

Winhills Primary Academy School

Off Duck Lane, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire PE19 2DX

Inspection dates	2–3 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good throughout the school so not all pupils make rapid progress, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Not enough of the most-able pupils are helped to reach the highest levels by the end of Year 6.
- There are groups of pupils in some year groups that are not making enough progress from their starting points to enable them to catch up with their peers nationally.
- Some teachers do not plan work effectively enough to ensure that all pupils are challenged sufficiently strongly to do their best in lessons.
- Self-evaluation by the school’s leaders can be over-generous.
- The school’s support for most able disadvantaged pupils lacks sufficient impact.
- Good quality teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively to maximise the learning in class.

The school has the following strengths

- Ambitious leadership with high expectations has ensured that the number of pupils who reach the expected level required for secondary school has risen to match the national average.
- The executive headteacher of the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust and the school’s headteacher have a clear vision for how they want to keep improving the school.
- Leadership and teaching within the early years is good. Children settle into the provision quickly and almost all make good or better progress.
- Some teaching within the school is inspirational and is highly effective at motivating pupils to do their very best.
- Pupils value their learning and have positive attitudes to school. Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy their lessons.
- Attendance is good and very few pupils are regularly absent.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teaching in Key Stage 2 is focused on helping pupils make more rapid progress, particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5
 - teachers' planning of lessons provides opportunities for the most-able pupils to make better progress so that more of them reach the higher levels of which they are capable
 - questioning is used effectively to deepen and extend the learning of all groups of pupils
 - pupils who are not making good enough progress are quickly identified and given additional support so that they can catch up quickly
 - the best practice within the school is shared effectively so that teaching across the school becomes more consistent
 - support within class for the most able disadvantaged pupils is better targeted
 - teaching assistants and other additional adults within class are used effectively to support the learning of pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and executive headteacher of the trust work closely together. They have been instrumental in raising standards since the last inspection. The number of pupils who reach the expected levels by the end of Year 6 is in line with the national average.
- Middle leaders across the school, such as subject leaders in English and mathematics, have a good knowledge of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects. In English, following a review of previous academic results, a range of initiatives aimed at improving spelling and writing in both key stages have been introduced. Evidence from pupils' books and the school's internal performance data, shows that progress in these areas has accelerated this year. More pupils than previously are making expected and better-than-expected progress.
- The special educational needs coordinator ensures that coordinated support, linked to effective partnerships with external experts, means that the majority of pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress.
- The systems in place to manage the performance of teachers and to plan further training are rigorous. Teachers are set appropriately challenging targets and, where teaching is not as good as it should be, action plans for support are put in place.
- The curriculum motivates pupils well. It provides pupils with a wide range of memorable experiences that are linked closely to raising standards. The 'Tardis' room, developed in partnership with the trust's artist-in-residence is being used well to motivate writing by providing a stimulating learning environment in a futuristic setting. Pupils say that they really enjoy their lessons. The library is well stocked and pupils all across the school show that they are developing a love for reading books. This was clear in an assembly observed during World Book Day, where pupils competed to see which house knew the most about a range of classic books.
- Good use is made of the extra funding available to promote physical education and sporting opportunities. This has been used to provide extensive training for staff and to promote a wide range of competitive activities that take place within the academy trust's group of schools and the other schools in the district.
- The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Activities are planned through the curriculum and a range of school trips are planned to support this. Discussions with pupils show that they have a good understanding of a range of faiths and have respect for others that have different opinions to themselves. Pupils' understanding of British values is evident through the pupils' honesty, kindness towards others and their understanding of democracy. The pupils were actively engaged in learning about British institutions during the last national election.
- The school has made effective use of the money provided by the government to support disadvantaged pupils so that almost all reach the expected level. This means that they are ready for secondary school. In the past, too few disadvantaged pupils have reached the highest level, and current school assessment data show that this is still the case.
- Due to the high turnover of staff during the last two years, there is still considerable inconsistency between the quality of teaching in different year groups. Leaders recognise this and have brought in support from other trust academies to strengthen teaching. The impact of this can be seen in some classes but not all.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are experienced and knowledgeable. They carry out their statutory duties with respect to managing the performance of staff and safeguarding procedures.
 - Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher and they carry out visits every half term to ensure that what they hear at meetings can be seen throughout the school. They hold the school to account through regular meetings and the executive headteacher of the trust takes a personal interest in the progress being made within the school.
 - Governors are keen to keep improving and have taken part in a self-review process in partnership with an external organisation. They know their strengths and areas for development well and have high expectations for how they want the school to keep on improving.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. A small group of parents have voiced concerns about the way the school cares for their children, and these systems were investigated as part of the inspection. Inspectors did not find any evidence to support these concerns. They found that appointments follow safer-recruitment procedures. New teachers receive appropriate training, which equips them with the skills to

recognise signs that a pupil may be at harm or in danger of radicalisation. Leaders work closely with outside agencies, reporting any concerns to the local authority promptly. They also work closely with parents, carers and other stakeholders to make sure that all pupils are supported and safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching overall does not help pupils to make enough progress. The quality of teaching varies across classes and between subjects. Teachers' planning of lessons does not fully enough consider the needs of the most-able pupils. Not enough activities are planned to stretch these pupils so that they reach the higher levels of which they are capable at the end of Year 6. Some children told inspectors that sometimes the work was too easy for them or that they wanted to get on more quickly.
- Some teachers make good use of their skills to support pupils' learning and provide greater challenge to deepen pupils' thinking. But pupils do not regularly consolidate their learning, for example, through meaningful thought and discussion. Not all teachers use teaching assistants effectively to support learning.
- Teachers have been effective at helping disadvantaged pupils reach their expected levels of achievement by the end of Year 6, but lesson activities and classroom support have not been effective in helping the most-able disadvantaged pupils to reach their full potential.
- Some teaching is inspirational. High expectations, excellent subject knowledge and engaging teaching styles, such as seen in a reading and writing activity, help pupils to make rapid progress. Pupils respond extremely well when challenged to think deeply about their answers.
- Overall, teaching is improving rapidly and this is leading to accelerated progress, particularly in Key Stage 2 where it has been slower in the past. Leaders have had to manage a significant turnover in class teachers. They have put in place a detailed training programme involving trust-wide support to improve the quality of teaching where it is weaker. Further opportunities have been provided to share some of the excellent practice that exists within school on a wider scale.
- Additional adults and teaching assistants are usually deployed well in class, but this is not consistent in all classes. There are times when these staff could be used more effectively to promote learning.
- The quality of subject knowledge demonstrated by teachers is good. This is not only true for English and mathematics but in the wider curriculum.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is effective because pupils are given good quality, regular support. Younger pupils enjoy reading and make good use of their phonics knowledge to help them sound out words they cannot read at first sight.
- Teachers take considerable time and effort over checking pupils' work. It is a strength of the provision. Teachers in all classes mark the work of pupils consistently well. Marking is thorough and provides pupils with useful ideas about how they can move on in their learning. Targets for improvement are set and systems are in place to support pupils improve their grammar and spelling.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and show good levels of perseverance when given challenging work. Almost all are keen to do well and try hard.
- Pupils say bullying is rare. They are aware of the different forms of bullying and know who to tell when they are worried. In the playground, they keep an eye out for one another and know how to be friendly to someone who is alone.
- Pupils talk confidently about what they need to do to stay safe. They have had visits from the fire brigade and the police and have a good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. The school arranges regular e-safety days and pupils follow up this work in class.
- Attendance is in line with the national average, and the number of pupils who miss school regularly is much lower than the national average. This reflects the fact that pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils are keen to raise money for charity, and do so regularly. They are proud of their efforts to help Great Ormond Street Hospital, Sport Relief and Children in Need.

Behaviour

- Inspectors watched pupils' behaviour in lessons, while moving around the school, during an assembly, and at playtime. They found that behaviour is good. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school contributes to a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Inspectors looked at the school log books and discussed behaviour with a wide range of pupils, confirming that behaviour over a longer period of time has also been good. Pupils report that there has been an improvement in behaviour during the last two years and that leaders and class teachers deal quickly with any rare instances of unacceptable behaviour.
- Pupils show tolerance and understanding to the small group of pupils who sometimes misbehave. There has been a considerable rise in the school roll as pupils transfer into school from elsewhere, and these pupils are made to feel welcome in class and at playtime. The school has clear behaviour policies and procedures. Pupils say that these are followed consistently and that they are treated fairly if they do anything wrong.
- A small number of parents raised concerns about behaviour through their responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and in discussions with inspectors. One parent commented on how much better the behaviour was at Winhills than in her child's previous school.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Despite the fact that the number of pupils who reach the expected standard by the end of school is in line with the national average, not enough pupils make good or better progress during Key Stage 2 and do not achieve as well as they might. This applies to reading, writing and mathematics. This is because not enough most-able pupils make the progress they need to in order to reach the higher levels of which some of them are capable by the end of Year 6.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress from their various starting points so that by the end of Key Stage 1, they reach levels that are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, pupils make good progress in learning their phonics so that they reach standards that are similar to their peers nationally.
- Over the last two years, the pace of progress has slowed during Key Stage 2, particularly for the most-able pupils, so that relatively few reach the highest levels. This is true for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. These pupils make slower progress because expectations for what they can achieve are not high enough.
- This year has seen a range of new initiatives that have been introduced to improve progress, particularly in reading and writing. Inspection evidence shows that the progress pupils are making has accelerated this year.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress from their different starting points because of good leadership by the special needs coordinator who ensures that teachers and teaching assistants provide appropriate support in line with each pupil's needs.
- Across the school, the proportions of pupils who need to catch up with their peers vary considerably from class to class. In Key Stage 2, this applies particularly to writing and the school has put systems in place to support these pupils so that they are catching up rapidly.

Early years provision

is good

- From starting points that are often lower than those typical for their ages, children make good progress across the provision in the early years. Detailed assessments are undertaken when children start school and these are put to good use in planning the curriculum to support their learning needs. This year, appropriate extra support has been put in place to support speaking and listening, alongside early literacy and mathematical development.
- Children from the age of two enter a calm environment and are provided with a good range of activities. Adults support the learning well, for example working alongside children, encouraging them, and asking developmental questions. The large outdoor area is well resourced and children actively develop their physical skills through a range of structured areas.
- Good leadership supported by effective teaching has ensured considerable improvements have taken place since the last inspection. In 2014, the proportion of children reaching the expected levels was much higher than the national average. This dipped in 2015 due to staff changes, but has been since reversed.

- Children enjoy coming to school, are well motivated and behave well. They listen to the teacher when asked and are good at taking turns and sharing. Children show that they are developing the ability to concentrate for a long period, and they use the equipment sensibly.
- The classroom environment is planned well to provide a range of stimulating activities both inside and outside, but there is not enough focus on developing and extending the mathematical learning of children.
- Children make good progress in learning their phonics because of well-planned activities, good modelling of sounds by staff, and effectively targeted support by additional adults.
- Parents play a positive and active role in the learning journey of children during this stage. The children's journals accurately record the next steps in learning and provide parents with a good opportunity to share learning at home. There is good communication with parents through a range of strategies such as home visits and a regular newsletter providing information about the phase.
- The early years leader ensures that all welfare arrangements for the early years are met.

School details

Unique reference number	138280
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10009157

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	265
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Gill
Executive headteacher	Susannah Connell
Telephone number	01480 211626
Website	www.winhills-cambs.co.uk
Email address	office@winhills.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 March 2014

Information about this school

- The school is a sponsored academy, which opened as a new school in July 2012. It is run by the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust, which also runs four other schools in the local area. The senior leadership team comprises an executive headteacher (who is also the substantive headteacher of a neighboring school), a head of school and a deputy headteacher.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- Winhills Primary Academy is average in size, compared with other primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- A Nursery was opened in February 2016 for two- to four-year-olds who can attend part time or full time. Children in the two Reception classes attend full time.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 12 lessons or parts of lessons. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors to three of these. They looked at work in pupils' books from the current academic year.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, an external adviser, senior and middle leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils talk about their work and heard pupils from Year 1 read.
- Informal discussions were held with pupils during lunchtimes and playtimes. Inspectors spoke with parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors met with two separate parents who requested a meeting during the inspection.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including records of pupil progress, work in books, achievement and progress information, planning and monitoring information, the school improvement plan, the self-evaluation document and external reports of the school.
- Safeguarding documents were examined in detail.
- The inspection team also considered 24 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the school's own parent consultation results.

Inspection team

Duncan Ramsey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Christine Lake

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

