

Written Report

CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

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| Name of School: | Willowbrook Primary School |
| School Address: | Roborough Green, Thurnby Lodge, Leicester |
| Hub School: | Rushey Mead |

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|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Telephone Number: | 0116 2413756 |
| Email address: | office@willowbrook.leicester.sch.uk |

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| Unique Reference Number: | 120056 |
| Local Authority: | Leicester |
| Type of School: | Primary |
| School Category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 3-11 |
| Number on roll: | 407 |
| Head teacher/Principal: | Sarah Ridley |

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| Date of last Ofsted inspection: | 29-30 March 2011 |
| Grade at last Ofsted inspection: | Outstanding |

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| Date of Quality Assurance Review: | 3-4 February 2015 |
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QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES

School Improvement Strategies: Outstanding

Achievement is: Outstanding

Quality of Teaching: Outstanding

Area of Excellent Practice:

Book-led learning Confirmed

Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that Willowbrook School appears to be firmly within the Outstanding grade as judged by Ofsted in the school's previous Ofsted report of March 2011.

Information about the school

- The school is larger than the average primary school.
- The school has a nursery on site.
- The school has fewer girls than average.
- A much larger proportion of pupils than would be expected nationally receive the pupil premium.
- About three-quarters of pupils are White British with the others coming from a variety of other backgrounds.
- An increasing number of pupils speak English as an additional language although the number remains quite small.
- The school has more pupils with statements and with special educational needs or disabilities than average.
- More pupils join the school at points other than Reception than would be expected nationally.

School Improvement Strategies

What Went Well

- There is a powerful culture of striving to improve in all areas of the school and a complete lack of complacency. The school embraces both internal and external evaluations of its work and actively seeks out new ideas and research which it thinks will have a positive impact on pupils' attainment.
- The school uses data very effectively to help inform decisions about how well it is doing and to plan next steps. There are extremely robust procedures to check the accuracy of the data such as internal and external moderations and standardisation.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching is very effective. Where teaching is less effective, support is readily available and takes many forms, including coaching and mentoring.
- Support for the Newly Qualified Teachers is strong and helps them to deliver very effective lessons.
- The School Improvement Plan is accurate and clearly focused on standards. All staff and governors contribute to and share responsibility and accountability for the improvement plan.
- Middle leaders (phase leaders) play an active and crucial role, both in developing new ideas and in monitoring and evaluating what is already in place. Time and support is given to leaders to monitor and evaluate the provision in their areas which means that any problems are quickly identified and rectified.
- Staff have a passion for their subject or area and this infectious enthusiasm drives the ambition to 'be the best'. All staff have an important role in developing new ideas and their views are actively sought.
- The school has a strong track record of improvements and so standards in all subjects have risen with the focus on the new curriculum.
- Training of staff is varied and effective. For example, all staff have had a wide range of training in behaviour management and as a consequence behaviour in the school is excellent.
- Teaching assistants are fully involved in any training and often contribute to this.
- Pupils are involved in decisions about the school. For example, the school council wanted more mathematics and this was agreed.

Even better if...

- ...the school continued to develop its use of research to inform changes to teaching and learning.

Pupil Achievement

- Most pupils enter the school in the Nursery and Reception with skills and knowledge that are well below those typical for their age, especially in areas such as communication, language, literacy and mathematics. They make good progress because the school has a well-developed curriculum which helps them to focus on these important areas. In 2014, pupils made good progress but still entered Year 1 with skills below the level that would be expected. The current predictions are that this figure will increase significantly in 2015.
- During Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make accelerated progress. Those who are disadvantaged have very effective help and those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEN/D) also make good progress because of the support they receive in class and outside. Pupils make particularly good progress in writing and achieve levels which are significantly above the nationally expected level. The trend over the past three years has been upward.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, pupils achieved significantly better than would be expected nationally in all subjects. This was a big improvement on 2013. In writing, 96% of pupils achieved at least Level 4. Girls did better than boys except at Level 5+ in mathematics.
- All groups of pupils made outstanding progress and, in particular, disadvantaged pupils did better than would be expected nationally. The proportions of pupils making expected and more than expected progress were extremely high. 100% of pupils made 2 levels of progress in writing and 98% did so in mathematics. In all three subjects pupils made more progress than would be expected nationally.
- Pupils currently in school are continuing to make exceptional progress. The school's very robust tracking shows that pupils in all year groups are on track to achieve extremely well. The school has introduced new assessment systems to meet the demands of the new curriculum and is confident that pupils are meeting and exceeding the levels expected of them.
- The school is aware that, on occasions, small numbers of the most able pupils, those who speak English as an additional language and those who are not disadvantaged do not perform as well as they might and has plans to ensure that this does not become a trend over time.

Quality of teaching

The school selected lessons to be observed to cover a range of ages and subjects.

What Went Well

- There is a high level of engagement in lessons; pupils enjoy the well-chosen activities. For example, in several mathematics lessons, pupils loved real-life problems such as finding out for the caretaker how much fencing was needed to go around the perimeter of the school.
- There is a calm, working atmosphere in classes. Pupils behave extremely well and get on quickly with their work. Pace is very good with almost no wasted time.

- Pupils enjoy a range of different activities, carefully selected by the teacher to ensure that they appeal to the different pupils in class.
- Resources are specifically chosen to meet the needs of pupils. For example, in one English lesson, more-able pupils researched synonyms on the computer while pupils with English as an additional language worked with pictures to develop their understanding of individual nouns.
- Pupils are very positive about their lessons, saying that, 'It is fun in all of our lessons all of the time.' Mathematics and extended writing were specifically singled out as being, 'Great fun!'
- Teaching assistants are well used, mostly to support those with additional needs. These pupils all make at least good progress, with disadvantaged pupils and those with SEN/D making particularly good progress because of the in-class support and extra interventions they receive.
- Teachers skillfully target their questions so that they help pupils to deepen their understanding.
- In the Foundation Stage, pupils are given plenty of tasks to help them to develop their social skills. A particularly effective session was seen, where the very youngest pupils had to lace beads onto a thread and were encouraged to take turns, say thank you and share.
- Pupils who join the school at times other than the usual ones make good progress in class because they are given effective support to help them catch up.

Even Better if...

- ...the school continued to widen the range of strategies to support those who have little English on arrival in school, because this group of pupils is set to increase.
- ...teachers ensured that no opportunities were missed to stretch the most-able pupils.
- ...teaching were consistently at least good in the Foundation Stage.

Quality of Area of Excellent Practice

Book-led learning

- The school decided to implement a book-led approach as it wanted to encourage pupils to read whole novels rather than extracts of books. The main focus of this work has been on Years 3 to 6.
- The school uses novels and other books as a key element for its curriculum planning. Planning in this way has been instrumental in raising achievement in reading and writing.
- Results in both areas have risen since it has been introduced in Key Stage 2. Reading and writing results at Key Stage 2 are now significantly above the national average and pupils make extremely good progress. There is a very small difference between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school.
- Pupils are able to make links between different texts, authors and genres and all subjects, including those such as science.
- The school has conducted much research into developing the use of whole books and has shared its knowledge within school and more widely with other schools. The local authority uses this school as an example of good practice and several schools have adopted the same approach with success. It has particularly helped one school, which was below floor targets, to improve. The effect on teaching and learning has been dramatic and results have improved significantly.

- The school is continuing to adapt its work in this area and to evaluate and refine its curriculum.

Partnerships

- The school has an enormously wide variety of links and partnerships which contribute in many ways to its success. A prime example of this is the work being done to support a local school which requires improvement.
- There are strong links with local teacher training centres, so the school is able to train new staff who often chose to work at the school.
- There has been some useful work done with a local secondary school to help pupils with transition to Year 7.
- The school has close links with the local authority, particularly regarding data moderation.
- The school works with national agencies such as leadership hubs.
- There are informal partnerships with other local schools to share best practice. This school often hosts visitors who come to see how well it is working with groups of pupils such as those who are disadvantaged or those with SEN/D.

This review will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.

What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?

The school does not require any further support.