

Inspection of Willand School

Gables Road, Willand, Cullompton, Devon EX15 2QL

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 January 2024

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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Willand school is inclusive and welcoming. It provides a safe and happy environment for pupils. Pupils, including those in Reception Year, talk positively and confidently about the school and their learning. Many pupils say that one of the best things about the school is the supportive and kind staff. Pupils know that if they have a worry there are adults that they can talk to.

There are high expectations for behaviour. Most pupils know and understand the expectations. In the early years, children quickly learn the rules and routines. They develop increasing independence through their learning and play. Pupils recognise how the school rules, 'be respectful, be safe and be ready', help them to know how to behave.

There is a strong sense of community at the school. Parents and carers appreciate the dedication and care their children receive from school staff.

There are a range of leadership opportunities for pupils. These include librarians, sports leaders, school council and eco-council. These opportunities help pupils to learn about responsibility and to be active citizens in the school. Pupils enjoy a range of trips and visits, such as the Year 6 residential trip. These experiences beyond the classroom help to extend and enrich pupils' learning.

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

The school is ambitious and committed to providing a high-quality education for all pupils. The school has considered the essential knowledge it wants pupils to know and remember. In many subjects, such as mathematics and science, the curriculum provides opportunities to revisit prior learning. This helps pupils to build on what they already know and have learned. Consequently, in these subjects, pupils' knowledge and understanding is secure.

Since the last inspection, there has been a strong focus on reading. Pupils enjoy reading. Older pupils talk confidently about books that they have read and enjoyed. They recommend books and authors to their peers. There is a structured reading curriculum that starts in the early years. Staff are well trained to teach the phonics curriculum. As a result, pupils are quick to apply the strategies they have learned to help them when reading. However, sometimes misconceptions are not addressed quickly and when this occurs, some pupils do not catch up swiftly enough. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they know and have learned. This helps them to read with increasing fluency and confidence.

In a few subjects, the school is still reviewing the curriculum and how it assesses pupils' learning. In these subjects, curriculum content is not yet precise. As a result, sometimes teaching does not check with precision what pupils know and remember. This means that pupils' misconceptions are not always addressed in a timely way.

The school has developed a new writing curriculum to support the quality of pupils' written work. This is not yet embedded. Consequently, expectations for the quality of written work and handwriting are inconsistent across year groups. Nonetheless, key stage 2 pupils are enjoying the recent introduction of writing in pen.

There are robust processes in place to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Support plans for individual pupils are clear and identify the steps in learning that pupils need to take. However, these are not always reflected well in provision in class. When this occurs, learning is not adapted sufficiently well and as a result, some pupils with SEND have gaps in their learning.

Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Interruptions to learning are rare. However, a small minority of pupils do not behave well. Staff provide appropriate guidance to pupils who need additional support to behave well.

The school's values of tolerance, equality, respect, resilience and trust thread through the school and help build pupils' moral and social development. The school has a strong focus on equality and anti-discrimination. Pupils understand differences and the importance of treating one another fairly. Pupils learn about the difference between right and wrong.

The school offers a range of clubs. However, some pupils and parents would like there to be more clubs available.

Staff are very positive about the school. Teachers, including those in the early stages of their careers, value the support they receive from leaders. Staff appreciate the thought and consideration of their workloads and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not checked that some areas of the curriculum are implemented as planned. As a result, in some subjects, the curriculum does not have the intended impact. For example, assessment is not used effectively. This means that pupils' understanding is less secure. The school must strengthen subject leadership to better support staff, including in the use of assessment, so that pupils know more and remember more in the longer term.
- In some subjects, teaching does not make effective use of information about pupils with SEND. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not develop their knowledge well enough across all subjects. The school must ensure that the information about pupils with SEND is used consistently well to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	113114
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10297893
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	377
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joanna Jacobs
Headteacher	Naomi Tottle
Website	www.willand.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 November 2021

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up the position in January 2024.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They held meetings with the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, staff and governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in writing, science and art.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the view of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. They also spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views of the school.

Inspection team

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