

Windmill Primary School

Beaconsfield, Brookside, Telford, Shropshire TF3 1LG

Inspection dates

21–22 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not been able to ensure that there is sufficient good teaching. As a result, progress still requires improvement.
- Progress in mathematics is variable in key stage 2. Consequently, pupils do not reach the levels that are expected for their age by the end of Year 6.
- The use of problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics are not taught well in some classes in key stage 2. As a result, too few pupils deepen their levels of understanding or are able to explain how they reach their answers.
- The most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in mathematics in key stage 2. This prevents them from making faster progress.
- Leaders do not check that teachers' assessments of the attainment of pupils are accurate.
- Expectations of standards in presentation and handwriting are not high enough.
- Feedback to newly qualified teachers is not consistent in identifying what they do well and which areas need improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the early years make good progress. Current children in the Reception Year are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils in key stage 1 also make good progress.
- Good use is made of the school grounds to promote learning and foster an appreciation of nature.
- The school is effective in extending pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Personal development and welfare are good. Support for pupils who demonstrate more challenging behaviour is responsive and timely.
- Parents and pupils agree that school is a safe place. Staff take good care of vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils enjoy school. As a result, their attendance has improved.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in key stage 2 and thereby raise achievement, especially in mathematics, by:
 - making sure that teachers plan for problem solving, reasoning and mastery in mathematics
 - planning work that deepens thinking and challenges the most-able, especially in mathematics
 - improving the quality of handwriting and presentation of pupils' work.
- Accelerate the impact senior leaders and managers have on pupils' outcomes by:
 - improving the moderation of assessment and taking effective steps to ensure that teachers' assessment judgements are accurate
 - monitoring the progress of the most-able pupils, ensuring high expectations of progress in all year groups in mathematics
 - ensuring that feedback given to newly qualified teachers provides clear guidance on strengths and areas for development.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Although improvements have been made to raise the quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the previous inspection, standards and progress are not yet consistently good in mathematics in key stage 2.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have begun to address weak teaching. As a result, teaching is improving. Since the previous inspection the teaching of reading and writing has improved, in particular for the most able pupils. However, inconsistencies remain in mathematics in key stage 2 where too few pupils are reaching the higher levels of attainment.
- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have taken actions to improve the teaching of mathematics with support from the local authority. The impact of this work can be seen in improved calculation skills. However, pupils are not secure in the use of these skills when problem solving and reasoning.
- Leaders are not checking the accuracy of teachers' assessment judgements with sufficient rigour. The headteacher has recognised that this is an area for development. He plans to work with local schools to reach a shared agreement on whether work in books matches the expectations of the new national curriculum.
- Newly qualified teachers receive regular feedback. However, the feedback is not consistently providing them with sufficient advice on how to improve their teaching.
- Phase leaders monitor the quality of teaching in the two year groups they oversee. On a termly basis, they observe teaching, talk to pupils and look at samples of pupils' books. Joint observations with inspectors during the inspection showed that phase leaders are able to accurately identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching.
- Systems for the performance management of staff have improved since the previous inspection. Targets set for staff are more challenging. This is resulting in improved outcomes for pupils, for example in phonics in Year 1 and reading in key stages 1 and 2.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils enjoy real-life scientific enquiry by making good use of the school grounds. For example, pupils have developed their understanding of energy through learning about the school's solar panel systems on the roof of one of the classrooms. The extensive wildlife area captures pupils' imagination and successfully develops scientific enquiry. Pupils are excited when talking about their regular lessons in the wildlife area. One pupil told the inspector about the wildlife she had seen from the 'hide', including herons and pond skaters.
- The school's 'market garden' is used well by all classes and the local community. Pupils are proud of the produce they grow. Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular learning experiences, including sports, cookery, film and French clubs. Participation at these clubs is good.
- Residential visits in Years 2, 4 and 6 allow pupils to experience an overnight stay at a National Trust base camp and outdoor adventure centres. These experiences build pupils' confidence in themselves and provide good opportunities for pupils to work together as teams. Pupils in Year 6 look forward with anticipation to the week-long Arthog outdoor education centre visit in Wales. Pupils said how much they had enjoyed the chance to experience new skills such as surfing in the sea.
- Leaders promote social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well through the curriculum. The school makes good use of visits and visitors in all year groups. Pupils are knowledgeable about different places of worship they have visited. They talk confidently about the faiths they study. Pupils show sensitivity and respect for the views of others. Pupils are well prepared for life in Britain today.
- The pupil premium is spent effectively to provide additional support and resources. Intervention teams provide small-group and individual support for pupils. As a result, gaps are narrowing for disadvantaged pupils in reading and writing.
- The primary sport funding is used to provide additional sporting opportunities within the school day and after school. Pupils told inspectors how much they enjoy the wider range of clubs provided by the specialist teachers. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy, both through sport and the use of their 'market garden'.
- The team of staff who support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well led and managed. Training for staff is effective. As a result, staff set appropriate learning targets and provide a good level of support for individual pupils. Parents value the extra help provided for their children. One comment identified satisfaction with the speed of assessment of need and support provided.

- Senior leaders receive strong support from the local authority. For example, the local authority has provided support in school improvement planning, monitoring systems, teaching mathematics and developing practice in the early years. The result of this work is a school culture where expectations are higher.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Following a skills audit, governance has greatly improved –in particular, in the challenge it provides to senior leaders and the training and induction of new governors. Governors understand their roles, and they are proactively holding leaders to account for the impact of planned improvements, the pupil premium and sports funding.
 - Governor are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They know about the quality of teaching in the school. They are determined to make sure that they recruit teachers and leaders with the right skills.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff work well with parents, carers and other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe from harm. Staff understand what to do if they are worried about a pupil. Concerns about pupils are followed up quickly and record-keeping is thorough. Pupils in the care of the local authority are carefully monitored. Training is up to date. Staff have received training on the dangers associated with extremism and radicalisation. The school’s policy and procedures for safeguarding meet current statutory requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently good. Previous weaknesses in teaching and assessment, in addition to changes in staffing, have affected pupils’ achievement over time.
- Teachers have raised their expectations when teaching mental and written methods of calculations. Consequently, pupils’ books show that their calculation skills are improving. However, opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills are still limited.
- Teaching does not always provide enough challenge for the most able pupils in mathematics. Work checked in books and visits to classrooms showed that in some classes the work set is too easy. As a result, the most able pupils do not make as much progress as they should in key stage 2.
- Reading is taught effectively. Pupils in all year groups have positive attitudes to reading. For example, in a Year 6 guided reading lesson, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the feelings of Albie, the main character in the book, ‘The many worlds of Albie Bright’. The book captured the pupils’ imagination. The teacher’s questioning was effective. Consequently, pupils gave mature, thoughtful opinions on why Albie would want to travel to a parallel universe and how his journey may prove scientific theories.
- Work in books across the school shows that expectations of presentation and handwriting are not always taught consistently. As a result, pupils do not always take enough pride in the presentation of their work.
- Teachers plan writing opportunities linked to current projects and themes. This motivates the pupils as writers and helps them to improve grammar, punctuation and spelling. For example, in Year 3, pupils showed high levels of enjoyment when writing about rainforests. During the lesson, stimulated by the school’s ‘exotic zoo’, the teacher successfully encouraged pupils to reflect on the words they could use to join sentences together when describing the animals.
- Work is marked in line with the school’s policy. Pupils make better progress when teachers make it clear how to improve their work. Pupils respond to teachers’ marking.
- Teaching assistants and additional adults are effective in supporting individual pupils or small groups. They promote pupils’ confidence and swiftly address any misconceptions in learning during the lesson.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is good.
- This is a nurturing school where pupils develop confidence and belief in themselves. Care for each other is at the heart of the school’s ethos and values.
- Adults are calm when dealing with pupils and relationships are good. Pupils say adults listen to their views. Pupils are reflective and show kindness and empathy to each other. One pupil summed this up when he said, ‘We all get along.’
- Pupils say bullying is rare and any incidents are dealt with quickly by teachers. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe on the internet and social media. The majority of parents agree that the school deals effectively with bullying.

- Pupils in Year 6 are proud to be leaders in the school. The school encourages pupils to take on roles of responsibility. For example, each class is responsible for the care of the eight different types of birds, reptiles, insects and mammals from around the world in the school's exotic zoo area. Pupils were excited to tell inspectors about the countries the animals originate from. Pupils have a good knowledge of caring for the animals and show great interest in the natural habitats of their animals, including the African pygmy hedgehog and the corn snake.
- The school site is secure and well maintained. Good use is made of the extensive school grounds to promote good social development at playtimes and lunchtimes. In the playground pupils play safely. They show awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of others.
- Pupils feel safe at school and parents agree. One parental comment summed up the views of many parents. They said, 'Teachers are compassionate and kind.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons, pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning. They are polite and show respect for each other.
- Systems for behaviour management are effective. Pupils behave well outside at breaktime and lunchtime because they have access to a wide range of well-planned activities. Adults supervise areas well. Pupils in Year 6 help younger children to play well together.
- Pupils with social and emotional needs are managed sensitively. The school takes time to use what they know about each pupil to plan personalised programmes of support. Two specialist rooms, a sensory room and the 'blue room', are well equipped. These rooms provide a calm, nurturing space for pupils.
- Pupils have good manners. The school celebrates and rewards manners through a weekly 'top table' in the dining room. Pupils say they feel proud when they are invited to join the top table.
- Occasionally, some pupils when moving around school need to be supported and reminded of the school's expectations.
- Attendance has improved and is in line with the national average. Leaders work successfully with parents through incentives such as a breakfast club to promote good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because not all pupils make good progress throughout the school, particularly in mathematics in key stage 2.
- The 2015, Year 6 test results showed that standards in reading and writing were in line with the national average. However, pupils' test results in mathematics were below the national average at the end of key stage 2.
- The proportion of most-able pupils attaining higher levels in reading and writing at the end of Year 6 was in line with the national average in 2015. It was below the national average in mathematics. This is because the work was not sufficiently challenging.
- Work in books and the latest school information indicates that standards have been maintained in reading and writing and are rising in mathematics. Recent improvement in the teaching of calculation is having a positive impact on pupils. Evidence in books shows that pupils are able to complete calculations with greater accuracy. Gaps in their mathematical knowledge are being identified and addressed more quickly.
- By the end of Year 1, pupils achieve well in their phonics screening check. In 2015, school results in phonics were above the national average. The teaching of phonics has improved since the previous inspection. New systems to teach phonics are having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- At the end of key stage 1 in 2015, pupils attained as well as other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Recent provisional results in Year 2 tests, in 2016, show that two thirds of the pupils are reaching age-related expectations in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Progress in reading is good. Pupils in all year groups have access to a wide range of books in school and show a good knowledge of a range of authors. During the inspection, pupils in key stage 1 were working with authors in their classrooms. Pupils were stimulated and excited to meet an author. In Year 2, they were inspired to write and illustrate their work after meeting David Litchfield and reading his book 'The bear and the piano'. One pupil said, 'You can be an author at any age.'
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is improving for lower-ability pupils and most-able pupils in reading and writing. For current pupils, school information and work seen in books show that disadvantaged pupils are making similar progress to other pupils in school and in some year groups, more progress than their classmates.

- Current progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving. School information shows that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making expected progress.

Early years provision

is good

- In 2015, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was below the national average. In 2016, outcomes are expected to improve with an increase in the numbers of all pupils and disadvantaged pupils achieving a good level of development.
- The early years leader is effective and has a good understanding of the strengths and weakness of the early years. Significant improvements have been made this year to ensure that provision is closely matched to the needs of the children. The work of the early years team has been more sharply focused on tracking children's progress from the minute they enter the school.
- Most children start Nursery and Reception with skills that are below those typically expected for their age. Children join the Reception Year from the school Nursery and other settings. Historical information shows that children did not make enough progress but for current children this is not the case. Children now make good progress in all areas of learning. Consequently, they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching is effective. The teaching of reading has improved. Children are using phonics in their play as a result of a new phonics programme and effective staff training. During the inspection, one group of children successfully wrote shopping lists and read them to each other. Writing is purposeful and adults skilfully engage children in writing through their play.
- Space is used well in the early years to engage the children in interesting and relevant experiences. They enjoy learning outdoors. For example, one group of children showed delight when scoring points for the accuracy of their ball skills as they developed early mathematical understanding through a practical learning experience.
- Adults know how to bring the best out in children and they ask questions skilfully. Children are keen to share their ideas. Teachers' records of children's progress, including their learning journeys, show that children are achieving well.
- Procedures to keep children safe are well managed and effective. Children behave well because early social skills are developed through the high expectations of all adults. Children take turns and they enjoy the responsibility of looking after pets in school.
- Children enjoy coming to school. Parents appreciate the early years provision and one comment reflects their views: 'My child has loved it from day one.'

School details

Unique reference number	127090
Local authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	10012414

This inspection 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	404
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Heywood
Headteacher	Mark Gibbons
Telephone number	01952 386360
Website	www.windmillschool.taw.org.uk
Email address	office@windmillprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 June 2014

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Three new phase leaders have been appointed in this academic year together with two newly qualified teachers.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Three governors remain from the time of the previous inspection. The chair of the governing body was elected to the role of chair in November 2014. There are currently three governor vacancies.
- The school's website meets the requirement for the publication of information.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed lessons, and a number of these were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes, and met with two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school.
- The views of parents were gathered informally at the start and end of the school day and during sports days which took place on both days. Inspectors took account of 94 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors took account of the views of 10 staff and one pupil in the online inspection surveys.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, representatives of the governing body including the chair and two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documents, including information relating to safeguarding, monitoring of teaching and learning, local authority reports, improvement plans and evaluations, governing body minutes, and information about pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Pamela Matty, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Margaret Newton	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Bandfield	Ofsted Inspector

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