

Inspection of Willow Wood Community Primary School

Redcar Road, Red House, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR5 5AU

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at Willow Wood Community Primary School. Leaders are determined that every child will achieve. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the help that they need to keep up with their peers. All staff share the vision of 'inspire, believe, challenge and achieve'.

Behaviour in school is exceptional. Lessons and playtimes are calm and orderly. Staff have high expectations and are strong role models. They know pupils and their families well. Pupils of all ages learn to understand their own feelings and those of others. Consequently, the school is a happy and welcoming place. Pupils feel safe. They know that staff will listen and help them if they are worried. Bullying is extremely rare, and staff are quick to deal with any incidents if they happen.

Leaders ensure that pupils are ready to learn. The popular breakfast club provides a great start to the day. Pupils receive support from trained staff if they are anxious. They learn how to stay healthy and safe, including online. Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs and activities.

Pupils work hard in lessons and remember what they have learned. They soon learn to read and write. Some pupils do not practise their reading at home. Leaders have plans to provide further support for these pupils.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have raised expectations about what pupils can achieve. All staff and governors share these high expectations. All staff and governors receive highly effective training and support. As a result, staff have considerable expertise. Governors provide strong strategic oversight. Together, they have improved outcomes for pupils.

Leaders have developed a broad curriculum with clear plans for each subject. Teachers have strong subject knowledge because they have effective support from subject leaders. Teachers know what content they need to deliver. They check pupils' understanding throughout lessons. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind get immediate support. Pupils have a thorough understanding of what they have learned. For example, younger pupils can explain why bubble wrap would protect Humpty Dumpty. They use scientific terms such as 'flexibility', 'air pockets' and 'absorb'. Older pupils describe how their study of colour mixes and pastels enables them to create pictures in the style of van Gogh.

Pupils with SEND keep up with their peers and achieve well. This is because leaders develop effective support plans and make regular checks on provision. Leaders work closely with parents and external agencies to support pupils with SEND. In lessons, staff deliberately repeat key information and provide extra advice and feedback.

Leaders prioritise reading. They have implemented a phonics programme that starts in Reception class. Staff are well trained and know the programme well. Pupils practise the sounds they learn by writing them. They read books that match the sounds they know. Pupils who need it receive extra support in lessons and in additional phonics sessions. As a result, most pupils are fluent readers by the time they leave key stage 1. Pupils enjoy the wide range of stories and poems they hear in class. However, some pupils do not read at home. This slows further progress. Leaders know this. They have plans to introduce even more reading opportunities and support at school.

Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons. Staff have strong subject knowledge. The curriculum provides lots of opportunities for pupils to revisit key learning. Pupils are confident in attempting tricky problems. They use mathematical vocabulary to discuss their approach. Some pupils struggled with home learning through the COVID-19 lockdowns. They are catching up quickly.

Provision for pupils' personal development is strong. Leaders have developed an effective approach to managing pupils' behaviour. All staff follow this approach. From the moment children start at the school, they learn how to follow routines. They take responsibility for their actions. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness. They learn about differing cultures and world views through lessons and assemblies. They take part in charity work. Pupils learn about different careers. They speak with people from different professions, including chatting online to an astronaut. Most pupils value their education and attend school regularly.

Children are quick to settle into the early years. Staff work closely with parents and understand the needs of each child. The curriculum is well designed and sequenced. Staff reinforce key learning and vocabulary throughout all activities. They create activities which stimulate children's conversation. Leaders have designed an outdoor area which enhances all areas of children's learning. Children in the Nursery class often play and learn outdoors with the Reception class. Nursery children benefit from this because the older children are strong role models. Children are well prepared for their move to key stage 1.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure strong safeguarding processes. All staff are well trained to identify issues that might cause concern. The processes for reporting and recording concerns are robust. Leaders are prompt with their actions. They work closely with parents and with external agencies. Leaders provide a lot of support to families, but they are not afraid to challenge when necessary.

Governors know the school well. They make every effort to hear from stakeholders. They make regular checks on safeguarding procedures, including those related to attendance and behaviour. As a result, governors provide effective oversight of safeguarding.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not read at home. The support these pupils receive at school ensures that they learn to read. However, they do not develop a love of reading that prepares them fully for the rigours of secondary education. Leaders should implement their plans to further develop provision for reading, so that all pupils have similar opportunities to share and enjoy books with adults.

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.

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	108783
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10257063
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	245
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Paul Stewart
Headteacher	Lindsay Robertson
Website	www.willowwoodprimary.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative education provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The lead inspector met with governors, including an online meeting with the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also held conversations with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders about provision for pupils with SEND and considered relevant documentation and practice.

- Inspectors spoke with teaching and support staff and considered responses to Ofsted’s staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors met with pupils throughout the inspection, both formally and informally, during breaktimes and in lessons.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art and science. Inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, listened to pupils read, talked with pupils and looked at pupils’ work. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning in other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the content of governing body minutes and other documentation, including reports from local authority officers.
- To evaluate the school’s management of safeguarding, inspectors considered a range of relevant school policies, and examined the single central record and the school’s procedure for the safer recruitment of staff. Inspectors spoke with leaders about safeguarding procedures. Inspectors also spoke with staff, governors and pupils to check their views and understanding of safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire, and spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors considered pupils’ behaviour in and outside lessons. Inspectors also considered school behaviour records and spoke with pupils about behaviour.

Inspection team

Ian Dawson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Dominic Brown

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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