

Inspection of a good school: Windmill Hill Primary School

Ash View, Chapeltown, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S35 1ZD

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2022

Outcome

Windmill Hill Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Windmill Hill Primary School is a welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils are happy and feel safe, which means they can focus on their learning. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves healthy in ways such as eating a balanced diet and exercising frequently. They also understand how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils say that bullying is rare but if it did happen, they know that teachers would help them.

Pupils are polite, friendly and engaging. They are respectful and talk confidently to adults using appropriate humour. This is because of the strong bonds that exist between them. Pupils routinely follow the Golden Rules: 'Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe, Be Your Best!'

Behaviour in school is good. Pupils engage well together at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils listen well in class and have positive learning attitudes. Pupils speak passionately about the 'Zones of Regulation'. They can confidently recognise their own emotions and know it is ok to feel certain ways in different situations. They are aware of strategies they can use to ensure they are focused and ready to learn.

Pupils are given responsibilities in school that they enjoy. Along with the 'School Council', the school has 'Play Leaders' and 'Reception Buddies'. Pupils frequently participate in extra-curricular clubs and are regularly given the opportunity to support local and national charities.

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

Leaders inspire staff who work together to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential. Staff are passionate and enthusiastic. They seek out opportunities to develop their knowledge in all subjects. As a result, pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that helps pupils develop a detailed understanding of subject content. Pupils frequently revisit concepts that have already been taught.

Leaders have clearly set out what they expect pupils to know by the end of each year. However, due to a reduction in pupil numbers, the school is moving from single-age classes to mixed-aged classes. As a result, some of the curriculum maps do not currently match the needs of mixed-age classes.

Pupils love reading and enjoy listening to teachers read to them every day. This is because they feel that a good author can 'transport them to a different place'. Leaders prioritise reading and teach phonics to pupils as soon as pupils start school. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. Most pupils can read fluently by the time they reach Year 3. The school has recently embarked on a new phonics programme.

Pupils enjoy mathematics. They can talk about what they know and how that helps them to learn more. Vocabulary is well developed. Children in early years use appropriate terms such as 'odd', 'even', 'horizontal', 'vertical' and 'oblong'. All pupils, including those with SEND, are given the opportunity to deepen their understanding by answering problem-solving and reasoning questions.

Pupils are knowledgeable and enjoy talking about their learning in all subjects. They can explain how the knowledge and skills they have previously been taught helps them with future learning. They can also use relevant, subject-specific vocabulary when in discussion. For example, in art, pupils talk about the work of Hans Holbein and how his work inspired their own portrait painting. They talked about 'shade' and 'tone' and demonstrated an understanding of colour mixing they had been previously taught.

The curriculum for pupils' personal development is strong. They are taught to understand how to be mentally and physically healthy, have healthy relationships with friends and family and how to make a positive contribution to the local community. The school tackles gender stereotypes in the world of work by inviting visitors such as female firefighters to join them for assemblies.

Provision for SEND pupils has improved since the arrival of the new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). Pupils with SEND are now identified early, and the school works well with outside agencies to ensure appropriate learning plans are followed. Toolkits to support assessment are used well and the progress made by SEND pupils is improving. However, due to historic inconsistencies in leadership, provision has not always been strong. This has affected the behaviour and attitudes of some pupils. As a result, parents became concerned. Recent trust support for the new SENCo has been impactful but these new procedures still need to be firmly embedded.

The school is well supported by the trustees and the local governing body. They know the school well. They know staff and pupils, and they are actively involved in the life of the school. The trust offers strong, targeted support where needed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All members of staff are confident about identifying and reporting issues. They know the signs to look out for and what to do if they have any concerns about the welfare of pupils. They receive regular training, which is revisited throughout the year. Updates are provided when required. Leaders take prompt and effective actions to protect pupils who are at risk. They work well with families and external agencies.

Governors rigorously check that leaders are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

There is a strong culture of care in the school. Pupils said that they know who to go to if they have a concern or if they are feeling anxious. They know that the pastoral team will give them time to talk and help them to feel better. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, both in the local community and online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school is currently reducing from two forms of entry to one form of entry. This has caused the school to have to move from single-age to mixed-age classes. Consequently, the current curriculum maps will no longer be appropriate as the mixed-age classes transition through school. Leaders need to establish a new curriculum that takes into account the end points for mixed-age classes.
- Historically, provision for some pupils with SEND has not been strong. As a result, pupils' achievement and their behaviour has been a concern and some parents have been unhappy with how their children have been supported. The recent improvements made by the new SENCo, with support from trust leaders, should continue so that the systems that are now in place become firmly embedded.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Windmill Hill Primary School, to be good in November 2013.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	145373
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10227612
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	318
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Katy Davison
Head of school	Simon Plant
Website	www.windmillhill.sheffield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Windmill Hill Primary School converted to become an academy in February 2018. When its predecessor school, Windmill Hill Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- The head of school has been in position since September 2020.
- The school is part of the Steel City Schools Partnership.
- The school does not use an alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders. This has been taken into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the head of school, two of the assistant headteachers, the SENCo and curriculum leaders.

- The inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair. He also spoke with four representatives from the trust, including the chief executive officer.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. He also observed adults listening to pupils read.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were checked. This included checks on the single central register, staff training and safeguarding records. The inspector also talked to the designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspector discussed the school's records on attendance and behaviour with the head of school and the learning mentor.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtime. He also met with two groups of pupils.
- The inspector looked at the school's self-evaluation document and improvement plans.
- The inspector talked informally with pupils in lessons and at breaktimes, and took into account the 16 responses to Ofsted's online pupils' survey.
- The inspector took into account 61 responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector met with staff and took into account the 21 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.

Inspection team

Simon McCarthy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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