



Willand School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113114
Local Authority Devon
Inspection number 289514
Inspection date 12 October 2006
Reporting inspector Hazel Callaghan

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Gables Road
School category	Community		Willand
Age range of pupils	4-11		Cullompton EX15 2QL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01884 820367
Number on roll (school)	294	Fax number	01884 821804
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Richard Carswell
		Headteacher	S Calderbank
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Willand School is of average size but pupil numbers are increasing. More pupils than is usual join or leave the school part-way through their primary education. An above average number of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an excellent school that provides an outstanding education for its pupils so they are extremely successful in both their work and in their personal development. Key reasons for the school's success are the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher and the commitment and dedication of a hard-working and united staff team. Pupils' education and care are of paramount importance. The school has a thorough understanding of its own effectiveness and has a good track record of making improvements, such as enabling boys in Years 1 and 2 to make similarly good progress to the girls in reading. Governors are well informed and provide a strong supportive partnership with staff that keeps the school on its toes.

Standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 have all risen over the last four years because of exceptional teaching and a good understanding of how pupils can be helped to improve. Pupils' achievement is outstanding and leads to standards that are significantly above average. Children get off to a good start in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2. Their progress then surges forward in the older classes from this secure base. Teachers have very high expectations for their pupils, and children, in turn, know what is expected of them. As a result, there is a common sense of purpose and a desire to do things well. Pupils think highly of their school. One said it was 'fantastic', another said it was 'very good' and the others in the group agreed.

The stimulating curriculum very successfully meets the needs of all pupils and is fundamental to the development of their outstanding personal development and high standards. Many additional activities enrich pupils' learning and promote their understanding of how to develop healthy lifestyles. Care, support and guidance are excellent with the result that relationships are strong throughout the school and pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. They enjoy challenge, respond well to responsibility and they work exceptionally well together. Their contribution to the life of the school and the wider community is exemplary.

The school could improve further by extending its very good systems of checking pupils' progress so that there is a clear overview of achievement from the Foundation Stage to end of Year 2, which will support greater analysis of the progress of different groups of children and ensure consistently high achievement through the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Record pupils' attainment from the start of school through to end of Year 2 so that there is a clear overview of trends in pupils' progress so they are enabled to make the same excellent progress as the older pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement through the school is outstanding. From a below average starting point in the Reception classes, pupils reach high standards in Year 6. This outstanding progress is particularly evident in the oldest classes where exemplary teaching enables pupils of all abilities to succeed exceedingly well in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' good progress starts in the Reception Year. They do particularly well in their language development and in their attitudes to learning. By the time children transfer into Year 1 most are confidently working within and many beyond the standards expected in all areas of learning. Good progress continues into Years 1 and 2, so that pupils are confident in their abilities and have the basic skills that prepare them well for learning in the older classes. Excellent progress is made by all pupils in Years 3 to 6 because teachers and pupils have high expectations for what can be achieved. Those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make excellent progress towards their individual targets and by Year 6 many attain average standards. Similarly pupils who join the school in all year groups settle quickly, their abilities are assessed and work that is well matched to their needs enables them to make similar progress to their peers. Gifted and talent pupils have many opportunities to extend their special skills and often excel in art, sport and music.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and this has a significant impact on the progress they make. Pupils enjoy challenge and respond very well to the teachers' high expectations for their effort and attention. Behaviour in lessons is exemplary and very good around the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils are courteous and polite and have excellent relationships with each other and the adults around them. They show care and consideration towards each other. They reflect on their own actions and discuss in a very adult way the actions of others. Pupils have no concerns about bullying. They thoroughly enjoy school and attend regularly, although a number of families take their children out of school for holidays in term-time. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe and use their knowledge to make positive decisions.

Pupils of all ages respond very well to the opportunities to take on responsibilities and they make a substantial contribution to the school and to the local community. Pupils in Year 6 were delighted when they were successful in their applications as monitors: to be a librarian or work in the tuck shop, for example. The school council has been very successful in promoting many positive changes in the life of the school and the members of the Eco Committee take their responsibilities very seriously.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Excellent teaching enables pupils of all abilities to achieve exceptionally well. Good teaching in the Reception Year and in Years 1 and 2 develops the basic skills pupils need and fosters an enjoyment of learning so they become confident in their own abilities and want to do well. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is often outstanding. Learning is fun and pupils are fully engaged in their tasks. The pace of lessons is often brisk so a lot is accomplished in each lesson and pupils of all abilities are challenged. Pupils understand what is expected of them and say teachers help them when they get stuck. Teachers assess pupils' work carefully and use the information well to ensure new activities move pupils forward successfully in their learning. Effective marking and a range of other strategies help pupils to understand how they are doing and how to make their work better. Teaching assistants play an important part in the excellent progress made by all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum promotes the interest and learning of all pupils. Teachers ensure that the curriculum extends pupils' skills each year, building on what has gone before. In the Reception classes there is a strong focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills, which provides the secure basis of all their language work. The programme for developing all pupils' personal and social development is strong throughout the school and promotes their moral and social development exceptionally well. There is also strong focus on developing their understanding of healthy lifestyles and the school has successfully attained the Healthy Schools Award. There is a very wide range of additional activities and visitors, such as artists in residence, that extend pupils' experiences and stimulate their enthusiasm for learning. Information and communication technology is used very well to promote all aspects of the curriculum and to provide many opportunities for pupils' independent research.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support. Pupils are highly valued as individuals and so feel very secure and well cared for. Effective systems and strong relationships ensure pupils feel confident to talk about any difficulties or worries. Pupils causing concern are monitored well and all staff made aware of their difficulties so that consistent approaches are employed. The school takes the well-being of its pupils very seriously and provision for aspects such as child protection and health and safety are secure. There are good links with outside agencies that are drawn on as required. There is regular monitoring on attendance and absence is quickly followed up.

The attainment of all pupils is checked and targets for future attainment regularly set and reviewed. These targets are shared with both pupils and their parents and underpin the very good progress because pupils have a very good understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. The school provides a homework club for those pupils who have difficulty studying at home. The achievements of pupils with learning difficulties are systematically monitored and effective targets for their progress help them to achieve exceedingly well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The leadership provided by the headteacher is excellent. Her strong sense of purpose and vision for the school are shared by all staff. This united approach is responsible for the exceptional quality of care and support given to all pupils, their outstanding personal development and academic achievement. All staff take an active part in evaluating the school's strengths and areas of weakness so that they feel fully involved and committed. Governors are well informed and provide both challenge and support for the headteacher and staff. They actively seek the views of parents to further improve school effectiveness. Evidence of many initiatives to improve learning and the development of outstanding provision in many areas suggest that the school has excellent capacity for further improvement.

The school's evaluation of its provision is accurate and based on comprehensive systems for monitoring and review. To improve these systems further the school is beginning to collect data on pupils' standards to provide a better overview of progress from the Foundation Stage to the end of Year 2 so that younger pupils can be helped to make the excellent progress that is made by all of those in Years 3 to 6.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

13 October 2006

Dear Pupils

Willand School Gables Road Willand Cullompton Devon EX15 2QL

I am writing to say thank you for making me feel welcome in your school and for helping me with my questions. I really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said very interesting. I thought you would like to know what I found out about you and the school.

What I liked about the school:

- You think you have a fantastic school and I agree.
- You are very happy at school and really enjoy your lessons.
- You get on very well with each other and the adults in the school.
- You behave very sensibly and are extremely kind to each other.
- We think you try very hard to do well in your work and you are good at making sensible choices about keeping healthy and safe.
- Teachers work really hard to make your lessons fun and to help you think carefully about how to make your work better.
- You are given lots of opportunities to take responsibility and you do it very well helping to make the school a special place.
- The school is very well led by Miss Calderbank and all the adults look after you extremely well.

What I have asked the school to do:

- To check on how well children are learning as they move from the Reception class up to the end of Year 2 so that teachers know when things may not be going as well as they could and make them better, just as they do in the older classes.

Thank you again for helping us find out about your school.

Best wishes Mrs Callaghan Lead Inspector