

Inspection of Willow Tree Primary School

Priors Farm Lane, Northolt, Middlesex UB5 5FE

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly and inclusive school. Staff know pupils and their families well. They look after pupils with a great sense of care and make sure that they feel safe. Pupils also confirmed that there are trusted adults they can talk to if they have a problem. Staff encourage pupils to share their opinions and to respect each other's views.

Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils. Children in early years get off to a strong start. This lays the foundations for realising the school's motto of 'Inspiring learners for life'. Leaders and staff work together to ensure that all pupils achieve well. Pupils enjoy learning because they study a rich curriculum. This year, leaders have paid more attention to developing the curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics. Overall, pupils gain and remember knowledge securely across a range of subjects.

Pupils value the range of clubs and educational trips on offer. Activities such as singing assemblies and learning to play instruments, such as the guitar, violin and piano, give pupils opportunities to broaden their interests. Pupils are proud that the school's choir has performed at the Royal Albert Hall.

Pupils' behaviour is mostly good. Adults deal with any occasional incidents of bullying effectively.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. Subject leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge and skills that they want pupils to acquire. The curriculum is clearly sequenced so that pupils' knowledge builds up step by step, from early years to Year 6.

Through the training and guidance that leaders provide, teachers generally have the expertise to teach subjects effectively. They introduce important subject knowledge with clarity and precision. They work hard to identify and address common misconceptions.

Teachers use assessment well to check pupils' knowledge and to address any gaps before moving on to something new. However, in some subjects other than English and mathematics, leaders have not made clear how teachers should develop pupils' deeper conceptual understanding. As a result, pupils' progress through the curriculum is not as strong.

Provision for pupils who attend the additional specialist resource provision (ARP) is particularly strong. Staff have detailed knowledge of individual pupils and deliver a curriculum that is ambitious and meets their needs well. Teachers are skilled in selecting and using adaptations to help pupils to understand what is being taught. For example, use of visual aids and pictures helped teachers to model to pupils the steps required to make bruschetta, using appropriate ingredients.

Leaders have set out a clear approach to teaching early reading. Skilled teachers deliver the school's phonics programme, which starts in the early years. Pupils read and are read to daily in school. They practise their reading with books matched to the sounds they have learned. Pupils who fall behind are identified, and are helped to catch up quickly. This includes the many pupils joining the school at the very earliest stage of speaking English as an additional language. Children in early years enjoy listening to and joining in with stories, songs and rhymes. Leaders' and staff's well-focused work on early reading ensures that pupils become increasingly fluent, confident readers as they move through the school.

Children in early years develop confidence and independence through a range of well-planned activities. Supportive adults help children to develop a sense of space and to move safely when using large play equipment. Older pupils and staff also have warm, positive working relationships. Overall, the school has a calm and orderly atmosphere. Some pupils need help to improve their behaviour, attendance or punctuality. Leaders and staff support them effectively so that their behaviour and attendance improve over time.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are swiftly identified. Leaders ensure that these pupils get the help that they need, including, for example, through the provision of additional resources and external specialist support. For example, in the early years, specialist input for speech and language is provided for children who need it. Additional support enables pupils with SEND to access learning alongside their peers. This also includes pupils from the ARP, who join their peers for many lessons.

The school offers a range of opportunities beyond the academic. Leaders develop pupils' understanding of different faiths, cultures and beliefs. The relationships and sex education and health education curriculum is well planned and taught, taking the context of the pupils into account. Pupils join many extra-curricular clubs. The opportunities for pupils to play a musical instrument and to take part in sports are part of leaders' approach to deepening pupils' cultural development. Leaders and staff strive to create a community of responsible, compassionate young citizens.

Staff said that leaders are considerate and respectful of them. They value the range of support from leaders and governors to manage their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise pupils' safety and welfare. They provide regular training to ensure that staff are alert to any signs that pupils might be at risk. Staff report concerns promptly, and leaders respond diligently. Leaders work with external agencies and with families as appropriate to support and meet pupils' needs. Leaders are not afraid to challenge if they think more should be done.

Leaders make sure that applicants are vetted for their suitability to work with pupils in school.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in different situations. For example, they learn about how not to make friends with strangers online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in some foundation subjects is not implemented with the same ambition and rigour as it is, for example, in the core subjects. As a result, in these subjects, pupils do not make as much progress through the curriculum as they do in the strongest subjects. Leaders should ensure that all subjects across the curriculum are taught with the same ambition and rigour, providing further subject-specific professional development opportunities for teachers where appropriate.

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	101902
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	10255393
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	512
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Hood
Headteachers	Jaspreet Cheema and Marion Conway
Website	www.willow-treeprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has set up an ARP, which currently educates 24 pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- For the past 12 months, the school has been led by two co-headteachers, who were previously the deputy headteachers.

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 the inspection, inspectors met with the co-headteachers, other senior leaders, subject leaders and a range of other staff.

- The lead inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. He also met remotely with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, design and technology and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, spoke with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning. They visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, inspectors reviewed school policies, procedures and records. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke with staff, governors and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors met with staff and considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Nasim Butt, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Atter	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Colenso	Ofsted Inspector

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