

Inspection of Willow Tree Community Primary School

Wetherby Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 7SG

Inspection dates: 4–5 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy in this inclusive school. They feel well cared for. They say it is friendly and believe that everyone is welcome. Pupils' personal development is a strength. Leaders provide a range of opportunities for pupils to pursue an active lifestyle. Pupil councils play an active role in school life. Pupils understand the need to be respectful, responsible and active citizens.

Pupils are eager to learn. They respond well when teachers set them work that builds on what they already know or can do. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in some subjects, including in reading. This is because leaders have not checked that staff are clear about what pupils should learn and remember.

Pupils feel safe. They know how to look after their own physical and mental health. Pupils say that bullying rarely happens. They play well together and know who to go to if any problems occur. Pupils say that they enjoy learning. However, some teachers do not make sure that all pupils behave well in some classes. When teachers do not match learning to the pupils' needs, some pupils lose interest and switch off. Pupils told inspectors that there are times when other pupils' behaviour stops them from getting on with their work.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The quality of education requires improvement. Leaders have recently put in place new plans to ensure the curriculum is well structured. These plans are not established across all subjects. Some curriculum leaders do not check the quality of learning in the subject they lead. Not all curriculum leaders know the strengths and weaknesses in their subject area.

In some classes, teaching does not build systematically on what pupils know. In a mathematics lesson visited, pupils worked on long multiplication before they understood short multiplication. Misconceptions are not always addressed at the point of teaching. Teachers plan many opportunities to learn the necessary vocabulary in science. Pupils' knowledge and use of vocabulary is strong. Pupils remember the content of history topics well. They make connections to other topics. In a lesson about the Second World War, pupils wrote about the links with the First World War. This is because teachers follow the well-sequenced plans in history.

The school follows a single programme for the teaching of phonics. Leaders do not check that all teachers follow the curriculum as it is set out. Pupils do not have the appropriate knowledge and skills required in Reception and key stage 1 to read well. Some teachers are not following the new curriculum plans for reading. Pupils in some classes are answering test-style comprehension questions. They do not have opportunities to understand what they read, through discussing their understanding or exploring the meaning of texts. This is not helping them to gain the reading skills

they will need for the next stage of their education. Teachers share their passion for reading through story time and by often inviting authors into school. Pupils listen well to teachers to gain a love of reading. Presently, pupils who are behind in their reading are well supported to catch up. This is because leaders have ensured that staff are experts in the teaching of reading catch-up programmes. The books that pupils read do not always match their ability. This does not help them to become fluent readers fast enough.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education provides high-quality pastoral support. There are many opportunities for pupils to pursue an active lifestyle. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy. Pupil councils ensure that pupils understand the need to be respectful, responsible and active citizens. Pupils regularly had breakfast with the elderly from the local community.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do well. Staff identify pupils' needs early. Pupils with SEND are well supported by extra adult help or special resources, and they are included well in lessons. Regular communication with parents and carers takes place. Leaders ensure that pupils receive additional support when changing year group or school.

Actions taken to reduce the persistent absence of pupils with SEND have been slow. Leaders do not take action in time to inform parents before pupils become persistent absentees.

Pupils' behaviour in some classes is not managed effectively. This holds back some pupils' learning.

There have been changes to staff in the early years. Children are getting off to a strong start in the Nursery. Leaders and staff make sure that children in the Nursery learn well. The expectations of adults in the Nursery are high. Teaching in the Nursery helps the children to make strong progress. This is not the case in the Reception classes. The learning environment in Reception is not stimulating, so children do not stay focused and flit between activities. The curriculum does not provide for the children well enough for the next steps in their learning. Staff expectations of the children are not as high as in Nursery. Not all children are well prepared for their move into Year 1.

Governors and leaders care about staff workload and well-being. Staff feel supported by leaders and appreciate the out-of-hours email embargo.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know their roles and responsibilities and how to record any concerns they have. All leaders and staff are vigilant. Staff make pupils' welfare a priority. Staff vetting checks are fit for purpose, and training for staff is effective. Leaders work well with external agencies to safeguard pupils and support their families. Pupils'

understanding of how to keep themselves safe online is particularly strong. Leaders are taking appropriate action to further improve site security.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Phonics is not taught effectively in Reception or key stage 1. There is a two-year declining trend in phonics outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Some members of staff have been trained more recently. They are helping pupils to catch up. Leaders must ensure that teachers follow the curriculum plans for the teaching of phonics so that pupils become confident and fluent readers. Leaders must also ensure that pupils are given reading books that are accurately matched to their phonics abilities.
- There are new curriculum plans for almost all subjects. Checks have not been carried out in all subjects. Where they have been undertaken, feedback has not been shared with all members of the curriculum team. Leaders must systematically check how well their new subject plans are being implemented. They must clearly communicate to the staff what is working well and what is not so that teachers can refine their practice.
- In mathematics, the curriculum planning sets out what pupils should learn. Some teachers do not check that pupils are secure in their understanding before moving on to the next steps. Leaders should support teachers to assess and plan sequences of lessons that build on what pupils already know.
- Many pupils conduct themselves well. Where teachers plan activities that are too easy or too hard, some pupils distract each other. Leaders should make sure that teachers plan activities that engage all learners. They should ensure that all staff have high expectations for behaviour.
- Overall, the absence from school of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. Leaders should ensure that actions are taken to address poor attendance before pupils become persistent absentees.
- Teaching in Reception is not building on the effective practice in Nursery. Leaders are not ensuring that the curriculum is of the same high quality. Teachers do not ensure that the learning environment and activities challenge all children. Leaders need to make sure that teachers plan suitably challenging objectives for children in the Reception classes so that they are well prepared for key stage 1.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	121424
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10121753
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	586
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Jane Beasley
Headteacher	Helen Davey
Website	www.willowtree.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, two deputy headteachers, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection included deep dives into reading, mathematics, science, writing and history. This means that we met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons with leaders, looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read, spoke to pupils about their work and spoke to teachers.
- We talked with parents during the inspection and considered the 93 responses from parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Responses to the survey for staff were also reviewed.

- We reviewed a wide range of documents relating to safeguarding, including the school's single central record of checks on adults working at the school and behaviour and bullying records.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mujahid Ali	Ofsted Inspector
Sharon Stelling	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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