

The Willoughby School

South Road, Bourne, PE10 9JE

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation from their very low starting points on entry.
- Pupils at Key Stages 1 to 3 and those with autism or profound and multiple learning difficulties make good progress, particularly in their communication and social interaction skills.
- Students at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, and those with severe learning difficulties, make outstanding progress, particularly in their accredited courses and in developing independence skills.
- Pupils learn well because teaching is good. Consistently good use of signing, symbols, and well-chosen resources captivate pupils' interest in learning.
- The sixth form is good and prepares students well for the next stage of their education.
- Excellent relationships and management of behaviour and high expectations for learning are additional strengths of teaching.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and show positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is above average.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together to rigorously monitor and improve teaching and learning.
- The governing body challenges the work of the school, and ensures the efficient use of resources to promote teaching and learning
- Effective leadership and governance has improved the quality of teaching and demonstrates good capacity for sustained further improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough lessons are outstanding and in a few lessons teaching requires improvement.
- The use of information about what pupils know and can do in planning lessons and setting them targets is inconsistent
- Teaching does not always extend the learning of all groups of pupils
- Middle leaders do not analyse and use information about pupils' progress rigorously enough to improve teaching and achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons jointly with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with two groups of pupils, with five members of the governing body and staff. Telephone discussions were held with five parents and inspectors took account of the school's survey of parents and 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including minutes of the governing body meetings, the school improvement plan, records of attendance, records of incidents, policies and procedures to promote safeguarding, samples of pupils' work and data on pupil progress over time.
- Inspectors also heard a sample of pupils reading.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Joan McPhail

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Willoughby School caters for pupils with learning difficulties ranging from severe to profound and multiple and over a third have autism. Nearly all pupils have a statement of special educational needs and a few are undergoing assessment for one.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and an above average proportion are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school provides a support and intervention service for parents of very young children. Its partnership with a local academy offers Willoughby pupils, particularly the gifted and talented, opportunities for inclusion.
- Outdoor facilities, including the creation of a sensory garden, have improved since the last inspection. A new sensory integration room has also been built within the school. The school has recently developed outreach support in autism for primary and secondary schools in the local area.
- Since the last inspection, a new deputy headteacher has been appointed and the governing body has been strengthened.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure much of the teaching across the school is outstanding and never less than consistently good by:
 - developing the use of assessment information to plan learning activities and create smart, realistic and challenging academic targets on individual education plans
 - planning different activities to extend the learning of all groups of pupils
 - analysing performance data more rigorously and using the outcomes of this to support improvements in teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start and make good progress in each area of learning from their very low starting points. This is because all staff work very effectively to ensure that children settle into routines quickly. They use a wide variety of practical resources, pictures and symbols together with signing to stimulate awareness and develop communication and social interaction skills.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stages 1 to 3 in all subjects because staff ensure that tasks are matched precisely to the needs of each pupil. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because there are good opportunities to develop these skills using different techniques, such as sensory reading. This was used effectively with a group of pupils with autism who read the names of different fruit while seeing pictures and passing them to one another.
- Pupils' good progress is promoted by the strong teamwork of teachers and support staff in personalising learning for each pupil. This has a particularly positive impact on pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium because the school uses the resources available to focus on the pupils' most pressing needs.
- School data shows that older pupils at Key Stage 4 and students at post-16 make outstanding progress, particularly in their accredited courses and in developing independence skills which, together, prepares them well for the next stage of their lives. All students leave the sixth form to enter further education and training.
- Pupils who attend a local academy benefit from a range of activities, such as 'Bourne's Got Talent' and the academy's sports day to enrich their learning and promote their personal development.
- School data confirm some slight variations in the progress pupils make in school. Those with severe learning difficulties make the best progress because teachers have the highest expectations for their learning. Pupils with autism make consistently good progress over time, particularly in their communication and social interaction skills; this is because teachers and teaching assistants carefully adapt learning to address each of the three areas of impairment with the consistent use of communication aids, visual resources and signing. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) usually make good progress, although occasionally their rate of progress dips when activities do not fully challenge them.

The quality of teaching is good

- Inspectors concurred with the judgements made by senior leaders in the lessons seen during the inspection. Most teaching is good, with examples of outstanding practice and, occasionally, where it requires improvement. This is consistent with the school's own evaluation of teaching, as endorsed by the local authority.
- Key strengths of teaching include excellent relationships between staff and pupils, consistency in the highly-skilled management of behaviour, and the use of well-chosen resources and methods to stimulate learning. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) has significantly improved since the last inspection through, for example, the use of new computers

to promote independent learning. Teachers ensure this is used consistently well to promote learning.

- Teachers' planning usually provides a good match of work to individual needs. Teachers mostly track and record pupils' progress accurately and use this information to plan tasks and match learning resources for each pupil. They deliver lessons at a brisk pace and use questioning to challenge pupils' thinking.
- Assessment systems and the tracking of pupils' progress, in line with national guidelines, have improved since the last inspection. Occasionally, assessment information is not used effectively enough either to plan learning activities which sufficiently challenge thinking and extend learning or to set sharply-focused targets on individual education plans which are specific, measureable, achievable and challenging.
- Teaching of pupils with additional disabilities and special educational needs, such as autism and PMLD, is good. All staff work closely with outside health professionals and therapists to ensure that tasks, methods and resources are matched carefully to pupils' needs.
- The teaching of language literacy and communication skills and mathematics across the school is good. Pupils make good progress in reading because books are carefully selected to match their individual reading levels and support staff make good use of sensory methods to stimulate awareness and understanding of the story. In a sensory reading lesson with a PMLD pupil, the teacher and support assistant provided a wide range of well-chosen sensory stimuli, such as cuddly toys and real coal, to increase the pupil's awareness of the story about the train.
- Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development well through planned opportunities for sharing, taking turns, guiding pupils to handle resources safely, and providing praise and encouragement which raise self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils often experience a sense of wonder when using ICT; for example, older pupils and students in the sixth form particularly enjoyed watching a Haj pilgrimage on the interactive whiteboard. Pupils attending the local academy also increase their confidence as they share activities with academy students.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They always do their best to stay safe and handle equipment safely. Those with disabilities move around the school safely in wheelchairs or using walking frames.
 - Pupils with severe challenging behaviours respond extremely well to their individual behaviour management plans. They make good progress in self-control, as seen in the rapid reduction over time in the use of physical restraint to prevent injury or harm. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
 - Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They enjoy lessons and this is reflected in the above average attendance of most pupils. Pupils who are absent through illness miss school very much. Staff maintain regular contact with pupils while they are recovering from hospital treatment, providing work for them to complete, where appropriate.
 - Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage stay safe and settle into routines quickly because all staff carefully plan and supervise activities to ensure children's safety and wellbeing at all
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times. Pupils at Key Stages 1 to 6 and students in the sixth form are courteous and polite to visitors. They show great respect for, and listen carefully to, adults.

- Parents and carers who completed the online questionnaires, and those who spoke to the inspectors, believe that behaviour is good and their children stay safe. Pupils also said that behaviour and safety are good and that bullying is rare. Pupils have a developing awareness of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and say that, should any incidents occur, staff are quick to address these.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is supported extremely well by the deputy headteacher and, together, they provide excellent leadership and direction for improving the school. They have developed strong teamwork and commitment among all staff in sustaining good outcomes for pupils by driving improvements forward. As a result, equality of opportunity is promoted well.
 - Leaders have an accurate view of the school. They make good use of the information from self-evaluation and from their rigorous systems for monitoring teaching and its impact on learning to improve the quality of teaching.
 - Arrangements for managing the performance of all staff are thorough and based on whole-school priorities for development. Clear objectives are set for teachers and support staff and these are clearly linked to those of senior leaders. Staff benefit from effective training and professional development to support the achievement of their objectives. This has led to a steady rise and good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
 - Leaders have developed sharper assessment systems for tracking pupils' progress. Senior leaders use this information well for setting well-conceived, whole-school priorities to raise pupils' achievement and improve the quality of teaching. However, this practice is less well developed by middle leaders to ensure that most teaching becomes outstanding and never less than consistently good.
 - Good leadership has ensured a good curriculum which is tailored to the needs of different groups of pupils. The new sensory integration suite and sensory garden are used well to calm pupils with more complex needs, increase their enjoyment and stimulate awareness of their environment.
 - The well-conceived programme for independent living and work related learning includes mini-enterprise, carefully-planned work experience in the local area and in school, and careers advice. This benefits older pupils and students at post-16, preparing them well for the next stage of their education.
 - The strong emphasis in developing social interaction and communication skills through improved use of ICT, a wide range of communication aids and signing permeates across all subjects at each Key Stage. Good opportunities for enrichment through visits, including a residential visit, and visitors to school, such as the Olympic torch bearer and a representative of the Indian community, promote pupils' learning and enjoyment.
 - Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively particularly through strong partnerships within the local community. This has enabled pupils to have first
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hand experiences and celebrate the diversity of different cultures through for example, Indian Day and Chinese Day as well as the celebrations of word festivals.

- The local authority supports the school well in monitoring and evaluating its work, and this has helped senior leaders improve the quality of teaching.
 - The school's arrangements for safeguarding fully meet requirements. Training is in place and up-to-date, and the procedures to vet staff and visitors are rigorous and monitored termly.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - oversees good improvement to the quality of teaching, to the curriculum and in assessment systems since the last inspection
 - ensures that all statutory requirements are met
 - manages the performance of the headteacher effectively using its own view of the school and whole-school priorities for development to set clear performance targets
 - has good oversight of the use of the budget and ensures that it is managed well to provide good value for money.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	120763
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	401966

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community Special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	73
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	15
Appropriate authority	Lincolnshire
Chair	Norma Turner
Headteacher	Adam Booker
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2010
Telephone number	01778 425203
Fax number	N/A
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