

Willaston Primary School

Willaston School recently received an external validation of its School Self Review Process (SSRE), which involved confirming the judgments the school made about itself across certain areas.

The overall summary identifies that:-

“The school knows itself well and is in a very good position to continue the considerable improvement of recent years.”

For the purpose of this validation, three aspects were looked at in detail:-

- Achievement against prior attainment
- Leadership
- Teaching for Learning

Achievement against prior attainment

A large majority of pupils who completed the Foundation Stage in 2017 made five or more ‘jumps’ in 16 of the 17 areas of learning. This means that achievement in the Foundation Stage can be judged as ‘very effective’ overall. Progress in Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language can be judged as ‘inspirational’.

Overall achievement at Key Stages 1 and 2 can be judged as ‘very effective’ and achievement in reading at Key Stage 2 can be judged as ‘inspirational’.

The school’s own records show that a large majority of pupils have a love of learning. This was confirmed by the observations of the validation team.

The validation team concurs with the school’s judgment that Achievement against Prior Learning is ‘very effective’.

Leadership

School leaders inspire and enthuse colleagues and clearly articulate the school’s vision, which underpins its activities, and the priorities for improvement. A particular feature of the school is the high quality of professional development leading to reflective practice supported by research.

Teachers have high aspirations for the pupils and pupils have high aspirations for themselves.

Leaders have a commitment to inclusion and this is evident in, for example, the support and challenge provided for pupils of all abilities.

The validation team concurs with the school’s judgment that Leadership is ‘very effective’.

Teaching for Learning

The school promotes the features of ‘growth mindset’. This was particularly demonstrated to the validation team when pupils spoke about the desire to ‘push’ themselves.

Teachers each have an overarching plan for pupils' learning and constantly review this based on the response and needs of individuals and groups. Pupils with special educational needs, in particular, are well-supported.

'Assessment for learning' is well-established in the school and pupils were able to articulate this to the validation team in terms of a sequence of self-assessment, peer assessment and teacher assessment.

The validation team concurs with the school's judgment that Teaching for Learning is 'very effective'.

Other areas considered

As well as the three specific aspects of the SSRE on which it focused, the validation team also considered other judgments set out in the SSRE. It concurred with many of these judgments, including:

- In addition, the validation team noted that while attainment in the core subjects at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 was 'not yet effective' in 2017, it is likely to be at least 'effective' at the end of the current school year.
- Pupils show high levels of engagement.
- From observations and conversations, the validation team found that pupils were developing a strong sense of themselves as learners.
- The vast majority of pupils show relationships that are positive. They develop well socially and emotionally.
- School leaders value and encourage innovation.
- Parents hold the school in high regard.
- The school is effective at helping pupils feel safe and deal sensibly with risk. The validation team noted the good use made of the school grounds to promote a sense of managed risk.
- Pupils are aware of how to stay safe online.
- The work of the child and family support worker is highly effective.

Conclusion

The SSRE is well set-out. In places it could be more focused on the relevant grade descriptors. It is a very full professional document with information about various activities and initiatives and their impact on pupils as learners.

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