

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



22 March 2018

Louise Ballard
Headteacher
Willow Brook Primary School
Willow Brook
Keyworth
Nottingham
Nottinghamshire
NG12 5BB

Dear Mrs Ballard

Short inspection of Willow Brook Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 8 March 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since your appointment as headteacher, from deputy headteacher, in February 2017, you have continued to improve pupils' progress and attainment. You have a dedicated team which is committed to providing pupils with a high-quality education.

Children in the early years make good progress. They enter Year 1 with skills and abilities above those found nationally. By the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is similar to national averages. In writing, it is above average. Overall, pupils make good progress by the end of key stage 2 and attain standards similar to those nationally. Sometimes, pupils reach standards that are higher than national averages.

You provide pupils with a caring and inviting learning environment. Pupils are well mannered and welcoming to visitors and to each other. Their behaviour is good and at times it is exemplary. Pupils want to come to school and learn. Their attendance is high. You provide many opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities, take on leadership roles and contribute to their community. Pupils were keen to tell me how much they enjoy learning and being a part of their school family.

You have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. You make extensive use of published information to check the progress and attainment of your pupils against others nationally. You use this information well to identify relevant areas for improvement.

Teaching ensures that pupils make good progress overall. At the last inspection, inspectors recommended that teaching should create more opportunities to inspire pupils. They also recommended that teachers explain learning more clearly to pupils. Pupils now routinely take part in lessons that are engaging and stimulating, and teachers provide opportunities for pupils to show their understanding. Pupils speak positively about lessons being interesting and fun. They smile and take part in their learning activities attentively and with enjoyment.

You and all class teachers have a detailed understanding of individual pupils' progress. Accurate assessment information helps teachers to plan activities for pupils' different learning needs. However, some pupils do not move on to more difficult work to make them think harder. At times, therefore, pupils with different abilities do not make equally good progress.

Members of the governing body are passionate about Willow Brook Primary School. They are an experienced group of individuals. Members understand and carry out their roles with confidence. They use their broad range of skills wisely to fulfil their duties and responsibilities. Members provide you with effective support and challenge. Most information shared with members of the governing body is detailed and pertinent. However, some information regarding different groups of learners is not as well checked or understood.

Parents are extremely positive about the school's work. They are supportive of adults who work in the school and care for their children. In particular, parents commented on the accessibility of staff, the additional clubs and the inclusive nature of the school.

You are continuing to improve some areas of the school's effectiveness. You acknowledge that pupils, by the end of key stage 1, have not maintained the rapid progress made by children in the early years. In addition, you recognise that you have not made sufficient use of the assessment information you collect. Checks on the progress of different groups of pupils currently in the school are not as thorough as they should be. This has resulted in the progress of some groups of pupils being more varied over time, including differences between boys and girls.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have created an environment where safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults in the school. Staff, volunteers and governors are all provided with relevant training to help them know what action to take if they need to. You and other staff know pupils as individuals. You arrange for any extra support or care that pupils may need promptly and with rigour.

Pupils explained confidently the procedures that you have established to help keep them safe. They told me how adults make them feel that they are the number one priority. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agreed that their children are safe.

Inspection findings

- In reading, pupils usually attain standards similar to those nationally by the end of key stage 1. In 2017, however, pupils did not attain as well in reading as they have done in previous years. This was especially true for the boys. To rectify this, leaders have given reading a boost. New reading resources have been purchased and parents have attended workshops on reading styles and expectations. Pupils told me how much they enjoy reading.
- Pupils' progress in reading, especially for Year 2 pupils, is accelerating. However, some inconsistencies remain between the boys' and the girls' attainment. The pupils I listened to reading were confident and demonstrated good use of their reading skills. Sometimes, however, allocated reading books do not provide some pupils with sufficient challenge to accelerate their reading skills further.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide effective phonics teaching. The school's phonics programme has been re-written and phonics is taught daily. Pupils are motivated and highly engaged in their phonics sessions. Teaching moves pupils on to harder skills quickly so that progress is rapid. The school's assessment information indicates that boys' phonics, in 2018, is likely to be above the national standard.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics by the end of key stage 2. However, progress has not been as rapid as it has been in reading and writing in the past. Leaders have identified that pupils' progress in problem-solving and reasoning has been slower than in other areas of mathematics learning. Teachers are now providing pupils with more opportunities to develop and practise these specific skills. This was seen to be effective in the lessons observed during the inspection. The school's assessment information shows that pupils currently in key stage 2 are making good progress in mathematics. It is now similar to the progress they are making in reading and writing.
- Over the last three years, girls' progress in mathematics in key stage 2 has been slower than boys'. The girls I spoke with told me how much they enjoy mathematics learning. They confidently explained to me what problems they had been set and how they were going to solve them. More girls are now reaching the expected standards in mathematics than in previous years.
- The most able pupils in key stage 2 did not make consistently good progress in reading and mathematics in 2016 and 2017. Leaders have ensured that teaching now places a greater emphasis on the most able pupils. These pupils are now able to attend extra sessions at other local schools. Leaders have also checked the accuracy of the assessments they make about pupils' deeper learning with other providers and have raised their expectations accordingly. The most able pupils are now making good progress. They are likely to attain above national averages, including greater depth, in 2018.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they use pupils' assessment information more thoroughly to check that all groups of pupils currently in the school make consistently good progress
- pupils in key stage 1 build on the rapid progress they make in reading, writing and mathematics in the early years
- teachers provide all pupils with challenging work in reading, writing and mathematics, so that more pupils reach greater depth in their learning.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Vondra Mays
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and members of the governing body. You and I observed pupils' learning in several lessons. I observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school.

I spoke with pupils informally and met formally with a group of pupils. I also listened to pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 reading and examined samples of pupils' work.

In addition, I considered a range of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan and records relating to pupils' progress and attainment. I considered the views of 72 parents posted on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. This included 56 free-text responses.

I reviewed the school's safeguarding practices. The school's website was also checked to confirm whether it met the requirements on the publication of required information.