

Willow Brook Primary School Academy

190 Church Road, Leyton, London E10 7BH

Inspection dates

13–14 June 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The lively atmosphere and the buzz of activity in the school reflect the pupils' real enthusiasm for learning. Pupils enjoy coming to a school where they are encouraged to aim high.
- The strong leadership team, led by the executive headteacher and the head of school, has worked tirelessly to transform the school so that it now gives its pupils an excellent education.
- The Nursery and Reception classes give children an outstanding start to school life in an attractive and stimulating environment.
- From low starting points, pupils now achieve results in English and mathematics which are better than the national averages.
- The curriculum, including the extensive enrichment programme, provides pupils with an excellent range of opportunities.
- The curriculum is taught in a very engaging way. Excellent teaching ensures that pupils make rapid progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those starting school at an early stage of learning English achieve at a similar level to other pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well.
- Pupils take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour. They are friendly and learn to respect each other and adults. They feel safe in school.
- The school's aims and values strongly support British values of tolerance, respect and belief in the rule of law. Parents are supportive of the school.
- The governors provide excellent challenge and support. They know the school well and what needs to be done to help the school to continue to improve.
- Attendance has improved and is now better than average.
- Senior staff are aware that occasionally teaching and learning need further refining to help deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To raise standards even further, leaders should ensure that teachers further refine their skills in knowing when to intervene and how to question pupils to help them deepen their knowledge and understanding of their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Inspirational leadership has moved the school rapidly from requiring improvement to outstanding. The leadership team has worked successfully to create a school that enables pupils to grow into mature and pleasant young people who have a love of learning and are well prepared for their future.
- There is no sense of complacency, and the commitment to continuing improvement is very evident. Leaders evaluate the quality of the school in depth. This enables them to identify quickly any areas in need of further improvement. Sharply focused development plans have challenging but achievable targets.
- Leadership at all levels in the school is excellent. The leadership team is quick to recognise potential in staff and leaders systematically develop leadership qualities. For example, middle leaders now take on much of the responsibility for promoting and developing high standards of teaching and learning.
- External reviews confirm that the school's judgement of pupils' achievement is consistently very accurate. Leaders and teachers regularly check on pupils' progress and set aspirational targets. Teachers use these targets to modify what and how they are teaching each pupil and to provide well-targeted support.
- Teaching is checked regularly and staff are provided with high-quality professional training which supports their development and helps them to improve their skills. Well-motivated staff work effectively as a whole-staff team and in smaller phase teams.
- The school's curriculum provides an excellent framework for learning. The core subjects are strongly supported by an exceptionally wide range of enrichment activities available to all pupils. For example, taking part in an arts festival and a science symposium widens their experience, and provides a stimulus for further work.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They learn about and respect people of other faiths. Activities in art, music, drama and sport not only encourage pupils to develop new interests, they also help them learn to work well with others in different contexts.
- Both the taught curriculum and enrichment activities fully prepare pupils to participate actively and positively in British society. Topics, activities such as international evenings and visits to places such as Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, help broaden pupils' understanding of British values and a wide range of other cultures.
- The use of the additional physical education and sport funding is excellent. Specialist coaching helps teachers to improve their teaching of physical education. The school offers a wide range of sports, including on residential visits, which give pupils experience of challenging outdoor activities. A high number of pupils take up these opportunities.

- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used very well and they do as well as other pupils nationally. The personal development of these pupils is excellent and they have high aspirations for their future. The breakfast club gives many pupils a calm and purposeful start to the day. Funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also spent wisely to secure strong progress.
- Extensive use of a wide range of partnerships benefits the school. For example, as members of the Griffin Schools Trust, leaders gain from external checks and advice on how to improve the school. Staff improve their practice by working with other schools to check the accuracy of their assessment of pupils' work.
- Parents are positive about the school and recognise how much it has improved. A group of parents said that communication with parents was much better and is now good. They said that the school was not complacent and was working on improving communication further.

Governance of the school

- The governors provide expertise in a wide range of essential skills. They both support and challenge the executive headteacher, the head of school and senior staff on all matters including safeguarding, the quality of teaching and pupils' levels of achievement.
- Governors are very well informed because they visit the school, talk to pupils as well as staff and review the reports and data they receive. They ask detailed questions to establish just how well the school is doing and where improvements need to be made.
- Governors have encouraged the school to participate fully in the opportunities to work with schools in the Griffin Schools Trust, and beyond. This helps to expand the range of opportunities for pupils, and to ensure that the school can learn from excellent practice in other places and benefit from external challenge, support and advice.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and are kept fully under review to ensure that they are up to date.
- The site is secure and staff are highly professional in caring for pupils. They are very well trained and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the procedures that they should follow. School records show that policies are implemented appropriately. Pupils and their parents believe that pupils are safe and well cared for.
- Those responsible for the leadership of safeguarding within the school have an excellent understanding of how to manage any issues skilfully to ensure that all pupils are safe. They have close relationships with other agencies who are responsible for children's safety and protection and issues are followed up.
- The school website underlines the high priority given to safeguarding and provides parents with detailed information and guidance. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that any issues are dealt with sensitively.

- Pupils have very clear guidance on how to keep themselves safe. Leaders ensure that work with pupils includes a focus on the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Pupils showed an understanding of these issues at a level appropriate to their age and maturity.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers ensure that classrooms are lively and pleasant places where everyone can enjoy working and learning together. In this very positive environment, pupils learn to take risks, knowing that teachers and other adults will help and support them.
- From the Nursery onwards, children learn quickly and well because teachers make learning both interesting and fun. Pupils enjoy working on the chosen topics such as the current work based on 'The Jungle Book' in Year 5.
- Pupils respond to skilful teaching with enthusiasm and show that they increasingly take responsibility for their learning. They work hard because they want to, not just because it is expected of them.
- Teachers have detailed knowledge of what their pupils have already learned and how it has been taught. They then build systematically on this to move pupils on rapidly and develop pupils' skills and confidence. The work in books, for example on different plays by William Shakespeare, showed how the stimulating teaching engages the interest and sparks the imagination of pupils in different year groups.
- Teachers use a wide range of resources, including computer technology, to improve communication in the classroom. They help pupils understand the basics, before moving on to getting them to think more deeply about topics.
- Throughout the school, reading and writing are expertly taught. In the early years and key stage 1, staff follow a systematic programme to develop children's phonic knowledge. This provides pupils with an excellent foundation from which they build impressive reading and writing skills. Work in other subjects strongly supports pupils' literacy skills.
- Teachers have worked hard to implement the mathematics curriculum. As a result, pupils are both confident about and competent in using mathematics. Teachers systematically support pupils in applying basic mathematical skills to solve problems. Pupils present their work well so that the strategies they have used are clear.
- In all classes, the promotion of speaking and listening skills enables pupils to develop their ideas and communicate very effectively. Teachers question pupils to check their understanding. However, leaders have identified that sometimes the questioning needs to encourage pupils to acquire a greater depth of knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers know their pupils very well and are able to match learning to specific individual needs, to ensure that pupils gain confidence and make rapid progress. Well-trained and knowledgeable teaching assistants support individuals and small groups very effectively. This particularly helps pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to progress quickly.

- Disadvantaged pupils also have any individual needs identified and effective support helps them to overcome barriers to learning. Pupils at an early stage of learning English receive similarly effective support. As a result, they rapidly become confident users of English.
- Pupils' work is celebrated around the school. Resources are of high quality and there is a good range of books available.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy all that it offers. They are keen to learn and like being challenged to take on more difficult work. This has helped to raise their achievement.
- The school is genuinely inclusive in its approach and gives all pupils access to a very wide range of opportunities for personal development. For example, taking part in the 'Enabling Enterprise' programme gave pupils the chance to develop skills in planning and teamwork, as well as insight into the engineering and construction industries. Other pupils gained similar skills on an eco-project where they learned about conservation in Epping Forest.
- The school has rigorous systems for checking on attendance. As a result, attendance has improved considerably since the previous inspection and is now above average. The number of persistent absentees is now well below the most recent figures for schools nationally.
- Pupils understand the school's values and what is expected of them. They could explain these clearly and enjoyed receiving a book as a reward when they put these values into practice.
- From the youngest onwards, pupils learn to take responsibility for themselves and their environment. They are encouraged to contribute their ideas, and members of the school council say that pupils' ideas are taken seriously.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are friendly and welcoming. They are polite to adults and other pupils.
- Behaviour is excellent in class and around the school. From the start, pupils learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour and low-level disruption is rare.
- Staff are excellent role models for their pupils. They strongly promote respect for others whatever their background or beliefs and pupils respond well to this. Relationships at all levels are excellent.
- Pupils said that bullying is rare. They feel safe and know whom to go to if there are any concerns or problems. They have been taught how to stay safe online. For example, they know not to give out any personal information to others.

- In the playground, pupils acting as play leaders take their responsibilities very seriously. They help others to resolve issues in the playground and adults provide a good level of supervision so that any minor issues are not allowed to become more serious.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils are now well prepared for the next stage of their education. In 2016, from a low starting point, Year 6 pupils achieved standards which were above the national average in reading and mathematics and in line with the national expectations in writing.
- Current pupils are making similarly rapid progress. The evidence from books and teachers' records shows that pupils have largely caught up from previous underachievement, particularly in the current Year 3 classes.
- In previous years, progress in key stage 1 was not as good as in other phases of the school and pupils did not make the progress which might have been expected from their starting points. This is no longer the case. Attainment and progress have improved and pupils in key stage 1 typically now reach standards which are at least in line with the national expectations and often better. For example, in 2016 in the Year 1 phonics check, a higher proportion of pupils achieved the expected standard than did so nationally. The current Year 1 pupils are on track to do even better.
- From Nursery onwards, individual progress is almost always at least good and frequently outstanding. Where pupils are at risk of not achieving as highly as others, the school quickly puts support in place to improve the rate of progress and raise attainment.
- A very high proportion of pupils in the school speak English as an additional language. Their progress is very much in line with the outcomes for the whole school. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support and most make at least good progress relative to their individual needs and their starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils nationally and some make exceptional progress. For example, in Year 1, these pupils have made better progress than other pupils in writing and mathematics because they have responded well to teaching designed to meet their individual needs.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy reading. They are given many opportunities to read a wide range of stories and plays and learn to read accurately and with expression.
- The work in pupils' books shows that as they move through the school, they develop sophisticated skills in writing for a variety of purposes. For example, pupils in Year 6 had written interesting and detailed character studies of the main characters in 'The Tempest' which showed a deep understanding of the play.
- In mathematics, pupils' books show that they make excellent progress in acquiring basic skills and in learning to solve increasingly complex problems. In discussion with a group of pupils, they said that they enjoy mathematics because teachers make it interesting. They like being able to use their knowledge and skills in real situations.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The children settle well into the Nursery and Reception classes. They rapidly learn the routines and become independent and able to look after themselves. They relate well to other children, learning to play happily together. Relationships with adults are warm and trusting.
- The indoor and outdoor areas are attractive, well organised and well resourced. They are designed to capture children's imagination and encourage them to develop a love of learning.
- Children make outstanding progress across all the areas of learning but particularly in terms of speech and language skills. Many of them start school with knowledge and skills that are low compared with what might typically be expected for their age, particularly in speech and language.
- By the time the children move to Year 1, they have made excellent progress and have knowledge and skills which are broadly typical for their age. They are confident and well prepared for the Year 1 curriculum.
- Children from disadvantaged backgrounds make progress which is at least as good as that of others and often better because staff understand and cater for their individual needs.
- Adults work closely and effectively as a team. They record children's progress systematically and use the records to show how much progress children have made and what the 'next steps' should be.
- Staff encourage children to try new things and to develop their independence. For example, the variety of resources for different activities encourages children to choose for themselves. As a result, children are keen to try things out.
- The activities in both indoor and outdoor areas have a strong focus on helping children to improve their language skills. Children in the early stages of learning English pick up and use the language quickly, soon becoming able to hold a conversation with adults and other children.
- Children from all backgrounds become confident and articulate and acquire a wide vocabulary. This helps to support their development in other areas such as mathematics. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported because their needs are understood and they too make excellent progress.
- Children enjoy books. Phonics teaching is lively and fun, giving children a very secure foundation in both reading and writing. Their 'special books' show children enjoying a range of writing activities such as re-telling stories and writing cards for special events.
- The outdoor area is organised particularly well, with a wide range of activities which children can explore independently and which are linked to the current topics and themes. The 'mini-beasts' area was very popular and was promoting considerable discussion around identifying different insects and recording the differences through pictures and writing.
- The early years phase leader has a very clear grasp of priorities. She knows what has

been achieved and wants to build further on the improvement to the outdoor area so that the activities in different areas help children to develop more rapidly the skills they need when writing. Staff are supported by high-quality professional development which enables them to improve their skills, for example in knowing when to intervene to move children's learning on even more quickly.

- Parents recognise that their children are happy, safe and well cared for and are getting an excellent start to their education.

School details

Unique reference number	138364
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10031708

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	574
Appropriate authority	Griffin Schools Trust
Chair	Ange Tyler
Executive Headteacher	Anne Powell
Headteacher	Graham Clifford
Telephone number	0208 539 1428
Website	www.willowbrook-gst.org
Email address	office@willowbrookprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Griffin Schools Trust, a multi-academy trust with schools in London, the South East and the Midlands. It is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school shares an executive headteacher with an outstanding local school that is also run by the trust. The two deputy headteachers have joined the school since the previous inspection.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Most pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, with many nationalities being

represented in the school. A high proportion of children who join the school in the Nursery or Reception classes are at an early stage of learning English, as are a high proportion of those pupils who join the school later than the usual times.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found in most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is much higher than in most primary schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes during the inspection, some as part of a learning walk and others for a longer period of time. Almost all observations and learning walks were undertaken jointly with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with the school council, a group of pupils from key stage 1 and a group from key stage 2. Other pupils were spoken with during lessons and the inspectors also listened to some pupils reading.
- An inspector held a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body, who is also the joint chief executive officer of the academy trust.
- Inspectors held meetings with several school staff, including the special educational needs coordinator and the phase leaders.
- Inspectors took account of 11 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online survey) and the school's own surveys of parents, and spoke informally with several parents including members of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) committee. Inspectors also took account of 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including: records of pupils' work; the school's data on progress; school improvement planning; leaders' checks on the quality of teaching; external checks on the quality of education; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Grace Marriott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jennie Bird	Ofsted Inspector
Anna Boshier	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017