
CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

Name of School:	Willowbrook Primary School
School Address:	Roborough Green, Thurnby Lodge, Leicester. LE5 2NA
Hub School:	Rushey Mead Academy

Telephone Number:	0116 2413756
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Unique Reference Number:	120056
Local Authority:	Leicester City
Type of School:	Community
School Category:	Primary
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Number on roll:	472
Head teacher/Principal:	Marie Collins (Executive headteacher: Sarah Ridley)

Date of last Ofsted inspection:	March 2011
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding

Date of Quality Assurance Review:	11 th – 12 th February 2016
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QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES¹

School Improvement Strategies:	Outstanding
Outcomes for Pupils is:	Outstanding
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment:	Outstanding
Area of Excellent Practice: Removing barriers to learning (RB2L)	Confirmed

Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that Willowbrook Primary School appears to be firmly within the Outstanding grade as judged by Ofsted in the school's previous Ofsted report 29th-30th March 2011.

¹ Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.

Information about the school

- Willowbrook is larger than the average primary school. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage that caters for children aged 3-4 years in Willowbrook Nursery, run by the governing body. Children move from this into the school's Reception classes.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils entitled to pupil premium funding is well-above average.
- Pupils represent a wide range of minority ethnic groups alongside those of White British heritage. The largest minority ethnic groups are from Indian backgrounds, with small proportions from Black African and White and Black Caribbean backgrounds.
- A small minority speaks English as an additional language, a few of whom are in the early stages of learning the language.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average.
- More pupils than usually found join or leave the school at times other than the usual starting or leaving points.

School Improvement Strategies

What Went Well

- The headteacher, together with the deputy headteacher, is highly ambitious for the school and its pupils. She provides a strong drive for improvement which is widely shared by staff at all levels. As a result of the investment that has been made in professional development, staff are united in the energy and enthusiasm with which they embrace change. The headteacher and all staff have a very clear focus on doing everything they can to ensure each pupil succeeds at Willowbrook.
- Leadership is widely distributed and opportunities to develop staff and pupils as leaders are seized upon. 'Deep and forward thinking' provides the strategic direction for this outstanding school.
- The headteacher skilfully spots leadership potential in her staff. She makes sure they have the training, coaching and leadership opportunities which help them to develop their practice.
- There are comprehensive systems in place to improve teaching skills. Because of this, individual staff needs are identified and acted on, such as by sharing best practice, coaching and mentoring, higher education links and in-school courses. Staff say that they are very pleased with the wide range of training opportunities, which help them to develop their skills, subject knowledge and ability to manage and fully support pupils in their learning.
- The school uses research to drive change as evidenced in how elements of 'Singapore Maths' have been implemented in the curriculum.
- Systems of tracking, monitoring and evaluation of performance data ensure that leaders are able to intervene rapidly to address any underperformance. Weaknesses in the school's work are systematically tackled.

- Self-evaluation is accurate and improvement plans are appropriately focused on improving learning and progress and strengthening provision. The layered approach to key documentation provides the appropriate audience with the right level of information.
- Middle leaders are extremely positive about their work. They work closely with senior leaders and each other to provide targeted support for individual teachers and pupils. The enthusiasm of all teachers is demonstrable; it enables pupils to learn exceptionally well and secure outstanding outcomes.
- There is a culture of accountability at all levels, with responsibility sitting at teacher level. There is a clear culture of peer collaboration and self-development. Teachers are encouraged to experiment and develop their own style. There is an open approach and acceptance that excellent teaching can be facilitated by different styles of teaching.
- The school environment, displays and classrooms exemplify high expectations and standards, something the pupils were proud to show the review team.
- The curriculum is planned exceptionally well to enable pupils to study a very wide range of subjects. Leaders review the curriculum periodically to ensure it is best suited to the needs of the pupils currently at Willowbrook. As a result, pupils build key skills securely and expand their interests.

Even Better If...

... the school created its own analysis of summary data which shows clearly the outstanding progress pupils make from their relative starting points whilst in Willowbrook.

Outcomes for Pupils

- Pupils make at least good progress across each of the key stages represented at Willowbrook and this culminates in pupils making outstanding progress overall.
- Most children start the Nursery class with skills and knowledge that are well below what is typical for their age. Children now make rapid progress so that a broadly average proportion reach a good level of development when they enter Year 1. Teaching is consistently of a high standard, and so children's progress is accelerated across all areas of the early years curriculum. The school data shows year on year improvements in children's achievement. Much of this is due to heightened expectations in teaching, excellent leadership and well-planned activities.
- At the end of Year 2, in 2015, standards of attainment were broadly average in reading and mathematics; standards were above average in writing. This represents good progress for this cohort of pupils, many of whom entered Year 1 with quite low levels of attainment.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the national phonics screening check was broadly average.
- In the Year 6 tests, in 2015, the majority of pupils attained standards that were above the national average. This again represents a good level of progress.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils achieving the combined reading, writing and mathematics Level 4+ at the end of Year 6 was significantly above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils achieving a Level 5 at the end of Year 6 was above the national average.
- Evidence in pupils' books and the school's data about pupil progress, show that pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to attain above average standards in 2016.
- The school continues to achieve strong value-added scores from year to year.
- Disadvantaged pupils (pupil premium) make significantly better progress than all pupils nationally. Senior leaders recognise the need to continue to reduce the attainment gap between pupil premium pupils and non-pupil premium pupils.
- There is no significant difference in the progress of the different minority ethnic groups represented in the school.
- The quality of pupils' work is of a high standard in many different areas, such as music, art and sport.
- Pupils demonstrate outstanding attitudes to learning. Staff set high standards to which pupils respond, showing high levels of respect and friendliness to adults, visitors and their classmates. Pupils develop resilience and many other personal attributes through the school's 5Rs programme. They feel safe and secure. They said learning is fun and they respect and value other cultures. They really enjoy the lessons and learn new things.

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

What Went Well

- Teachers become extremely well versed in evaluating what pupils know, understand and can do. Information from this evaluation is used to inform future learning very well. Teachers also expect pupils to think carefully about what they have learned, which they do very well across the school. As a result, pupils are able to identify where their learning needs to improve and act on it accordingly.
- Teachers routinely reflect on the quality of their practice, happily taking on board advice and trying new ideas and approaches.
- The teaching of writing is very effective. Precise activities build the skills needed to construct grammatically correct sentences that are accurately punctuated, with words correctly spelt. Pupils use these skills well in a wide variety of genres and subjects to good effect.
- Teachers organise lessons very well to make sure that no time is wasted. Straightaway in the morning pupils settle themselves with no fuss to their morning work.
- Throughout the school, teachers demonstrate exceptional subject knowledge and passionately enthuse their pupils with a love of learning.
- Teachers use questioning expertly to promote learning. They also respond well to pupils' questions, which are plentiful, sometimes withholding the answer in order to promote further discussion and deepen understanding.
- Teachers put a lot of thought into their planning. They have high expectations of their pupils and plan activities that are rich in subject content, challenging and fun.

- Teachers cleverly structure lessons to ensure all pupils progress. In some lessons, pupils express disappointment that the lesson is over and, unprompted, say that they want to continue with their work.
- In the early years setting, there are very high levels of engagement for all children, with knowledgeable and responsive staff supporting and developing children's language for thinking across the curriculum. Creative entry points are used to 'hook' children into learning.
- Learning Journeys are used very effectively to track each child's learning and progress in the key areas from Nursery through to the end of Reception and include evidence gathered from a wide range of sources, including observations, photographs and learning samples.
- Marking of work is thorough and regular, and is normally of a very high standard. Detailed comments and feedback for pupils shows clearly what a pupil has done well, and how to take the next steps to improve.

Even Better If...

...the school reflected on how best to incorporate 'positional teaching' techniques in order to ensure all pupils are actively involved in the lesson.

...peer collaboration techniques were always used as effectively as the best practice observed in the school.

Quality of Area of Excellent Practice

Removing barriers to learning (RB2L)

- RB2L has been highlighted as an area of strong practice by the local authority. The school has employed a Behaviour Mentor, Family Support Worker and an Inclusion Base Leader to work as part of a team to offer a holistic approach.
- All members of the team continually pursue professional development through school visits, courses and their attendance at network meetings. The team is constantly look for new ideas, initiatives, interventions and best practice.
- TAC (Team Around the Child) and the RB2L meetings take place regularly to ensure that all leading staff are aware of ongoing and developing needs.
- The school look at the additional support that it can offer pupils and funding streams which can be used to support the individual needs of pupils.
- Highly skilled staff build effective relationships with priority families. Positive use of texts is a key method of communicating with these families.
- The school is very supportive of parents' needs, including arranging and attending appointments, transport and dealing with housing issues.
- The school arranges meet and greet sessions, bereavement counselling and one-to-one pupil work. Adult learning classes are arranged which help to empower parents/carers.
- The school has received reaccreditation as an ABC school.

- There is very clear evidence of the positive impact of the various teams on attendance, exclusions and mental and emotional health learning and academic progress.

Partnerships

- Willowbrook is an outward looking school: staff are committed to improving outcomes for the children of Leicester and actively support other stakeholders within the local authority and the Challenge Partner hub. The school is always willing to share good practice whether this be presenting at local conferences, demonstrating subject pedagogy or offering a procedural approach, such as the Willowbrook model of restorative justice, which was shared with other schools both locally and nationally.
- Specifically, this year, the school has engaged with other neighbouring primaries to standardise post-levels assessment through shared moderation.
- Partnerships have facilitated staff retention, not only from the development opportunities arising from support work, but also through staff taking on new roles internally following secondments.
- Links to teacher training, including SCITT run out of the Challenge Partner hub, are well used by the school. Student placements have provided a valuable opportunity to talent spot and develop their own TAs through school based training.
- The previously confirmed Area of Excellence – teaching literacy through novels- triggered some school visits to view this good practice.
- The school works closely with the secondary hub and are committed to sending two practitioners per year on the OTP.
- The deputy headteacher has participated in a research visit to Singapore. It was an opportunity to learn from Singapore’s pedagogy and education culture and consider how to transition this to a UK setting. Considerable follow up work has resulted including presenting at Challenge Partner and local authority network meetings.

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?

Following discussion with the headteacher, the school would not like any further support at this time.