

# Willaston Primary School

Derwent Close, Willaston, Nantwich, Cheshire , CW5 6QQ

**Inspection dates** 25–26 September 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress, from their different starting points, to reach standards that are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' reading skills are well-above average. They read fluently and with great relish because reading skills are emphasised from an early age and taught well throughout the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. They are excited and curious about learning because of the many well-prepared activities that include lots of opportunities to read and write.
- The quality of teaching is good. Some teaching is outstanding and enables pupils to make rapid progress.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. They enjoy lessons and want to learn. Pupils are confident and keen to speak with visitors and to share their views.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance and are keenly aware of what is needed to improve the school further. They have tackled weaknesses in the quality of teaching successfully and with determination and so the dip in pupils' attainment and progress in 2012 has been successfully reversed.
- Governors are very involved in school life. They challenge the school's performance, know what is happening in school and are fully involved in driving improvement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing and mathematics are not as high as in reading because pupils' basic skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar and in number are not always secure. This holds back the achievement of a small proportion of pupils when they are in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is not consistently good or better in all classes. More-able pupils are not always given work in mathematics that is sufficiently demanding, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Not enough teaching enables pupils to think for themselves and become independent and self-reliant.
- Although expectations for pupils' achievement are high, very challenging targets are not routinely used when teachers plan pupils' work.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed parts of 14 lessons; four of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- An inspector listened to pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2 read.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, including the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, the special educational needs leader, two members of the governing body and groups of pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 61 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), the school's questionnaire completed by parents and letters sent to the inspection team. The questionnaires completed by 11 staff were also taken into account.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and reviewed various documents including the school's view of its effectiveness, tracking of pupils' progress, pupils' books and records of governing body meetings and the performance management of staff. Documents relating to behaviour, safety and safeguarding were also considered.

## Inspection team

Marie Cordey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Halford

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those who are looked after.)
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- Before- and after-school care is provided on site which is inspected separately by Ofsted.
- Since the previous inspection the school has experienced significant staffing changes. Several new teachers have joined the school and a new headteacher has been appointed.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of consistently good and outstanding teaching in order to improve pupils' achievement further, especially in writing and mathematics, by:
  - ensuring that the basic skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar and number are planned for and taught securely in all classes, and that any gaps in these basic skills for older pupils are quickly identified and swiftly improved
  - consistently providing more demanding work for more-able pupils in mathematics, especially in Key Stage 2
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and the high-level skills of thought and reflection so that become self-reliant and lifelong learners.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
  - ensuring that very challenging targets are set, that are known by pupils and used by teachers when planning lessons, to enable pupils to achieve the highest standards.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement from their typically average starting points is good. They make better than expected progress across Key Stages 1 and 2. In some classes pupils make rapid progress because the quality of teaching they receive is outstanding.
- In 2012, pupils' standards dipped to a little above average which represented expected progress from pupils' starting points. Staffing difficulties, including temporary appointments, affected the continuity and pace of pupils' learning. Leaders acted swiftly and sensitively to improve the quality of teaching and to provide tailored support for pupils identified to be making expected rather than good progress. These successful strategies, accelerated pupils' progress and standards rose to their previous above average level.
- In Key Stage 2, although above average, standards in writing and mathematics are not as high as those in reading. A small proportion of pupils have not grasped basic mathematical skills and this both frustrates them and prevents them tackling investigations and solving mathematical problems successfully. Similarly, a few pupils' limited knowledge of basic skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar hampers their writing skills.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 rose significantly this year, particularly for the more-able pupils. Good and better teaching and the determined leadership and expectations of the headteacher contributed to this improvement which is also evident in the progress and above-average attainment of pupils currently in Key Stage 1.
- The well-above average results in the most recent Year 1 phonics screening test were a big improvement on the previous year. This is due to greater teacher knowledge and the improved teaching of the sounds that letters make.
- The teaching of reading has improved significantly in the past year and is thorough and deliberately planned to match pupils' interests. A joy in reading is celebrated throughout the school and has led to improvements in pupils' standards in reading and writing too.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. The school provides class support through the teacher and teaching assistants, closely matching work to the individual needs of pupils, while at the same time encouraging them to be independent and to persevere with their work.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. Gaps in attainment and progress have narrowed over time and their standards and progress are in line with other pupils in the school. This is because of better teaching specifically focused on the achievement of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- Although more-able pupils make good progress and attain standards that are above average overall, their achievement is not as secure in mathematics. This is beginning to change because of a school's focus on improving the teaching of mathematics so that it is more challenging and targeted to enable pupils to achieve at the highest levels. This has successfully raised standards in mathematics in Year 2 for the more-able. Current work in Years 5 and 6 demonstrates improvement and the proportion of pupils working at Level 6 is increasing.
- Pupils enjoy being challenged by their teachers to succeed, but this is not consistent in all lessons. In an outstanding lesson in Year 2, pupils were not only invigorated by their teacher's introduction to characters in stories, they knew exactly what each of them needed to do in order to achieve the best work possible. This is because they develop confidence and self-reliance and are keen to explore and research different possibilities. High-level skills in thinking and analysis are matched by a bedrock of extensive knowledge in such lessons.
- When pupils are asked about their favourite subjects, they often reply that it is physical education. This is because it is taught by a specialist coach who very precisely and effectively teaches pupils specific skills. Pupils relish this learning and, in Year 1, for example, pupils were pleased to demonstrate forward and backward rolls as well as their rhythmic dancing skills. The use of sports funding is making a difference in improving pupils' skills and appreciation of healthy lifestyles.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from their individual starting

points. Well-planned opportunities both indoors and out encourage them to explore and learn. Children learn to link sounds and letters quickly because they are taught the basic skills of reading and writing well. They then find opportunities to make words in almost every activity they participate in whether it is letters in the sand or water, for instance. They acquire early basic skills which are not always consolidated and built on throughout the school.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall and reflects pupils' good progress. In some classes it is outstanding, and so pupils make even faster progress.
- In the very best lessons pupils thrive, really enjoy learning and make better than expected progress when they are set stimulating tasks that reflect their abilities and their skills. High expectations of their achievement are realistically matched to the abilities of individual pupils who are eager to improve their standards.
- Most lessons are planned to closely match individual pupils' abilities and interests and so they learn well and make good progress. Sometimes, they become restless when they are not clear what is expected from them or when their work is too easy. Occasionally, gaps in learning, for example of the basic skills in number and spelling, punctuation and grammar, are not recognised and corrected quickly enough and so pupils are not well-equipped to progress further in their work.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and pupils are knowledgeable about how they can improve. Even the youngest pupils talk about being 'tickled pink' at the positive aspects of their work and the 'green for growth' points to help them make their work even better.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well-supported in their learning by their class teacher and knowledgeable support assistants. They are sensitively guided and helped to complete tasks and improve, while being encouraged to think for themselves and work things out. Occasionally, pupils are not encouraged to be independent when teaching assistants do too much for them.
- More-able pupils are typically given work that challenges them to reach their full potential, especially in reading. Attainment at the highest levels in mathematics is rising because of a systematic focus on 'stretching' pupils' knowledge and skills in lessons and in the level of work set. However, this is not yet consistent practice in all classes.
- Children enjoy learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are warmly welcomed and because there are so many opportunities for them to excite their curiosity and desire to play and learn. They make consistently good progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils are unfailingly polite and articulate. They are interesting and interested young people. Pupils are particularly proud of the displays in their school and point out the 'communi-tree' in the hall to demonstrate the many ways in which they help each other and their community. 'Grandma's assemblies', 'world worm charming' and community choir concerts reflect this and very attractive school and outdoor areas provide invigorating surroundings for pupils to develop and learn.
- Pupils are especially keen to tell visitors about how to be fit and healthy and enjoy the many after-school activities, school trips and sporting and musical clubs that are on offer. Pupils' attendance and participation in 'Street dance', 'Premier Sports' and football reflect their enthusiasm and commitment to sport as well as their good cultural development.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is good. They are helpful and courteous to each other and adults. They have positive attitudes and are keen to work to the best of their ability. Occasionally, they become restless in lessons where they are not clear exactly what is expected from them or instructions are not helpful or clear enough.

- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying as well as what to do about it. They say they feel safe and their parents agree. A small number of parents have concerns about behaviour and bullying and the school is keen to work with any parents who have any worries.
- Pupils are pleasant, fair and have a well-developed sense of what is right and what is wrong. This is reflected in their good spiritual, moral and social development.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn happily and are keen to talk about what they are doing. They are encouraged to 'have a go' and become more independent as a result.
- Pupils' attendance is above average and pupils enjoy coming to school. Their parents support the school's expectations of attendance and ensure that their children attend well and arrive at school on time.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- Leaders and governors know their school well. They are knowledgeable about its strengths and keenly aware of what is needed to improve it further. Pupils' achievement is tracked rigorously by senior leaders and questioned closely by the governing body. Consequently, the dip in achievement in 2012 and the achievement of more-able pupils in mathematics were signalled as improvement areas. Swift and effective action was taken to raise standards.
- Leaders and governors have successfully tackled weaknesses in the quality of teaching with determination. As a result, standards have returned to their previous above average levels and pupils achieve well. Leaders acknowledge there is more work to do to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistency good or better in all classes to improve pupils' achievement further.
- The headteacher is developing systems to set very clear challenging targets throughout the school based on pupils making at least better than expected progress. This will ensure greater consistency and make it much clearer to every member of staff, and to pupils, exactly what pupils are expected to achieve throughout Years 1 to 6.
- Performance management arrangements are rigorous and clearly linked to teachers' pay progression. They are squarely centred on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. Professional development is based on school priorities and performance management targets and staff welcome the support and challenge to enable them to improve their skills further. There is a real sense of staff sharing a drive for improvement and improving pupils' outcomes.
- The curriculum is typically closely matched to pupils' abilities so that they have equal opportunity to succeed. Pupils' basic skills in writing and in number are not consistently addressed to ensure that a small proportion of pupils can develop their knowledge and skills further, and a few more-able pupils in mathematics are not given work that is sufficiently challenging so that they achieve their potential in mathematics.
- The local authority has helped the school to identify areas for improvement while recognising what it does well. It provides 'light touch' support and challenge to help the school to move forward.
- The vast majority of parents are happy with the school and would recommend it to others. A small number have some concerns and leaders and governors are aware of this and plan to work more closely with any parents who are worried.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governance of the school is good. Governors have reconstituted the governing body to provide more challenge and accountability to the school. Much training has taken place to ensure that the governing body is much more knowledgeable about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching in all classes. Governors take their responsibilities very seriously and participate in regular 'away days' to increase their knowledge and skills. Consequently, they are in a position to question the school's performance and set targets for improvement. Governors are instrumental in linking performance management targets to teachers' pay. The governing body meets statutory requirements regarding the safeguarding of pupils and updates their training, including advanced training, on a regular basis. Pupil premium funding is discussed thoroughly and funds are specifically and carefully distributed to maximise its

effect. This includes opportunities for pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding to take part in educational trips, sports and musical activities and after-school clubs at a reduced rate. Finances are managed astutely and are closely directed at pupils' achievement.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111076
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	426236

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jenny Moran
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Grehan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 October 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01270 661528
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