



Willow Tree Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101902
LEA Ealing LEA
Inspection number 276613
Inspection dates 8 November 2005 to 9 November 2005
Reporting inspector David Marshall AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Priors Farm Lane
School category	Community		Northolt
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Middlesex UB5 5DY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02088454181
Number on roll	715	Fax number	02088452253
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr M Mallam
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2000	Headteacher	Mr Simon Adams

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by 4 inspectors.

Description of the school

Willow Tree is a well above average size large primary school. The school is in an area of social deprivation. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average. Of the full-time pupils slightly more than half have a non-white ethnic heritage. 170 pupils are refugees or asylum seekers, which is more than is usually found in primary schools. Currently over a third of the children are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the national average. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also well above the national average. An above average number of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. There are 13 looked after children in the school. In the last two years, 12 teachers have left the school and 9 have joined.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The inspection team and the school agree that Willow Tree provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils, and it is getting better. It provides satisfactory value for money and has shown sound improvement since the time of the last inspection. Pupils' progress and standards are satisfactory and improving. In order to raise pupils' achievements good systems have been introduced that mean strengths and weaknesses are now quickly identified and these are enabling the necessary better progress. Teaching and learning are sound overall but there are variations across the school. The use of assessment to make learning activities appropriate for all pupils has improved. Lessons now are generally well planned and teachers aim to make learning fun. The expectations of pupils' behaviour, and the pace of lessons, are good in most classes. However, in a small minority of lessons the teaching, though satisfactory, does not challenge and extend the pupils to the same extent. The organisation of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, and these young children make a sound start to their education. Pupils throughout the school are cared for well, and all of them feel safe and secure. Although below the national average, attendance has improved thanks to the school's effective procedures. Provision for those pupils with special educational needs, and for those with English as additional language, is good. The curriculum covers all subjects and is enhanced by a good range of additional activities. Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The head teacher provides good leadership and is ably supported by the senior leadership team and all staff. Staff who are new to the school are supported well. Many governors are new to their role and they are beginning to give constructive support to the school. The school's capacity to improve is good.

What the school should do to improve further

* Use the results of the improved assessment systems to continue to inform decisions about how to raise levels of achievement in English, mathematics and science.* Ensure that the school's systems for sharing best practice are implemented effectively to make teaching consistently good across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Most children enter the school with standards that are below expectations for their age. Due to the effective organisation they are making sound progress in the Foundation Stage. Much importance is given to developing personal and social skills and this means children settle in quickly and make a sound start to their education. In Years 1 and 2 much emphasis is put on developing speaking and listening skills and this has a positive impact on the standards pupils reach in reading and writing. As a result, pupils' standards reached this year have improved on those attained in 2004. Standards in mathematics are lower than in English but new arrangements for pupils to have individual improvement targets this term are already beginning to raise their

levels of achievement. National test results in Year 6 in 2005 were in line with those in 2004, and the progress of these pupils from their Year 2 tests is in line with the national average. Pupils' standards are still not high enough but are improving now as there are secure systems in place to track their progress. These identify where additional teaching will be most beneficial. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their creative, sporting and musical talents through the extensive range of additional activities. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. They are well supported and have access to a curriculum that helps them all to achieve well. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress through the effective additional support they are given.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They are friendly, polite and confident. Pupils enjoy their lessons and get on well with each other. They understand how they can improve - as one school council member said - We have to get better at maths. They value their school, enjoy the many opportunities that it has to offer them and speak enthusiastically about it. As one parent wrote - They (pupils) feel a sense of achievement in everything they do and talk about the importance of wanting to learn. Pupils feel safe at school and have confidence in knowing adults whom they can call upon for help if they need it. Although attendance is unsatisfactory, it has improved and the school has good systems in place to further encourage this. Pupils are developing a sound understanding of how to stay healthy, by eating sensibly and enjoying physical activities. Pupils with learning disabilities speak enthusiastically of the extra help that they receive. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They are respectful of each other and follow the clear school rules. They are keen to take responsibility both for classroom tasks and by taking on school roles, like becoming members of the school council, being PE Monitors or helping younger pupils in the playground. Pupils participate in a good range of activities that help them to understand about the lives of people from different cultures. Pupils' contribution to the community is good. In addition to fund raising for different charities, they participate in many activities that have strong community links. They are developing the necessary skills well that will enable them to settle into their next stage of education and to become good citizens in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's view that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Some good teaching was seen. In a good Year 5 mathematics lesson pupils were encouraged to explain how they worked out and solved problems which they were set. They clarified their thoughts and learnt from each other that there is more than one way to solve a problem. In other good lessons, the teachers' good questioning

really encouraged pupils' independent thinking. For example in Year 2, good teaching allowed pupils time to gather their thoughts in order to answer searching questions and to make their own independent decisions. This again encouraged pupils to solve things for themselves. Through a thorough use of assessment the school puts a good emphasis on providing small group support for pupils with learning difficulties to enable them to have the extra help they need. These groups work well and are raising standards. This approach however is not consistent throughout the school. Occasionally whole class lessons do not cater sufficiently for different pupils' ways of learning. In a few lessons the same work sheets were given to pupils of very different abilities, and as a result they lacked pace and pupils showed a lack of interest in the topics being covered. Pupils are set individual targets to aim for in literacy and mathematics. The majority understand these and are aware of what they need to aim for. Most teachers clearly highlight where pupils need to improve in their learning, but there are pieces of work which are not marked. Consequently some pupils are unsure about how to build on their achievements. The needs of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are met effectively. These pupils enjoy their lessons and show a positive attitude to their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Pupils now have access to lessons which provides coverage of all subjects, but the topics covered are not always those that are most relevant to, or provide most interest for, the pupils in this school. All staff are currently involved in revising the curriculum in order to match tasks better to pupils' abilities and interests and to promote further enjoyment through an approach based on selected topics. Resources, especially computers, are used well for a wide range of activities that keep pupils' interest high and promote good progress in research skills. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health development is good and pupils' safety is well supported by programmes such as the Second Step that promotes self control and respect in them all. Pupils have access to and readily participate in a good range of interesting clubs which adds to their enjoyment of learning and helps them to develop healthy lifestyles. As the members themselves confirmed, the work of the active School Council helps pupils to learn about rules and respect and working together. Visits to a wide variety of places, the well organised language weeks, and visitors such as theatre groups enrich pupils' cultural experiences well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care provided for all pupils is good. All adults show a high level of commitment in promoting the health and safety of the pupils. The accommodation and grounds are regularly checked so that pupils can work and play in a safe environment. Child protection procedures are clear, known and understood by all members of staff. Individual progress is tracked well in all classes but very occasionally information collected on individuals is not used as effectively as it could be in whole

class lessons. Individual education plans are used well and enable pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress. Through their association, parents raise money and support the school well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school judges leadership and management to be good. The inspectors do not agree with this and judge leadership and management as satisfactory overall. The leadership of the head teacher is good. Since his appointment he has successfully developed the senior leadership team so that there is now a strong learning ethos which is helping the school to improve. Year leaders and phase leaders have been effective in implementing systems to monitor how well pupils are doing. These have been developed skilfully and as a result, pupils are regularly tested in English and mathematics and standards are now beginning to improve. The head teacher and his senior team have recognised the inconsistency in the quality of teaching throughout the school. They have started to address these variations and have bought in external consultants who have worked with staff in the lower part of the school. This has resulted in standards at the end of Year 2 improving this year. This focus is now on the upper part of the school because standards are still too low at the end of Year 6. The school is developing a culture of monitoring and self-evaluation and subject leaders use assessment information well to help lesson planning. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Literacy has been the main focus in the past and standards have improved and the emphasis has now been switched to mathematics. The governing body, although relatively new, have a sound idea of what the school needs to do to improve and all statutory requirements are met. They are becoming more involved in strategic planning in order to give further constructive support to the leadership team. The school works hard to involve parents and the community more in understanding the work of the school. The new Weekly Home Learning letters are very good because they show parents and carers what their children are learning. Regular newsletters help parents to feel involved in the school and able to comment on its work. The school has worked hard to ensure that money is spent wisely to provide the very good range of resources for pupils. There is a commitment from all staff to improve their performance and the progress made by all pupils. The school's capacity to improve is good.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and telling us all about yourselves. We enjoyed our time with you and would now like to tell you what we found out on our visit.

You do well and most of you try hard with your work. You are especially lucky to have so many different activities, both during and after school, and we saw how keen you are to take part in them. Many of you told us how much you enjoy being at school. We thought that most of you behaved well and we liked the way you make everyone who comes to your school so welcome. Most of you understand that you are making good progress and how to improve your work further. There are a few things that we have asked the school to improve and these are for teachers to: * make sure you are all given the right things to do in all your lessons to get better, and * share their teaching skills in different classes across the school.

You must continue to listen carefully and pay attention to the things they say. Then you will all do even better in your learning. We wish you well in the future.