

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Windmill Primary School

Fernlea Drive, Woosehill, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 3DR

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 February 2025

Outcome

Windmill Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Nicola Cotter. The school is part of GLF Schools trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Julian Drinkall, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lynne O'Reilly.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils describe Windmill as a warm, welcoming and inclusive school. There is a sense of teamwork underpinning the shared aspirations and high standards achieved here. Dedicated staff support all pupils to benefit from a rich curriculum that is enhanced by a range of trips, experiences and clubs. Pupils arrive keen to learn, dive enthusiastically into all that is on offer, and leave each day brimming with ideas.

Pupils develop a love of reading, and they enjoy both learning and discussing their work. Their behaviour in lessons and conduct around school are impressive. They help each other however they can. Pupils enjoy the different leadership roles on offer, such as eco-councillors, house captains and prefects, and being in assemblies. They are rightly proud of their school.

Pupils value how the school's 'rights respecting school' status, with its focus on promoting respect, is threaded throughout school life. They develop consideration, tolerance and genuine respect for each other and the wider community. Windmill nurtures confident, enthusiastic learners who are well prepared for their next steps in education. This is rightly valued by parents. As one said, 'my children are thriving here.'

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Staff share a united vision for the school. Together, they have driven forward many improvements. The school has pushed forward with enhancements to the curriculum in recent years.

The school has adopted and adapted the trust's ambitious curriculum for pupils from early years through to Year 6. Close teamwork, regular training and networking with other schools help to boost the subject knowledge of staff. Teachers engage with the expectations for the school's curriculum. Typically, they ensure that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Consequently, these pupils achieve across the curriculum. Occasionally, teachers need to consider more carefully what pupils already know and can do. This is needed to promote deeper thinking and to support all pupils to learn as well as they could. At times, pupils can lose focus as a result.

Children in Nursery and Reception make a strong start to their education. Staff share a thorough knowledge of what individual children can do and their next steps. They skilfully interact to promote children's curiosity and engagement with meaningful learning through play. Staff flexibly adapt activities to meet children's individual needs well. The early years curriculum supports children's physical, social and emotional development and their communication and language skills effectively.

The teaching of reading is a strength. Regular training ensures that staff are skilled in teaching phonics and checking pupils' developing reading skills. Books are carefully matched to the programme so that pupils practise the sounds they have been taught. Pupils who need additional help with their reading receive targeted and bespoke support. Teachers and pupils clearly share a love of reading. Over time, pupils make strong progress to become fluent readers, and they develop a rich vocabulary.

Pupils enjoy learning in mathematics and gain the confidence to solve increasingly complex problems as they move through the school. They tackle the challenges set in lessons enthusiastically and confidently discuss the methods they use. Typically, teachers check pupils' learning well, enabling any misconceptions to be swiftly addressed.

In other subjects, the well-crafted curriculum identifies the key concepts, skills and vocabulary that pupils need to know and how these build upon their prior learning. This work has improved pupils' knowledge and achievement. However, in some areas, such as aspects of science and design and technology, further modifications to the curriculum are underway to make the contexts of lessons more relatable to pupils.

Staff work in partnership with families to maintain high levels of attendance. Pupils respect their school, the staff and each other. Pupils socialise well and play happily at breaktimes. The school's rules, rewards and routines are valued, and any disruption is rare. Pupils show real empathy and respect for each other and their local community.

Staff prioritise pupils' health and well-being and nurture their all-round development very well. The extra-curricular programme helps foster a love of sports, the arts and the wider community. Pupils broaden their interests through the range of clubs, trips and events. The curriculum promotes respect for diversity and inclusion well and ensures that pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, including when online. Pupils develop a broad range of knowledge, together with self-confidence as learners, which equips them well for future learning and success.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers are less confident at adapting their teaching in some areas of the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils effectively. As a result, some pupils struggle to focus, or a minority can go off task. The school should ensure that teachers know how to skilfully support pupils in line with the best examples already in school.
- In some foundation subjects, the school is adapting its curriculum, seeking to offer more engaging local contexts. Occasionally, the learning here does not build sufficiently on pupils' prior knowledge, so some pupils do not make the desired connections within or between subjects. The school needs to ensure that these adaptations of the curriculum are having the desired impact.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	139899
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10341747
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lynne O'Reilly
CEO of the trust	Julian Drinkall
Headteacher	Nicola Cotter
Website	www.windmillschool.org
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Windmill Primary School is governed by the GLF Schools trust. There is a school standards board (SSB) that oversees aspects of school governance for both this school and Wheatfield Primary School on behalf of the trust.
- There have been changes to the leadership structure and to governance personnel since the last inspection. Previously, the school had an executive headteacher and the current headteacher was head of school. She took over as headteacher from September 2024. The leadership structure of the school has changed. The chair of the SSB has very recently taken up post.
- The school opened its nursery, which includes provision for two-year-olds, in October 2023. Work is scheduled to adapt, enhance and increase the existing facilities to improve provision and offer more spaces.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at some samples of their work. A meeting was held with a group of pupils to discuss their views about many different aspects of their school and to talk about their work. The inspector also held informal conversations with pupils at lunchtime.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff represented in meetings and the responses to Ofsted's online surveys were considered.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and with staff from the trust who work routinely with the school. The inspector also spoke to members of the SSB, a trustee and the CEO of the trust. Regular update meetings were held with the headteacher.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including those relating to behaviour, attendance, governance and leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Matthew Newberry, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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