and a majority of pupils are exceeding the expectations for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In writing, pupils across the school are making particularly strong progress. Teachers have made sure that pupils have lots of interesting opportunities to write at length and develop their skills.
- Pupils who join the school speaking English as an additional language make rapid progress to catch up with their classmates. These pupils receive effective additional support that enables them to develop their language skills.
- The most-able pupils are making good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The very large majority of most-able pupils are exceeding the standards expected for their age in these subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making similar progress to other pupils because they benefit from extra lessons in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, the gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates are starting to close.
- In 2015, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year increased and was above the national average.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability, including those with complex needs, are making good progress from their starting points. Some of these pupils are starting to reach the standards expected for

their age.

- Last year, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check was below the national average. Leaders took action to improve phonics teaching. As a result, those pupils in Year 2 who did not meet the expected standard are making better progress in phonics. In Reception and Year 1, most pupils are reaching the standards expected for their age in phonics.
- Year 1 pupils' attainment is not as high as the other year groups. Some pupils are not yet reaching the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Few pupils are exceeding the expected standards. This is because some pupils have left the class and more have joined the school since September 2015. Some new pupils are learning to speak English.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is not as strong as it is in reading and writing. This is because in some classes, mathematics teaching is not always sufficiently challenging.

## Early years provision

is good

- The early years leader is rightly ambitious for the children in her care. She maintains rigorous oversight of children's achievement and uses this to make well-judged changes to the provision. For example, over the past two years, children's attainment in reading and writing has been lower than in other areas of learning. The leader has ensured that children are able to practise their reading and writing throughout the day. Children have many reasons to read and write. One child was determined to write a sign to everyone to tell them to 'Be careful!' as her pet slug 'Sonny' had escaped and she didn't want anyone to step on him. Consequently, children are making rapid progress in reading and writing this year and their attainment has risen.
- Children join the school at different times and with varied skills and abilities. Last year, most children made good progress and the large majority were ready for Year 1. This year, the very large majority of children are also achieving well. However, rates of progress are stronger in some areas of learning than in others. Children's attainment and progress are lower in mathematics than in other areas of learning.
- Leaders have ensured that vulnerable children, including those who are disadvantaged and have special educational needs or disability, are making good progress. Right from the start, staff establish strong relationships with their families, visiting children at home and putting in place effective additional support.
- Children enjoy learning and make good progress because activities are interesting and the teacher develops their skills well. For example, some children were learning to read words with two syllables in them. After practising ways to use their phonics to read tricky words with the teacher, the children went off as 'word detectives', finding words with their friends. Three children found the word 'pondweed' and successfully read it to help solve their clue. Both inside and outside, children have access to a range of activities that cover all of the areas of learning.
- Excellent relationships with parents start in the Reception class. Parents value the opportunities that they have to visit the class such as 'stay and play' days. Through the class blog, parents can share their children's achievements with the teacher and contribute to checks on learning. The teacher uses this assessment information well to plan children's next steps.
- Children behave very well and use equipment carefully, showing that they know how to be safe. They cooperate well with each other and share ideas. For example, a small group of children created a perfectly symmetrical 'boat' from large wooden blocks. One child designed the boat and used his clipboard to show the others his plan. Together they created the design, showing due regard for health and safety, complete with hard hats and hi-viz jackets!

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139899
<b>Local authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10011712

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	79
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kirstie Moor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bev Homer
<b>Telephone number</b>	01189 029123
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<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@windmillschool.org">info@windmillschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Windmill Primary School is a new academy free school sponsored by the Glyn Learning Foundation academy trust. It opened in September 2013. The school is increasing in size by a class each year, and at present it is smaller than average. There are currently pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
- The school opened with six pupils. Gradually, pupil numbers have increased. However, there are still some spaces in each year group. New pupils of different ages join the school throughout the year.
- Few pupils are known to be disadvantaged and eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average. The number of pupils new to English has recently increased. Nearly half of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is now above average.
- Senior leaders and governors are responsible for the leadership and management of this school and the partner school, Wheatfield Primary School. The executive headteacher, two assistant headteachers and the leaders of English and mathematics also lead at Wheatfield Primary School. They divide their leadership time between the two sites.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in seven lessons and parts of lessons, six of which observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders and the mathematics leader. The inspector scrutinised pupils' exercise books.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, pupils, four members of the governing body and two representatives of the academy trust.
- The inspector spoke to nine parents on the playground and took into account 21 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- A range of documents were looked at, including the school's information about pupils' achievement and records concerning pupils' attendance, behaviour and safety.
- The inspector also took into account 34 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Caroline Dulon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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