



0-19 Standards Sub-Committee

Date:	Tuesday, 23 March 2010
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 2 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Members of the Sub-Committee are asked to consider whether they have a personal or prejudicial interest in connection with any of the items on this agenda and if so to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

2. SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES

3. SECONDARY SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTIONS DECEMBER 2009 - MARCH 2010 (Pages 1 - 14)

4. PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES

5. PRIMARY SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTIONS DECEMBER 2009 - MARCH 2010 (Pages 15 - 184)

6. SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES

7. SPECIAL SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTIONS DECEMBER 2009 - MARCH 2010 (Pages 185 - 198)

8. NATIONAL CHALLENGE UPDATE

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

10. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

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The Oldershaw School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105104
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336426
Inspection dates	01–02 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Mrs Gillian Salter-Smith

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	851
Of which number on roll in the sixth form	134
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr I Cubbin
Headteacher	Mr S Peach
Date of previous school inspection	October 2006
School address	Valkyrie Road Wallasey CH45 4RJ
Telephone number	0151 6382800
Fax number	0151 6911581
Email address	schooloffice@oldershaw.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. More than half of inspectors' time was spent looking at students' learning. The inspectors visited 42 lessons, and observed 41 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff, the national challenge adviser, external partners and groups of students. They observed the school's work, including an assembly, the dining areas and the outdoor areas. Documents looked at included the self-evaluation form, the school development and raising attainment plans, the data on students' progress and attainment, and policies with regard to safeguarding students. Ninety eight questionnaires were received from parents, 57 from staff and 95 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the attainment, learning and progress of current students, especially for mathematics, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those joining the school mid key stage
- the consistency in the effectiveness of teaching and use of assessment to support planning and learning
- outcomes and provision in the sixth form
- the pattern of attendance
- whether the school's outstanding judgements for many aspects of its outcomes and provision are justified.

Information about the school

The number of students on roll is below the national average. There are more boys than girls compared to most schools. The proportion of students eligible for a free school meal is well above the national average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement, is well above average. A well above average number of students join the school or leave at times other than the usual start in Year 7. Most students are of White British heritage. Of the small number from minority ethnic backgrounds a very few are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. There are a very small number of looked after children.

The school has been a specialist Business & Enterprise college since September 2007. The school includes a resourced centre with funding for 25 students with moderate learning difficulties: The Learning Centre. It is an extended school. Awards for good practice include the DCSF award for good practice in Inclusion (2008), Artsmark Gold, Sportsmark, Healthy School Award, Arkwright and Nuffield Scholarships, the Athenaeum Literary Prize, the National Parliamentary Press Prize, the Recognition of Quality Award for Work Related and Enterprise, the Chartered Management Institute's Leadership programme award, the Career Academy programme award and the National Association of Writers in Education Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Oldershaw is a good school. Exceptional commitment and drive from leaders at all levels, including governors, have succeeded in providing a highly supportive environment in which students feel safe and secure and very well supported. Behaviour is good and students are proud of their school. The relentless focus on improvement has resulted in accelerating progress and rapidly improving attainment so that students' achievement is good. Students make an outstanding contribution to the school and the local community often through using their exceptional leadership skills to support others within the school and the wider community.

The school's very strong determination to ensure that all students succeed, whatever their circumstances or background, is reflected in the high levels of care, guidance and support provided. Staff are prepared to go that extra mile to support students in gaining the qualifications of which they are capable and in finding ways to support students, particularly those who face significant barriers to their learning. Staff work exceptionally well in partnership with parents and a myriad of local agencies to find the right support for individual students and their families. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit a great deal from the excellent care provided and the highly tailored support that supports their outstanding progress.

The excellent curriculum is very carefully planned with the support of highly successful partnerships with local providers. As a result, students and particularly those in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form, follow courses that are very well matched to their interests and needs. The school's specialist status for business and enterprise has broadened the curriculum significantly helping many students to gain level 2 qualifications in enterprise, business, and information and communication technology (ICT) courses. The innovative arrangements for Year 7 and 8 students, 'The Project', help them to settle into school quickly and make good progress.

Students' good achievement is reflected in national data on progress that has placed them in the top 10% of schools over the past three years. From well below average starting points most students reach broadly average standards of attainment, although attainment is not as strong in mathematics. Improved systems for assessing and tracking students' progress are being used effectively to raise students' aspirations and identify and tackle underachievement quickly. Teaching is good overall and most students enjoy learning and make good progress. There are, however, inconsistencies in some features of teaching that, although recognised

within the school's monitoring systems, have not always been tackled fully and eliminated.

Governors are highly challenging of leaders and make a strong contribution to monitoring and evaluation processes. The school knows itself well recognising both its strengths and priorities. Since the last inspection the school's good capacity to improve has been demonstrated in improved achievement and attainment, greatly improved attendance, more effective teaching and assessment, and a curriculum that offers activities that students enjoy and supports good achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further, particularly in mathematics by:
 - using assessment information more precisely to provide challenging tasks for every student
 - improving the pace and structure of lessons so that students are more actively engaged in learning
 - ensuring that all marking provides useful guidance to students on the next steps to take in learning
 - setting consistently high expectations of presentation of written work.

- Find more ways to share best practice in teaching and learning in order to eliminate inconsistencies.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students respond well to good relationships with staff, enjoy most lessons and develop positive attitudes to learning. Students apply themselves well to tasks and work well in pairs and groups. They are developing confidence in becoming independent learners. A Year 11 French group worked very well independently to practise a speaking task in pairs. Their clear understanding of the criteria against which they are assessed helped them to identify how they could make improvements. Occasionally, students lose interest in learning and their low level chatter is allowed to slow the pace of lessons down.

Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make exceptional progress because of the holistic approach that is taken to meet both personal and academic needs. Furthermore, extensive curriculum arrangements and courses in both Key Stage 3 and 4 are planned carefully to best serve individual student needs.

All groups of students, including those who join the school mid key stage, achieve well as is reflected in the national indicators for achievement. Standards are rising rapidly and are broadly average. In 2009, the proportion of students gaining five GCSE passes was significantly above the national average but attainment in English and mathematics was not as good. School data on current students' progress, accredited assessments already taken and their written work indicate considerable improvement and that the school has already exceeded its challenging targets for English and mathematics with English stronger than mathematics.

Students' significantly improved attendance is having a positive impact on achievement. Great pride in their school is developing as students are given more and more of a say in how their school functions. Students are especially keen to support others less fortunate than themselves and make exceptionally valiant efforts to raise funds for a variety of charities. Students have a good understanding of right and wrong and are encouraged to reflect on the consequences of their actions. They take a positive interest in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Although highly involved in the local community, students' understanding of the many cultures that compose the wider United Kingdom community is more limited. Through participation in many enterprise and business related activities, students develop a wide range of skills including secure ICT skills. These, together with their increasing confidence in applying their basic skills of literacy and numeracy, prepare them satisfactorily for their futures.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop [workplace and other skills]/[skills] that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most lessons are good and some are outstanding. Effective lessons are planned well with a good variety of tasks that quickly involve students. Good use is made of ICT to help maintain students' interest. Tasks and questioning are challenging and students are encouraged to work independently. The purpose of lessons is made clear and good use is made of examination criteria to help guide students in the next steps in learning. Teachers give frequent support and guidance to individuals during lessons and often involve students in evaluating their own progress. Progress is checked frequently through probing questioning. However, inconsistencies in the effectiveness of some features of teaching remain. In a small minority of lessons, assessment information is not always used precisely enough to provide challenging tasks for every student. The pace of learning can be slowed down because tasks are not varied enough, and teachers talk for too long and do not encourage students to work independently. Marking varies in quality and does not always provide useful guidance to students on the next steps to take in learning and some weak presentation of written work is accepted, particularly in mathematics.

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

The school's highly innovative approach to curriculum development is having a significant impact on students' achievement, attendance and attitudes. The very wide range of vocational courses offered, often in response to community needs, is helping students achieve good outcomes. There is a strong focus on supporting students in gaining accreditations in English and mathematics. The Project course for Year 7 and 8 students is very popular with students and is helping them gain good basic learning skills in literacy, working with others and in completing tasks. The nurture group provides a very appropriate environment for vulnerable students and the express group for more able students ensures these students are challenged. Students value and enjoy the school's very good range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits.

Students have great confidence in the staff who they say are always there to help and encourage them to do well, particularly when they are preparing for examinations. Very full assessment of students' individual needs from the time they enter the school, especially if they join mid key stage, enables the right support to be found for students and their families, particularly those most vulnerable. Staff leave no stone unturned in seeking support. The Learning Centre functions very effectively in providing support for students and their families. Looked after children are very well supported and as a result, have achieved very well. Staff work very closely with parents in assuring a high level of support for students.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Very strong leadership has established high expectations of students, staff and themselves. It has focused on the right priorities and established the school not only as a highly caring community that ensures that every student succeeds, but also as a focal point for community activity and support, often through the Extended School activities. Rigorous monitoring of students' progress has helped to identify priorities. National Challenge guidance has supported the development of middle leaders and led to greater accountability for student progress and higher levels of support for underachieving students. The recent focus on improving the use of assessment by leaders and subject teachers has helped to raise aspirations of students, parents and staff. As a result, challenging targets are increasingly being met and exceeded. Teaching is monitored closely and programmes of professional development are focused on school priorities and individual needs. Some inconsistencies in teaching have not been picked up quickly enough, nor has best practice been shared often enough, to ensure inconsistencies are eliminated.

Experienced and knowledgeable governors seek innovative ways to ensure long-term development and improvement of the school. Governors are very rigorous in

fulfilling their statutory requirements with regard to the safeguarding of students. Training of staff in safeguarding students is thorough and up to date. Checks on staff recruitment are thorough and school security is robust.

The school is highly inclusive and students’ needs are looked at carefully. Staff work very effectively in partnership with parents to ensure that any barriers are overcome. The success of this is reflected in students’ achievement where no group underachieves and most achieve better than expected. There is no evidence of discrimination and all students are encouraged to develop their interests and talents to the full.

The school is a cohesive community in which there are good levels of tolerance and understanding between students from different backgrounds and cultures. Students have a well-developed understanding of different groups within the local community and they come in regular contact with more elderly people, young people and the general public. The curriculum provides good opportunities to develop an understanding of global communities and cultures with a link to a South African community being one example. The school recognises that there is more to do to develop students’ wider understanding of the breadth of cultures within modern day United Kingdom society.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

Students start their courses with GCSE results considerably lower than most students’ starting points. Recruitment to the sixth form and the rates of completion of courses is good. For the last two years all students at the end of Year 13 have entered higher education, further education or employment. Students are very positive about their experiences in the sixth form which is confirmed in their good attendance. They make a very good contribution to the school community, for example, through spearheading charity fund-raising activities, helping younger students with their reading and supporting learning in lessons. They develop independent learning skills with the support of the school’s good ICT facilities, although the school’s arrangements for assuring students make best use of their non-lesson time are not robust. Consequently, students do not always make full use of the study time and

facilities available to them. There are good outcomes across a range of measures with most students reaching the targets set for them. Students’ good progress is the result of good teaching and a carefully planned and organised range of curriculum opportunities that allows students to access courses that match their needs well. Leadership and management are good, especially in tracking students’ progress and providing additional support.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth Form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Around 15% of parents returned questionnaires. The large majority of these parents are supportive of the school and consider their children enjoy school. They are especially appreciative of the holistic approach the school takes to individual care and support for their children. The vast majority consider that the school keeps their children safe, that it is well managed and appreciate the way their children are well prepared for their futures. Inspectors agree with most of these views. They consider that students are prepared well for their futures in many ways, but while they are developing greater confidence in applying their basic skills they judge that they are prepared satisfactorily. A very small number of parents expressed concerns relating to the management of behaviour, homework and communications with parents. Inspectors are satisfied that the school has very effective systems in place through the pastoral system to manage behaviour and to communicate with parents. The school recognises that the system of using ‘student post’ may not always be effective. Homework is monitored by the school and the development of ICT systems to support independent learning is leading to greater consistency in its use.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Oldershaw School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 98 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 851 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	33	61	62	5	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	27	68	69	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	45	48	49	6	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	38	50	51	9	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	36	55	56	8	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	24	61	62	11	11	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	16	65	66	9	9	2	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	24	24	65	66	5	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	30	61	62	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	29	56	57	9	9	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	18	69	70	6	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	38	39	55	56	4	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	46	47	46	47	5	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



04 February 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of The Oldershaw School, Wallasey, CH45 4RJ

Many thanks for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We enjoyed meeting and talking to many of you about your school. Thank you to those of you who completed the questionnaires and please pass on our thanks to your parents or carers who returned their questionnaires.

Oldershaw is a good school that takes exceptionally good care of you. Staff go that extra mile to ensure that you are happy and secure in school and able to succeed. The school has developed an outstanding range of courses for you to make sure that you are interested in learning and can see a way forward into further education and training. They have looked carefully at what opportunities for work and employment there are in the locality and made sure that they work exceptionally well with other institutions locally to give you every opportunity to follow a course that suits you. Your school recognises that you have a great deal to offer, both in terms of ideas of how to improve the school and of how you can support different groups in your local community. The number of you involved in leading activities in primary schools, fund-raising activities or sports and art activities is commendable.

You are making good progress and achieving well especially in business, enterprise and ICT related courses. Your standards in mathematics are not as good as in other subjects and, consequently, your school is providing you with some very good support to help you to do even better. However, in order to help you gain even better results, especially in mathematics, we have asked the school to find ways to share best practice in teaching and eliminate inconsistencies so that :

- in every lesson all of you are challenged fully
- more lessons engage you actively in learning
- all marking makes the next steps in learning clear to you
- there are consistently high expectations of the presentation of written work.

We hope that you carry on enjoying school and that you continue to work and study hard so that you can enjoy a successful future.

Yours sincerely
Mrs Gillian Salter-Smith
Lead inspector

Bidston Avenue Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105060
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336410
Inspection dates	10–11 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Mrs Kathleen McArthur

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	413
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr George Davies
Headteacher	Mr S Brady
Date of previous school inspection	January 2007
School address	Tollemache Road Birkenhead CH41 0DQ
Telephone number	0151 6521594
Fax number	0151 6532064
Email address	headteacher@bidstonavenue.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, policies, documents, minutes of meetings, school and national data, and 65 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well pupils are challenged, particularly the more able
- the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the effectiveness of arrangements to promote community cohesion
- how effectively leaders and managers evaluate school performance and contribute to improvement planning.

Information about the school

Bidston Avenue Primary School is much larger than most primary schools. Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage. A small number are from other minority ethnic backgrounds, with a few who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is almost twice the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides two Reception classes.

Significant changes in leadership since the previous inspection include a new headteacher and deputy headteacher, and other senior posts. Major construction work to link the two school buildings was being carried out at the time of the inspection.

The school holds many externally validated awards, including Basic Skills, Activemark, Healthy Schools and Eco-School Bronze.

The Bidston Avenue Pre-school operates on the site. This is run privately and is subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school that provides outstanding care, guidance and support for every pupil and builds on excellent partnerships to fulfil its stated aim of 'creating opportunities for talents and interests to grow'. Pupils feel very safe and secure and gain memorable experiences in this happy, harmonious environment. Parents are very satisfied. 'My son gets up every morning excited and keen to learn.' and 'Staff put children first.' were typical comments. The school gives good value for money.

Pupils achieve well. A recent focus on improving key skills in literacy and numeracy is leading to rising standards, especially in mathematics. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are below the levels expected for their age. Here they get off to a good start and continue to make good progress through the school and reach average levels of attainment. However, the more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to attain the higher levels, particularly in writing at Key Stage 2. Pupils gain good reading skills but are less successful in structuring and composing their writing. Very skilled support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the small number learning to speak English as an additional language means they progress at the same rate as their classmates.

Good relationships between pupils and staff contribute strongly to good learning and behaviour. One pupil commented, 'Our teachers work as a team.' and many said how much they enjoy their lessons. Good teaching and imaginative activities ensure pupils are keen to learn and work hard. They know how to look after their health and trust staff to help with any problems. Opportunities to take responsibility are eagerly accepted and help pupils become increasingly responsible and mature. They cooperate well at work and play, and respect all the cultures represented in school, but are less aware of the wider and global communities. The exciting curriculum has some outstanding features that enrich pupils' experiences. For example, residential visits, the many opportunities to sing and perform, film making, access to the school portal from home and the wide variety of popular activities and clubs.

The dedicated and committed leadership and management team, ably supported by well-informed governors and staff has raised aspirations for everyone, including the pupils who are keen to achieve their learning targets. There is no complacency: targets for on-going school improvement are ambitious and challenging. Inspection findings matched the school's accurate evaluation of its overall effectiveness. Standards have risen, progress has accelerated and the building has been developed

to provide a welcoming, stimulating and well resourced environment. Consequently, there is good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards by:
 - ensuring the more able pupils are consistently challenged to reach higher levels
 - improving the structure and composition of pupils' writing.
- Extend pupils' awareness of lifestyles and cultures in the wider and global communities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils/children

2

Almost all groups of pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points. Good teaching captures their enthusiasm so they enjoy learning, listen carefully and work hard. Lesson observations, pupils' books and school data show that progress is good, and most pupils are on course to reach their challenging targets. Specific, focused support ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language progress well in relation to their starting points.

By the end of Year 2, the attainment of many pupils is now close to the expected levels for their age, but in 2009 few reached the higher level. However, this represents good progress for these pupils in relation to their starting points which were well below those usually seen when they started school. Pupils read well and this supports learning in all subjects, but their writing skills are weaker. Actions to boost writing include staff training and the use of materials that really motivate pupils. These are proving successful with younger pupils and helping to raise attainment but have only been in place for a short time and have yet to fully impact on the attainment of the older pupils in Key Stage 2. In 2009 attainment in Key Stage 2 matched national averages at both the expected and higher levels. Strong focus on improving calculation skills has raised attainment in mathematics, but writing skills at a higher level are weaker. This attainment represents good progress for these pupils in relation to their starting points in Year 1.

Pupils report that the school takes good care of them. They are well aware of safety issues, including internet safety, know there is always someone to turn to for help and that bullying is not tolerated. Although a few pupil questionnaires said behaviour could be better, good and often exemplary behaviour was observed in lessons and assemblies. Pupils move around the buildings and playgrounds with care and consideration for others and, as one pupil remarked, 'Staff protect us around the building work.'

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are always polite, friendly and helpful to staff, visitors and their classmates, and show sincere empathy for others, for example, the homeless. They eagerly accept responsibilities in the school community as play leaders and councillors and make a strong contribution to

the local community, participating in the recent 'Save Bidston Hill' campaign and recycling paper. Year 6 pupils learn about economics and how fair trade supports communities globally when they acted as farmers trading cocoa beans. Otherwise, pupils' awareness of issues and lifestyles in the wider world is limited. Attendance is satisfactory. Robust efforts to raise attendance have proved successful; rewards and certificates are prominently displayed around school. Pupils are well prepared for the next steps in education and for their future as responsible citizens.

These are the grades for pupils'/children's outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Varied teaching styles, stimulating activities, well chosen resources and high expectations inspire pupils to work hard, enjoy learning and make good progress. Some examples of exemplary teaching were observed. Well chosen questions ensure pupils of all abilities participate fully in lessons. 'If we are stuck, teachers give us an example or different method to help us.' reported one pupil typical of others. Well-deployed teaching assistants bring additional skills in modelling language and posing additional questions. Good assessment systems give a very clear picture of progress and provide valuable information to plan the next steps in learning. In some classes pupils often self-assess their work. They are very sure how to improve their work to reach their targets and say teachers' marking is helpful. However, activities do not always challenge pupils of different abilities, particularly the more able.

The balanced range of imaginative curriculum activities is carefully adapted to meet and support the needs of every pupil and includes a good personal development programme. Subjects are often linked through themes, and innovative use of information and communication technology, for example, film making, successfully develops and extends key skills in all subjects. Consequently, pupils show high levels of enjoyment in all activities. Enrichment is very strong and the school makes full use of its excellent partnerships to provide experiences pupils would not otherwise meet. Older pupils learn French or Spanish. There are frequent visits and visitors and many opportunities for pupils to sing or learn a musical instrument; the school throbbed as pupils in Years 3 and 4 practised Japanese drumming.

Parents and pupils have great confidence in the school’s exemplary care, guidance and support arrangements. Governors are particularly active in ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed meticulously and have been rigorous in overseeing site safety during the construction work. Close links between school, parents and all external agencies ensure high quality, sensitive support for pupils who face difficulties that make it hard for them to learn or take advantage of the opportunities offered by the school. Pupils reflect on the impact of their actions on others and parents say they are well prepared to move to the next stage of their education, from pre-school through to high school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Robust monitoring and evaluation ensure senior leaders know exactly how the school is performing, ensures all pupils experience consistently good teaching and enables them to set ambitious and demanding targets. Governance is good, with strong features in their active involvement, systems to quality assure the school’s work and in the way they challenge leaders. Parents appreciate the family learning workshops that help them support their child, they feel well informed and know their views and concerns are respected. Excellent partnerships enrich the curriculum and enhance the high quality care, for example, with the local Children’s Centre. The school takes the lead in sharing best practice with other settings, such as implementing and updating assessment systems. Good arrangements, including high quality additional support, ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to everything the school offers and progress well. Staff are vigilant and consistently implement good safeguarding procedures that ensure pupils’ safety and well-being. The harmonious school ethos is based on good community cohesion arrangements, enhanced through extensive local links and partnerships although evaluation of the impact of the school’s actions shows that pupils have limited knowledge of other ways of life in the wider British society and the world.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter school with skills below those typical for their age, and a significant proportion are weaker in language, communication and mathematical skills. A very caring ethos, warm, friendly relationships and strong, effective partnerships between staff and their parents ensure children feel confident, secure and safe. They gather quickly on the carpet each morning, eager to hear who will be given responsibilities that day. Behaviour is good and children soon learn to share, cooperate and play well together. They tidy up responsibly and show increasing independence when choosing activities. Daily practice with sounds and letters, for example, guessing games with the initial letters of their names, helps children progress rapidly, ready for reading and writing.

Good teaching provides an interesting range of learning activities, carefully balanced between those led by adults and those selected by the children. Staff are skilled in meeting the needs of each child, firmly based on careful observation of their progress and good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The rooms are bright, welcoming and appropriately equipped. However, plans do not always include activities outside and the outdoor area offers limited opportunities for children to extend their learning in the fresh air.

Leadership is good and ensures staff work closely together as a team with a real sense of purpose to improve and extend the learning experiences of each child. Consequently, the children make good progress in all areas of learning and most reach average levels of skills at the end of their time in the Reception classes, but are still weaker in writing.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Responses in the questionnaire show very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the school’s provision; parents and carers say their children enjoy school, are kept safe and that they are well informed about their progress. They showed great confidence in the staff and the leaders.

Inspection findings supported the positive views of parents but did not support the very few negative comments.

A concern was raised about the entrance gate to the infant playground which also provides access to the pre-school. The inspection found that the school has rigorous safety arrangements in place and the gate is staffed when pupils are outside.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bidston Avenue Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 413 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	75	12	18	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	68	20	31	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	57	26	40	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	55	25	38	2	3	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	42	65	21	32	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	52	29	45	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	55	26	40	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	36	55	26	40	3	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	60	23	35	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	54	27	42	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	45	32	49	2	3	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	38	58	24	37	3	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	68	18	28	1	2	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



12 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bidston Avenue Primary School, Birkenhead CH41 0DQ

I would like to thank you for making the team welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you and hearing what you thought about school. You told us you are happy and feel safe, enjoy learning and know how to care for your health, and your parents agree.

We were very impressed by the sensible way you behave around the school and were pleased to see you taking extra care while the building work was going on. We learned that you want to help in school and get involved with the local community, and take part in many sports and musical activities. We enjoyed hearing you singing and taking part in the Japanese drumming.

Bidston Avenue is a good school and the leaders and staff take excellent care of you all. They make sure you start well in the Reception classes and make good progress through school to reach the right standards for your age. They give you lots of interesting things to do in lessons and at the clubs, which you told us you enjoy very much. You also told us that you know what learning targets you are aiming for.

I have asked the leaders to:

- make sure teachers plan work that challenges more of you to reach higher levels in writing
- help you learn more about the wider world.

We know you are excited to have the new building and we hope this will add to your enjoyment of everything you do at school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kathleen McArthur
Lead inspector

Birkenhead Christ Church C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105064
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336411
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Mrs Diane Auton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Linda Christian
Headteacher	Mrs Marie Szydłowska
Date of previous school inspection	March 2007
School address	Mount Grove Birkenhead CH41 2UJ
Telephone number	0151 652 1278
Fax number	0151 653 7681
Email address	headteacher@christchurch-birkenhead.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including data about pupils' progress and attainment, the school's planning documents, policies, procedures and records. They reviewed information provided by parents and carers in the 23 questionnaires that were returned.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the standards reached by pupils and the progress they make
- the effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum in building on pupils' skills from year to year
- the impact of leadership and management on achieving the best possible outcomes for pupils
- how well provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to progress in their learning and development.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is greater than that found in most schools. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a very small proportion from other heritages, including a small number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Early Years Foundation Stage education is provided in the Nursery and Reception classes. The school has experienced several recent changes in personnel, including three new appointments to the teaching staff this term.

The school is an Investor in People. It also holds the Healthy Schools Award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Activemark and the School Travel Plan Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

From very low starting points on entry to the Nursery class, most pupils go on to reach the nationally expected level of attainment in all subjects by the end of Key Stage 2. However, the rate of progress is very uneven across the school and, as a result, pupils do not start to achieve well until the final years of Key Stage 2. Attainment is below average by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils continue to work at levels below the expectations for their age during the first half of Key Stage 2.

After making a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils' progress slows down until the final two years of Key Stage 2, when it starts to accelerate rapidly and attainment rises significantly. This has been a consistent picture for the past three years. The school recognises the need to address underachievement in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 and a number of actions are currently being taken with this in view. These developments are positive, but are mostly at an early stage and so it is too soon to measure their impact on pupils' attainment and overall rate of progress. However, because teaching has been recently and significantly improved, pupils are now more effective learners across the school. As a result, good learning is a characteristic of most lessons, reflecting the current good overall quality of teaching. There has not been time for these improvements to become evident in sustained good progress over longer periods as seen in performance data. Hence, learning and progress are judged to be satisfactory although pupils' performance in lessons is now good. This good performance is rooted in good teaching and an improved, good-quality curriculum which ensures that pupils are fully engaged in most lessons and have good opportunities to develop basic skills in many subjects.

Pupils behave well and show a good understanding of how and why to adopt healthy lifestyles. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school is caring and inclusive and provides well for pupils who are learning English, those who are vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, those pupils make good progress.

The school has established a systematic approach to tracking and reviewing the progress pupils make. This has had the best impact for pupils with additional needs, who are identified accurately and supported well. The school is less effective in identifying any underachievement by more-able pupils. The use of individual learning targets contributes well to the good progress pupils make in Reception and Year 6; this successful strategy is not yet fully developed in the other classes. Work has

begun to improve continuity of provision between Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 in order to meet pupils' learning needs more accurately in Key Stage 1. This, too, is still at a very early stage. Monitoring systems have been strengthened, and this has helped to ensure that teaching, learning and the curriculum are good. While the school's self-evaluation is accurate in most respects, it does not fully recognise the extent to which more-able pupils may be underachieving. Consequently, the school's capacity for continuing to improve is currently satisfactory, rather than good. The poor attendance of a minority of pupils is an ongoing issue for the school, despite its strenuous efforts to promote and encourage regular attendance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress and attainment, particularly in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4, by:
 - ensuring that provision in Key Stage 1 is closely matched to pupils' learning needs
 - rapidly extending current good practice in the use of individual learning targets to all classes
 - using the information gained from tracking pupils' progress to identify any underachievement, and especially of more-able pupils, so that it may be addressed promptly and effectively.

- Improve attendance by further increasing its efforts to implement a full range of strategies to promote regular attendance by a small minority of pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils apply themselves well in lessons and show good concentration skills. They work well with a partner or in groups and in most lessons they are alert and responsive and show interest in learning. Improvements in the quality of teaching are enabling all groups of pupils to become more confident and effective learners. In a minority of lessons, where insufficient challenge is provided for them, more-able pupils do not learn as well as they might. Until very recently, pupils' average attainment has resulted mainly from particularly effective teaching in Years 5 and 6, which led to rapid progress towards the end of pupils' time in the school. Currently, as pupils' learning skills are improving, progress in lessons is speeding up and is now good overall but progress over time remains satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make consistently good progress as they move up through the school. This a consequence of the targeted support given to those pupils with additional needs in this inclusive school.

Pupils show a good understanding of issues relating to healthy living and personal safety. They take responsibility as school councillors and are active fundraisers for charities at home and abroad. Pupils, and parents and carers, agree that school is a place of safety, although a small minority described some instances of aggressive behaviour between pupils at playtimes. However, no examples of this were seen during the inspection. On the contrary, pupils behave well. Despite the school's efforts to promote good attendance, a small number of families have not been able to ensure that their children attend regularly and attendance figures are below national targets.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Ongoing improvements in provision are helping pupils to enjoy school, learn and progress increasingly well in lessons. Rigorous monitoring ensures the continuing effectiveness of provision. Teaching is of good overall quality. Lessons are usually planned well to take the range of learners' needs into account. The pace of learning is mostly brisk, tasks appropriately challenging and teachers use questions well to extend pupils' thinking. Teachers ensure that pupils are given a clear understanding of what they are expected to do and to achieve in lessons. Good procedures and regular use of assessment ensure that teachers have a clear overview of pupils' progress. Marking gives pupils good advice on how to improve their work. However, the school recognises that the use of individual learning targets, a strong feature in some classes, has not been fully developed across all year groups and so there are some missed opportunities for informing pupils about how well they are doing. It is now taking action to improve this. Well-trained teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning, especially that of pupils who have additional needs.

The curriculum has been revised and is now designed effectively to meet pupils' needs and to reflect their interests. This ensures that they are fully engaged in most lessons. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills through work across the areas of learning. The curriculum is well enriched by opportunities for pupils to develop skills in sports and to learn a modern foreign language. A range of visitors and visits add well to the effective programme to promote pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship

education. Carefully planned provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that they enjoy full access to learning and social inclusion. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 is starting to be adapted to meet the needs of those pupils who enter Year 1 with low levels of skills, for example by providing more opportunities for them to practise their skills during structured play. Pastoral care is good and the school works sensitively to support vulnerable pupils and their families. This is helping to break down the barriers to learning and progress that a number of pupils encounter. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. The school works hard to promote good attendance and to support families where there is record of their children's poor attendance, although this has not yet resulted in improved attendance by a small minority of pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, is successfully bringing the new staff team together in a shared commitment to her vision for taking the school forward. Regular progress reviews enable staff to identify and support pupils with additional needs. As a result, those pupils attain well in relation to their abilities and starting points. There has not yet been a similar impact on the progress and attainment of pupils in the middle- and higher-ability groups in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4, however. This is because the school has not been sufficiently strategic in identifying and supporting pupils who may be underachieving. Good monitoring practice is assuring the good overall quality of teaching. Subject leaders contribute actively to ensuring the good quality of the curriculum. The supportive governing body is increasing its capacity to hold the school to account. Most parents and carers expressed positive views of the school, reflecting the positive relationships that prevail between parents and carers, and staff. The school regularly canvasses parents' and carers' views on important issues. Despite its good efforts, it has not yet been able to engage fully with a minority of families with problems relating to attendance. The school complies with statutory requirements for safeguarding, health and safety, and child protection. It supports equal opportunities and access to educational entitlement satisfactorily. The school contributes well to community cohesion through its links in the parish and the community. It has effective partnerships with the high school and local specialist schools. In addition, it helps to support a student in India and has partnerships with a range of agencies that promote pupils' health, welfare, social and learning needs.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's skills on entry to Nursery are often well below expectations for the age group. They make good progress, but by the end of the Reception Year a significant proportion of children still have not reached expected levels. The quality of teaching is good, with a good balance of activities initiated by the children themselves and those led and directed by adults. Staff provide a range of activities that are interesting and fun for children and present a good level of challenge. Relationships are caring and warm and, consequently, children are happy and secure in the setting. Provision to ensure their welfare is good and meets requirements. Assessment is based on careful observations of children in their activities and is used effectively to plan for their individual learning needs. Although relationships with parents and carers are positive, parents and carers are not yet involved enough as partners in their children's learning and assessment. The learning environment is bright and welcoming and the outdoor area has been developed well to support active learning through play. The setting is led and managed well and the staff team work together effectively to promote the children's learning and well-being. Provision is monitored regularly and this supports ongoing improvements. Links with external agencies help to support the progress of children with additional learning, language or social needs.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The rate of response to the questionnaire was low. A very large majority of those who responded said they agree or strongly agree that they are happy with their children's experience at the school. This is in line with the inspection team's judgement on the school's satisfactory overall effectiveness. A small number of parents and carers were critical of the school's management of unacceptable behaviour: the inspection team did not agree with them, finding that pupils' behaviour is good and is managed well by the staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Birkenhead Christ Church CofE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 205 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	78	3	13	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	13	57	9	39	1	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	52	11	48	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	52	10	43	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	57	9	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	48	10	43	2	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	52	10	43	1	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	9	39	13	57	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	43	12	52	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	52	10	43	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	43	11	48	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	11	48	8	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	61	8	35	1	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



25 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Birkenhead Christ Church C of E Primary School, Birkenhead, CH41 2UJ

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school. As you know, we came to see how well the school is doing and how you are all getting on with your learning. These are some of the things we found.

- The school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. Christ Church is a happy school and you are well-behaved and polite young people.
- You work hard in your lessons, you enjoy your learning and you get on well with each other and with the adults in school. In this you are helped by good teaching and an interesting curriculum.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage gets your education off to a good start; pupils attain well by the end of Year 6, but progress isn't yet as good as it could be in some of the other years.
- I was very pleased to hear about how much you enjoy school. You also told me that you think the after-school activities are very good.

There is still some work to be done to make Christ Church the best school it can possibly be. I have asked the headteacher and the staff:

- to make some improvements to the way they review your progress, to help to find out when you may need extra support to do as well as you possibly can
- to make sure that the good use made of individual learning targets in some classes is shared throughout the school to help all of you to know how well you are doing
- to continue working on the links between Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 so that children keep making good progress when they join Year 1 and Year 2
- to carry on doing all they can to improve attendance.

You can help with all of this by continuing to do your best, by continuing to be happy learners and by making sure you attend school regularly.

With my very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Diane Auton
Lead inspector

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Black Horse Hill Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105032
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336405
Inspection dates	18–19 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Mrs Judith Straw

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sandra Crowden
Headteacher	Mr Harry Kennedy
Date of previous school inspection	October 2007
School address	Saughall Massie Road West Kirby Wirral CH48 6DR
Telephone number	0151 625 8446
Fax number	0151 625 2999
Email address	headteacher@blackhorse hill-junior.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work across a range of subjects, school policies and procedures, including all documentation relating to safeguarding, curriculum planning, the school's development plan, tracking information about the progress of pupils, and questionnaires from 86 parents and carers, 167 pupils and nine staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well all pupils are learning, progressing and achieving their potential
- whether aspects of pupils' personal development are outstanding
- the accuracy of the school's evaluation of teaching, learning and the curriculum
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in bringing about school improvement.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average junior school and is situated in an area of average prosperity. The great majority of pupils come from a White British background and very few are from other backgrounds. None speak English as a second language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average. The proportion identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, although few pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

The school holds the Activemark, Healthy Schools award, the Bike-It Bronze award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the local authority accreditation for International School award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. As one parent put it, echoing the views of many, 'The school has constantly exceeded my expectations and shown itself to be wholeheartedly committed to the education of the children and the local community.'

Pupils make good progress because they are real partners in their learning. Teaching is good and pupils are encouraged to think for themselves, work independently of teachers and develop habits of research and investigation which are transferable across all areas of learning. An exciting, innovative and creative curriculum is being developed which enhances enjoyment and fires the imagination of pupils. The school takes very good care of pupils so that they feel safe, happy and confident. Some aspects of pupils' personal development are outstanding. These are their approach to healthy living, their contribution to the school and wider community and their knowledge and understanding of how to keep safe.

Pupils join Year 3 with attainment that is above average. When they leave in Year 6 standards are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Inspection evidence confirmed the school's own assessment that the learning, progress and achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good across a range of subjects. Inspection evidence, as well as the school's own accurate and detailed tracking data, shows that pupils make slower progress in mathematics and this is currently a whole-school focus for improvement. Pupils do not always receive enough advice on how to improve their work in mathematics and sometimes there is not enough planning for the full range of ability in each class.

Leadership and management are good at all levels. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching and learning has improved, an innovative and creative curriculum has become firmly embedded and the quality of care, guidance and support has been enhanced. The school has an accurate knowledge of its strengths and areas where improvements can be made. This good track record combined with a strong and effective working partnership between teachers and parents and carers illustrates well that the school has good capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and achievement in mathematics by:
 - further embedding strategies already in place to improve provision in mathematics
 - ensuring that work is better matched to the needs of the full range of pupils in each mathematics set
 - improving the quality and consistency of the feedback pupils receive through marking.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Teaching and learning are able to flourish because pupils want to learn. They enjoy coming to school where their attendance is above average. A comment, typical of many was, 'I love this school; it helps everyone to be creative.' Pupils say there is no bullying and that they feel completely safe and happy in school. They throw themselves wholeheartedly into the life of the school taking full advantage of the many enrichment activities on offer. Their contribution to their school and local community is outstanding. Many pupils take on roles and responsibilities in school such as being active playground leaders, serving on the school council or as class monitors, becoming house captains, road safety officers and joining the Bike-It crew. Two boys are 'Reading Champions' and work with the local library to encourage other boys to read regularly. The school council has been filmed by the local authority as an example to other schools of good practice. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the benefits of healthy eating and taking regular exercise. The school council is passionately committed to making the school even more health conscious than it is already. This is one of the first schools to achieve the Bike-It Award and pupils really enjoy the Bike-It breakfasts which are provided for those who cycle or walk to school.

Attitudes and behaviour are good in and out of lessons. Attainment in English is rising steadily but declining in mathematics. The school is developing strategies to address this issue, including involving parents and carers in their children's learning. The school's detailed tracking data shows that over half of all pupils in every class are making better than expected progress in the core subjects. In lessons, pupils are enthusiastic, keen to learn and work very well in partnership with their teachers and each other. Pupils develop strong academic skills and excellent social skills. They are keen to talk about their work and take pride in its presentation. Their books are a pleasure to read. Project work is extremely well presented and standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are high.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2

The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good across the school, although teachers are aware that pupils are making slower progress in mathematics than in other subjects. There is a whole-school focus on improving provision and standards in mathematics and teachers are currently trialling different ways of accelerating progress. The emphasis across the school is on developing key transferable skills through fascinating and creative topics such as the current project in Years 4 and 5, called 'fire and fury'. Teachers plan carefully so that many skills are developed. They are beginning to assess pupils' progress across a range of subjects such as history, geography and ICT. Teachers make lessons exciting, challenging and fun. For example, during the inspection, Year 3 were making pizzas as part of their work on Italy and Year 6 were improvising scenes from Macbeth. Teaching assistants support teachers well and play a very positive part in children's learning. Pupils participate fully in reviewing their own and others' work. However, marking comments, particularly in mathematics, do not always ensure that pupils know how to improve their work.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and designed to meet the needs of pupils. School leaders have worked hard to develop the curriculum since the last inspection and to inject excitement, enthusiasm, an investigative approach and a love of learning into the work that pupils do. There is an emphasis on problem solving and many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop team-working skills, enterprise skills, skills in handling money, and gardening and ICT skills. The cross-curricular themes, such as 'roman holiday', 'tomb raiders' and 'working children', broaden pupils' horizons as do the numerous visits pupils make, such as to Roman Chester, and the whole-school Victorian and Tudor days. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is provided, including different sporting clubs every afternoon, chess and Chinese, and the take-up is strong.

The care, guidance and support to promote the welfare of all pupils is good. Transition arrangements into the school from the infant school and on to secondary school at the end of Year 6 are smooth and comfortable for pupils. Pastoral care is strong because teachers and other adults take time to listen to children and get to know them well. Very effective strategies support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they are quickly diagnosed and the right level of support is available to ensure that they make good progress. Pupils have the opportunity to develop into capable, confident, independent and caring individuals. The school is working to improve further the links with other schools and to ensure that progress is consistent across all subjects.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The direction and purpose given to the school by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher are outstanding. There is a strong sense of teamwork in the school, based on mutual support. Improvements have been made by consulting staff and parents and carers so that everyone feels valued and willing to put new ideas into practice, for example with the new creative curriculum and the new parents council. Governors, teachers, managers and leaders all support each other well. Together, they have succeeded in ensuring that the school has improved significantly over the last few years. The school knows itself well and is keen to improve further. Community cohesion is good. There are excellent links with the local community, including the local church, and good international links with a local secondary school and three primary schools in South Africa.

The school has good procedures for promoting equal opportunity. All pupils in the school are able to enjoy all that the school offers. There are good systems in place at all levels for monitoring the quality of the school's work and it has an honest and accurate picture of strengths and weaker areas. The school development plan identifies priorities and clearly sets out how they are to be addressed. Safeguarding arrangements and matters relating to child protection and health and safety are handled well and provision is good. The school works well with external agencies. Parents and carers are consulted and engaged at all levels and their suggestions are acted on if considered to be in the best interests of all concerned. Governors play an active, supportive and critical role and are very well informed about the school.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The great majority of parents and carers are very pleased and praise many aspects of the schools' work. They are impressed by the commitment of the headteacher and staff, the good behaviour and discipline which is maintained, the exciting and challenging curriculum and the care taken of their children, with one parent stating, 'Pastoral care is exceptional.' Parents and carers also appreciate the efforts made by the school to empower them to help their children. They are confident that the school has improved over recent years. Representatives of the newly formed parent council spoke of their desire to act as a channel of communication so that all concerns raised by parents and carers can be explored and, if possible, addressed. The minority of parents and carers who expressed negative comments were concerned about the large class sizes in Years 4 and 5. It is the case that these are large classes but inspectors noted that teachers manage them well and that most pupils make good progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Black Horse Hill Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 86 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	61	31	35	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	68	77	18	20	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	49	56	37	42	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	51	38	43	4	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	49	56	35	40	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	51	40	45	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	52	40	45	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	50	39	44	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	51	35	40	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	49	37	42	4	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	44	42	48	3	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	52	59	35	40	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	64	30	34	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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Common terminology used by inspectors

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Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



20 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Black Horse Hill Junior School, Wirral, CH48 6DR

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited you in school this week. It was a privilege to spend two days with you. We thoroughly enjoyed hearing your views about school. It is obvious that you really enjoy school and we agree with you and your parents and carers that yours is a good school.

We were very impressed by your knowledge and understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives and with the great way you all contribute to your school community. It is obvious you are very proud of your school. We noted your good behaviour and positive attitude in lessons. This is why you make good progress and attain standards which are above average, and well above average in English and science. Teaching and learning are good and you clearly enjoy lessons. You told us that you love 'context for learning' work where you look at an amazing range of different topics and become investigators and designers. The school takes good care of you and you feel safe at all times. The leaders and managers in school work well with your parents and carers to try to make sure you get the most you can out of school life.

There is one area where you are not learning quite as well and that is in mathematics. Teachers have already noticed this and are planning to help you to make better progress in mathematics. We have asked them to plan for the different abilities you have and make sure that when your work is marked you know exactly what you need to do to improve it.

We wish you all the best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Judith Straw
On behalf of the inspection team.

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Cathcart Street Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105048
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336407
Inspection dates	03–04 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Mr Philip Martin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Cocker
Headteacher	Mrs R Bishop
Date of previous school inspection	September 2006
School address	Dover Close Birkenhead CH41 3JY
Telephone number	0151 647 7349
Fax number	0151 647 2325
Email address	schooloffice@cathcartstreet.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited six lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' previous work, policies and procedures, including those concerned with ensuring pupils' safety and well-being, improvement plans and its evaluation of its current strengths and weaknesses. Inspectors also checked the responses to questionnaires sent to parents/carers, pupils and staff. Parents returned 14 questionnaires in time for analysis. Inspectors also read those that arrived after this deadline.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- to what extent the strengths in provision and progress have been maintained
- if the quality of teaching and the curriculum is good enough to raise standards and progress in the key subjects
- the quality of care, guidance and support provided and its effect on pupils' personal development
- the extent and impact of monitoring and evaluation carried by the school's leadership in maintaining and sustaining improvements.

Information about the school

Cathcart Street is a small primary school. The school makes provision for children of Nursery and Reception age in an Early Years Foundation Stage Unit. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational need is average. Most pupils are White British and a small number come from a range of other backgrounds. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The headteacher took up post in September 2008. The school has the Healthy Schools Award, Bronze Eco-Award, the Activemark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

A key strength is the good care and support the school offers to all children and pupils. Many pupils come from difficult circumstances and challenging situations. Staff provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment in which pupils can learn. Pupils enjoy school very much and feel safe. This is verified by their answers to a questionnaire asking for their views. A typical response declares that, 'The staff here help us a lot and support us'. All parents who answered a questionnaire agreed that their children are safe. The school, along with a range of agencies and groups, works well with parents to help them to support their children and to realise the importance of academic as well as personal success. A typical comment from a parent notes that '... this is a supportive school'. Despite pupils' enjoyment and the school's determined efforts, attendance rates are low. This is largely because of the poor attendance of a few pupils and the health problems that some children experience.

From low starting points, pupils make satisfactory overall progress. Progress is better than this in English because staff have worked hard to ensure that this important subject is taught effectively. As a result, pupils reach broadly average standards by the time they leave school. Standards are low but improving in mathematics and science. The school has a satisfactory capacity to sustain improvements. The school recognises what it does well and where it needs to improve because of the satisfactory systems which evaluate strengths and weaknesses. It has a useful action plan focused on raising standards. It is evident that the work the school is doing to improve teaching and the curriculum in mathematics is having a positive impact. Standards are rising and the quality of teaching is improving. Whilst the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, teachers are sometimes not fully clear about what they expect pupils to learn. This means that activities are not always as useful as they might be in helping them to learn particular skills. At its best, teachers' marking tells pupils how well they have done and how they could make that type of work better. This quality of marking is inconsistently applied.

Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage Unit with knowledge and skills much lower than those expected at that age. Their communication and social skills are particularly low. They learn well because of the good quality provision. By the end of this key stage, they have made good improvement in those areas in which they were weakest. The good range of resources for these children includes an outdoor area, but this is not always accessible in wet weather because there is no covered space and children's own clothing is not always suitable.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics and science by:
 - fully implementing the existing plans to improve teaching and learning in both subjects.
- Raise the quality of teaching from satisfactory to at least good by:
 - making sure that teachers are consistently clear about what pupils are to learn during lessons
 - making sure that the way that teachers mark pupils' work consistently informs pupils about what they need to do to improve.
- Improve the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - providing facilities and equipment so that children can learn and play outside in all weathers.
- Raise attendance levels by:
 - encouraging the attendance of those pupils who are too regularly absent.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils/children

3

Pupils start Year 1 with lower than average standards and make satisfactory progress overall. Progress is good in English and by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 they have reached average standards in this subject. Standards in mathematics, though low, are improving as result of the school's continuing focus on improving teaching and learning. Standards in science are also low. The school recognises this and has devised an action plan to improve the situation. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and receive useful support that helps them to make similar progress to their classmates. The few pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English also make satisfactory progress.

Pupils enjoy school. All parents who responded to a questionnaire asking for their views agree with this, as did pupils who took part in discussions with inspectors. Pupils know the importance of staying healthy and different ways they can do this. They usually behave well in class, but a few find it difficult to maintain these standards at times. The school has effective systems for encouraging good behaviour. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities. As a result of their satisfactory achievement and the school's useful focus on helping pupils to develop personal qualities, they are satisfactorily prepared for the next steps in their education.

These are the grades for pupils'/children's outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers in Years 1-6 satisfactorily use their knowledge of how well pupils are doing to plan lessons that match the different ability groups in each class. A good feature of mathematics lessons was the clear link between what pupils were learning and how this related to life outside the classroom. In the better lessons, teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. They share this in a way that helps pupils to understand the steps they need to go through to succeed. Sometimes however, this information is lacking. Whilst teachers keep marking up to date, this sometimes does not link clearly enough to the purpose of the lesson. In some cases, it offers advice how to improve in the particular task. This feature is sometimes missing. The curriculum is rightly focused on providing pupils with basic literacy and numeracy skills. They use their literacy skills satisfactorily in other subjects, for example when recording their experiences in 'International Week'. The curriculum is enriched with a good range of activities that add extra interest, enjoyment and an understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Teachers are deeply concerned for pupils' welfare and learning and look after them well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have gained an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses through useful systems of monitoring and evaluation. The team has devised plans for further improvement which are based on the right priorities. The plan for further improving mathematics in partnership with the local authority is robust and having a positive and measurable impact on teaching and standards. Governors provide a satisfactory degree of support and challenge. They have ensured that all safeguarding requirements are met. The school draws on

partnerships with a wide range of agencies and tries hard to involve parents in order to improve provision. This extends to good links with agencies and groups in supporting pupils' personal development. This is a central part of the school's work because of the serious nature of the barriers to learning that many pupils experience. The school has a good awareness of the pupils' backgrounds and makes a satisfactory contribution towards promoting community cohesion. It has engaged in some effective work to bring in members of the local community, for example, the 'International Week' and joint activities within the region. Existing links with schools in other countries make a positive contribution to pupils' understanding of children from different backgrounds.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children start in the Nursery with standards well below those expected for their age. Their communication and personal, social and emotional skills are particularly low. The Early Years Foundation Stage teacher and other staff carefully assess children's progress and use this information to plan work and activities that match their needs. They provide a good balance of adult-led activities and those that the children start themselves, although many need to learn how to play on their own initiative. Staff work hard to develop children's communication and social skills and they ensure that all welfare requirements are met. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage most children are willing and happy learners. They are increasingly comfortable talking to adults and to each other. They know how to stay healthy and safe, for example, when putting out equipment for physical education. They experience a good range of activities, although wet weather sometimes limits their opportunities to learn and play outdoors. They make good progress and standards, although still below average, are closer to age-related expectations at the end of the stage than they were at the start. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The leader has a good overview of provision and leads an effective team of staff.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

All of the parents who responded to a questionnaire about their views agree, or strongly agree, that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. Most parents agree or strongly agree with the other points. A typical comment notes that 'the school has a happy atmosphere.' A very small number of parents felt that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection team agrees with the parents positive views and finds that the school has effective systems in place for dealing with misbehaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cathcart Street Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 17 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 117 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	59	7	41	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	14	82	3	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	71	5	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	59	6	35	1	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	65	5	29	1	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	59	5	29	1	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	65	5	29	1	7	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	8	47	7	41	1	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	53	7	41	1	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	47	6	35	3	21	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	53	7	41	1	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	53	7	41	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	12	71	4	24	1	7	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



7 December 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Cathcart Street Primary School, Birkenhead, CH41 3JY

I would like to thank you for the welcome you gave to my colleague and me when we inspected your school. I would particularly like to thank those of you who spoke with inspectors and those who completed the questionnaire.

There are many positive things about the school which I found are giving you a satisfactory education. It is very clear that the adults in school care a lot about all of you. You told me that you enjoy school very much when I talked to you and in the questionnaires. It works with other groups well to make sure that you are looked after and kept safe but some of you are absent from school too much.

Children in the Foundation Unit get off to a good start but they do not have enough opportunities to play and work outside. By the time you leave school, you are reaching standards in English that are close to what they should be. The standards you reach in mathematics and science are quite a way below what they should be at your age. They are improving in mathematics because your teachers are working well with the local authority to help you to learn. They use what they know about how well you are doing to plan satisfactory lessons, but sometimes they do not tell you clearly enough what you are going to learn. Sometimes, the way they mark your work could be more helpful.

I have asked the school to do the following things to make it better than it is now by:

- making sure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage Unit have the right kind of equipment so they can learn and play outside
- making sure that what you learn in mathematics and science helps you to reach the standards you should
- improving teaching by making sure you know what you are meant to be learning in each lesson and marking your work so that you know how you can make it even better.

You can help by continuing to try your best at all times and making sure you come to school as often as possible.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Philip Martin

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Christ The King Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105081
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336421
Inspection dates	03–04 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Sheila O'Keeffe

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sharon Moore
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Doogan
Date of previous school inspection	February 2007
School address	Allport Road Bromborough Wirral CH62 6AE
Telephone number	0151 334 4345
Fax number	0151 334 9658
Email address	headteacher@christtheking.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, observed all staff, with the majority of time spent observing learning. They held meetings with the Chair of Governors, staff, groups of pupils, parents, as well as talking informally with staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation and pupils' work. The inspectors also took into account the responses to questionnaires completed by pupils and 180 parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the attainment and achievement of the more able pupils in Key Stage 1, particularly in reading and writing and in Key Stage 2, in mathematics
- the outcomes, provision and leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how well pupils are involved in the assessment of their own learning and how well they are informed about how to improve their work
- the strengths in pupils' personal development and the care, guidance and support provided.

Information about the school

Christ the King is a larger than average sized primary school. The majority of pupils are White British, with a very small number who belong to minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are below average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of two Reception classes. New pupils joined the school a few years ago after Key Stage 1, as a result of two local school closures. In the last year, the school appointed a new headteacher and more recently a new deputy headteacher. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, Activemark and 'Sing Up' Gold Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Christ the King provides a welcoming, caring atmosphere where pupils are guided and supported well in developing their social skills and respect for each other. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English make good progress because they receive good support. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures positive relationships and a friendly, happy environment. Pupils feel safe and enjoy their time at school. Satisfactory safeguarding systems are in place. Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning are reflected in their high academic achievement in English, mathematics and science. Their academic achievement is outstanding. From broadly average starting points, pupils make good progress and reach standards that are well above the national average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. More able pupils at both key stages do well. This is because of good teaching and the good use teachers make of assessment to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential. In a small proportion of lessons where the pace is slower, pupils are not sufficiently engaged in activities and do not have enough opportunities to be involved in assessing their own work and so they do not fully understand what they need to do to improve it. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress, but the outside provision for learning is not as good as the indoor provision.

The curriculum is good and is enhanced by effective, enrichment activities which benefit pupils' good personal, creative and artistic development. Pupils have a good understanding of the local and of global communities through their studies. However, their experiences are not as well developed as regards their awareness and understanding of other communities that make up the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom.

The newly formed senior leadership team is focused on the right priorities to maintain and improve pupils' excellent achievement and ensure continuing high standards. As a result, pupils receive the support they need for their individual needs so they can make good progress. The school is fully aware of its strengths and areas for development and has planned carefully to address relative weaknesses by seeking support from outside agencies and delivering staff training. This demonstrates the good capacity that the school has to maintain the high academic standards and address the areas for improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the outdoor learning provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Ensure that all pupils are engaged in assessing and improving their own work.
- Improve pupils’ awareness and understanding of the different communities that make up the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom, by providing opportunities for pupils to engage with communities different from their own.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils have a positive attitude to their learning and achieve extremely well. This is evident in lessons, particularly where teachers set work which engages and challenges pupils in exciting activities and pupils have time to be involved in assessing their own work and have a good grasp of what they need to do to improve. In some lessons, progress is satisfactory because the pace is too slow and pupils are not actively engaged and, therefore, do not have sufficient time to explore, reflect, discuss, share and assess their own work.

When pupils begin Year 1, most are working at levels above those expected for their age. During Key Stage 1, they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics to reach standards by the end of Year 2 which are above average. The rate of progress continues through Key Stage 2, resulting in standards which are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are especially high in English.

Pupils are polite, well mannered and confident. They enjoy school and undertake their responsibilities as members of the school council or as playground buddies seriously. Behaviour and attendance are good. Pupils show respect for one another and play together well. Pupils are developing a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.

There are good links with the local community, for example, the choir sings on special occasions at church. Pupils show respect for the needs of others, celebrate difference and recognise what is right or wrong. They raise money and make contributions to charitable causes and are aware of global issues, for example, through the video news-bites that they regularly view in class. Pupils’ understanding and awareness of the multicultural diversity of the United Kingdom are limited because they have too few opportunities to engage with people from diverse backgrounds.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most lessons have a number of strong features, including good relationships between staff and pupils and good systems for checking on pupils' progress. In these lessons, teachers create an exciting, learning atmosphere where pupils are keen to do well and behaviour is good. Teaching assistants play an important role in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensuring they make good progress in their learning. Generally marking is used well to guide pupils on how to improve their work. Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities, for instance, opportunities to learn about myths and legends by taking part in role play, drama, dance and food tasting. This makes learning fun. Where teaching is less effective, teachers do not engage pupils early on in the lesson in interesting activities. In these lessons, pupils have relatively few opportunities to be involved in assessing, sharing and discussing their own work and ways to improve it. The school tracks the progress of pupils well to ensure that no pupil falls behind.

Pupils' enjoyment is enhanced by a good curriculum. The enrichment activities, such as the Key Stage 2 four-part harmony choir, make a good contribution to pupils' self-esteem and the development of their artistic talent through opportunities to perform for different audiences. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of learning English, is good because of the school's early identification and subsequent support systems that are put in place. The school actively promotes good attendance through its reward system.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The newly formed senior leadership team has focused on forming curriculum teams to share expertise and to work on identified key areas for improvement. Monitoring and development of teaching and learning are good and linked to sustaining continual improvement. Governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are changing their practice to link in with the

curriculum teams to monitor the areas targeted for development. Equal opportunities, tackling discrimination and good partnerships with parents and relevant agencies are central to the school's work in improving outcomes for all pupils, ensuring they are helped to succeed. At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures were satisfactory. The school is a good cohesive community, supports the local community and is effective in developing pupils' global awareness. However, pupils' experience and understanding of the different communities that make up the cultural diversity in the United Kingdom is not as well developed.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account:	
The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle well and get off to a good start because of the good relationships that staff form with them and the good communication with parents and carers to gather and share important information. Children are well cared for, safe and happy which is reflected in their good behaviour and the way in which they take turns and share resources well. Children make good progress in developing their skills across all areas of learning because of the good support and interesting activities that are provided, especially indoors. Staff use observations of children to help them plan the next steps in children's learning so that individual needs are met. Overall provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. It is well led and managed. From broadly average starting points most children make good progress and develop skills which are mostly above those expected for their age when they reach Year 1. The good indoor provision is not reflected in the outdoor learning environment. Although children do have free access to outdoor learning, the outside area is small and not fully equipped in order to provide for all areas of learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers are very positive about all aspects of the school's provision. They feel that their children are happy at school, and in particular, they are pleased with the progress their children make. Inspectors followed up a few negative comments made, and taking into account their own observations, pupils' responses to the questionnaire, meetings with pupils, analysis of school documentation and discussion with the headteacher, they found no evidence to cause concern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Christ The King Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 180 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 367 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	111	62	65	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	127	71	50	28	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	110	61	61	34	7	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	104	58	68	38	1	1	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	116	64	60	33	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	107	59	68	38	4	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	94	52	71	39	10	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	89	49	76	42	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	107	59	68	38	2	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	80	44	85	47	6	3	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	82	46	88	49	5	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	106	59	66	37	5	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	118	66	60	33	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
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Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

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Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Christ The King Catholic Primary School, Wirral, CH62 6AE

We enjoyed our inspection of your school. I would like to thank you all for making us feel welcome and, in particular, the two pupils who gave us a guided tour. Your good social skills make the school a happy place. Many of you told us how much you enjoy school, particularly the visits and visitors. The adults look after you well and you have a good range of activities in which to take part. I was impressed by your excellent school choir, singing so beautifully in four-part harmony.

Here are some of the things we found out about your school.

- Christ The King is a good school that helps you to become thoughtful, confident and caring young people.
- You make good progress and achieve well above average standards by the time you leave in Year 6.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to make sure that:

- the young children have a bigger and better outside play space
- teachers help you all to understand how well you are doing and know how to improve your work
- you all learn more about people in different communities in the United Kingdom.

I wish you all good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sheila O'Keeffe
Lead inspector

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Church Drive Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105053
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336409
Inspection dates	16–17 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Mr John Dunne

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Molyneux
Headteacher	Mr N Long
Date of previous school inspection	April 2007
School address	Church Drive Port Sunlight Wirral CH62 5EF
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at assessment data, individual education plans, case studies and monitoring and evaluation documents. Forty parental questionnaires were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the capacity of leaders and managers to secure improvements in attainment, particularly in mathematics
- whether teaching is securely challenging and effective so that recent improvements are likely to be maintained and built upon
- how successfully the curriculum has been adapted to enable all to make good progress
- pupils' understanding of diversity and how well the school is promoting engagement with community groups beyond the school and the immediate locality.

Information about the school

The school is slightly larger than average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. Most pupils are of White British heritage; a small proportion is from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of a Nursery and Reception class in interlinked classrooms with continuous access to an open play area. Some pupils attend the before and after-school care facility that is not managed by the school. This was not inspected on this inspection. A separate report is published on the Ofsted website. The school has gained a number of awards including: Healthy Schools award, Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, Exceptional Delivery of National School Sport Strategy award and the Financial Management Standard in Schools.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school offers a satisfactory and improving quality of education. It has a number of strengths which include the good provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' behaviour and relationships with each other and adults are good both in class and around school. Their understanding of how to stay healthy is well developed. This is making a positive contribution to their personal development. As result, pupils enjoy school.

Following the last inspection, standards declined at the end of Key Stage 2 and remained stubbornly low in mathematics. New appointments significantly strengthened the senior leadership team. This enabled the school to implement a range of measures which have been effective in raising attainment. It is now broadly average overall including in mathematics and is continuing to rise significantly faster than the national trend. Progress is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. This is partly because successful changes to the curriculum in the earlier years are now more effectively promoting learning. This is now beginning to happen in Key Stage 2. Because of this and a legacy of previous underachievement, progress in Years 3 to 6 is not as fast as that in Key Stage 1 but it is improving year-on-year.

Pupils are courteous and show respect for those from different backgrounds and cultures. The school does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to engage regularly with people from a wider range of cultures to help them gain an understanding of the multicultural nature of the British society.

Leaders and managers at all levels are hard working and committed to securing improvements. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Much has been done to improve teaching and raise attainment. However, systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and the school's effectiveness lack rigour. Therefore, the plans for improvement are not always sufficiently focused on the key priorities for improving outcomes for pupils. Governors are equally dedicated to the school. However, shortcomings in the quality of information they receive reduces their ability to effectively support and challenge the school. Despite this, there is a track record of sustained improvement and this illustrates that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leaders' and managers' monitoring and evaluation by:
 - ensuring the school development plan is more sharply focused on the key areas for improvement and indicates how these will be implemented and monitored over time.
 - making sure that the monitoring of teaching is more sharply focused on improving learning outcomes.

- Enable governors to more effectively hold the school to account by:
 - providing them with more detailed information in relation to the school's performance in key areas
 - ensuring that procedures relating to the recording of progress towards bringing about improvement are more formally documented.

- Improve pupils' understanding of the issues relating to living in a British multicultural society by:
 - providing greater opportunities for them to engage with people from a wider range of cultures more regularly.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Standards have been low for a number of years, particularly in mathematics. They have risen and tests in 2009 showed average standards were being reached in all areas. Given that pupils leave Reception with standards broadly in line with expectations, this represents satisfactory progress. Lessons and work seen showed that pupils are making increasingly better progress in Key Stage 2. This is because they respond positively to opportunities to work both independently and collaboratively on appropriately challenging tasks. Where the teaching is less effective and tasks are either too easy or too hard for some groups, learning and progress slows. Positive relationships and pupils' good behaviour mean that they have good attitudes to learning. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress.

Pupils' happy, welcoming faces show that they enjoy school and feel safe. Their social, moral, and spiritual development is good. Pupil's cultural development is less well developed as they have few opportunities to engage with people from a range of cultures. They show good understanding of right and wrong and good levels of respect and tolerance for others. They enjoy taking on responsibilities by playing an active part in the school forum or becoming playground leaders, for example. Nutritious food served throughout the day, active participation in physical activity and

effective teaching of issues relating health ensure that pupils' understanding of a healthy lifestyle is good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall because most pupils are making no better than satisfactory progress by the time they leave. However, it is improving due to increasingly effective assessment procedures and good marking which clearly tells pupils how to improve to meet specific targets. Teachers mostly make good use of assessment information but there are occasional inconsistencies which mean that tasks are not always matched well enough to pupils' needs. Classroom teaching assistants are very effectively used and have played a significant part in recent improvements. Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy the opportunities that they have to do topic work, which gives them the chance apply increasingly well-developed basic skills across a wide range of subjects. This is only beginning to be developed in Key Stage 2. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the range of enrichment activities the school provides. Participation rates are high. Pupils achieve well in the arts due to the good provision. Enrichment opportunities add significantly to pupils' enjoyment and adoption of healthy lifestyles.

Pupils say that the adults will quickly sort out the rare cases of bullying or any other problems. Suitable arrangements for transition ensure that children settle into the different settings for learning as they progress through the school. Although pupils are kept safe, the school is not always quick enough in following up reasons for absence.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

A recently invigorated leadership team is committed and motivated to embed ambition for further improvement. As a result, teachers understand what needs to be done and are collaborating well in teams and this is leading to improving outcomes. The systems for formally prioritising what needs to be done and clearly indicating the strategies for how they will be achieved are not always robust enough. There is a similar picture in terms of the monitoring of teaching and learning, because the programme of monitoring activities is not shaped consistently from an accurate evaluation of strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels are committed to equality and tackling discrimination. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress as a result.

Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. While a harmonious school community is evident and the pupils are involved in the local community, opportunities for pupils to explore other cultures and global issues are at an early stage of development. Governors are very much involved in the life of the school. The quality of written information they receive about the school is not always as much as they need and this sometimes leads to a lack of formal record keeping. Governors have made a number of influential contributions to the school's improvement, for example recommending the appointment of additional, effective teaching assistants.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. From starting points which are below those expected, children make good progress because teaching is good. They attain standards which are generally in line with age-related expectations by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Children make very good progress in their personal development but less progress in writing than other areas.

Staff have identified this and are effectively modelling language well and exploiting opportunities for imaginative talk. Activities are well organised and provide children with a wide range of appropriate learning opportunities with a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader communicates high expectations. Her leadership is effective. She encourages all staff to take ownership by familiarising themselves with all aspects of planning and assessment for all stages of learning. She has a good knowledge of strengths and areas for development and plans appropriate professional development. Children’s welfare is securely looked after. Procedures for tracking children's progress are effective in enabling their individual needs to be identified and planned for. Links with parents and outside agencies are firmly established so that support for children with particular needs is quickly arranged.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Approximately one eighth of families returned a parental questionnaire. These indicate that a large majority of parents are positive about the way the school cares for and educates their children. A few families thought that their children were not making enough progress and that school could do more to help them support their children's learning. Inspectors judge pupils’ progress to be satisfactory but agree that the school could do more to inform and involve parents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Church Drive Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 292 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	55	14	35	1	3	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	24	60	14	35	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	43	18	45	4	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	53	10	25	7	18	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	48	16	40	3	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	45	14	35	4	10	2	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	38	20	50	2	5	1	3
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for pupils who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	38	14	35	3	8	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	38	18	45	3	8	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	30	20	50	4	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	35	19	48	3	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	55	13	33	3	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	58	13	33	1	3	2	5

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



18 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Church Drive Primary School, Wirral, CH62 5EF

I am writing on behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently. We greatly enjoyed meeting you. Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us in your happy school. We have judged that yours is a satisfactory school which is improving.

You get a good start in Nursery and Reception and progress well throughout Years 1 and 2. Lessons are getting better for the older pupils and standards in those years are going up. Your teachers put on a lot of extra activities for you and you appreciate this. They give you good advice so you know how to improve your work. They also do a good job in teaching about how to stay healthy. You are growing up to be polite, sensible young people with self-confidence. We were pleased to see how well you behaved and the way everyone gets on well with each other.

Your headteacher and other staff are working to improve your lessons and we saw these improvements in the lessons we visited. We have asked staff to think about other areas for improvement which will make your school even better.

- To check more thoroughly on how your teachers are making your lessons better.
- To improve how managers plan the ways to improve your school and to give your school governors more information, so they can do more to help.
- Give you more chances to meet people from different cultures so that you get a better understanding of areas which are different from where you live.

All the best for the future!

Yours sincerely,

Mr John Dunne
Lead inspector

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Great Meols Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105033
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336406
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Mr Frank Carruthers

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	387
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Beryl Roberts
Headteacher	Mrs Pip Shedden
Date of previous school inspection	March 2007
School address	Elwyn Road Meols Wirral CH47 7AP
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation including policies on safeguarding, the school development plan, teachers' planning, assessment files and records of pupils' progress, including individual education plans for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspectors spent approximately 60% of their time inspecting pupils' learning. Staff and pupils completed questionnaires and 124 questionnaires returned from parents and carers were also read and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- standards of work in current classes and the progress pupils are making
- improvements since the last inspection
- how parents and pupils view the work of the school
- all aspects of safeguarding and provision to secure the welfare of pupils.

Information about the school

This is a much larger than average size primary school. Its pupils come from a wider area than the immediate locality. Almost all pupils are White British. No pupil is at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Nine per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Four pupils have a statement of special educational need. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes. A privately run pre-school Nursery operates in the school and is subject to a separate inspection. The school has the Investors in People and Healthy School's Awards, the Activemark and Basic Skills Award. At the time of the last inspection, the headteacher was in an acting role for the year and was later appointed to the headship of the school subsequently, a new deputy headteacher was appointed.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school provides an outstanding education for pupils. Standards in English, mathematics and science are high and throughout the school pupils make good and at times outstanding progress. Their overall achievement in both academic and personal development is excellent. These exceptional outcomes are due to a number of factors: good quality teaching; excellent care, guidance and support; pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning; the rich and varied curriculum; and the valuable support parents give to their children's education.

Teaching is well planned and lessons have a brisk pace. Pupils gain a good understanding of what the objectives of a lesson are and what they need to do to improve their work. Positive relationships between staff and pupils are a strength. The curriculum is exceptionally well planned with special events, visits and visitors to enrich the lives of pupils. All staff provide excellent care so that pupils feel safe in school and know how to look after themselves and one another. They gain an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy and fit lifestyle.

Since the last inspection the overall effectiveness of the school has improved. This is thanks to the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher and senior staff. The leadership team is rigorous in evaluating accurately how well the school is doing and taking steps to address any shortcomings found. They drive forward and secure improvement well through a detailed school improvement plan. For example, the standards of pupils' writing have been improved considerably. Supported by a strong governing body, the leadership team has good capacity to maintain high performance and further improve provision. The school has good strategies in place to develop pupils' understanding of citizenship and their role in the local and wider community. It has yet to make a full review of pupils' needs and understanding, however, in order to create an action plan to promote community cohesion.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Review pupils' needs and draw up an action plan to promote the local and wider aspects of community cohesion and pupils' better understanding of citizenship.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Across the age range, learning is good in lessons because pupils concentrate and listen very well and join in discussions fully. They collaborate with one another, sharing ideas readily with their 'talking partner'. They are confident in explaining what they are doing in subjects, such as mathematics, and will seek help when necessary. Teachers provide pupils with clear guidance in exercise books on how they should structure their writing and improve the way they show their working out in mathematics. As a result, pupils know how to improve their work. Each year the majority of pupils in Year 6 achieve above the nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science. Pupils take with them to secondary school the knowledge and skills to do well in the future and a real enthusiasm for learning. Attendance is consistently above average and punctuality is good. The pupils' understanding of how to stay safe and secure is very well developed. A large number take part in the county's Civil Award scheme that promotes good citizenship and service to others. Pupils make healthy choices from the varied menus at lunchtimes, bring fruit to school for snacks and take part in the wide variety of physical activities available before- and after-school and during lunchtimes. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching provides pupils with good challenge and is well planned. Interactive whiteboards are used particularly effectively to stimulate pupils' interest. Teachers know their pupils well and so pitch their questions accurately to challenge them and make them think. A strong feature of the best teaching is the use of assessment to plan and mark work and to encourage pupils to assess their own work and that of their peers. In a few lessons, this is not so evident and as a result, pupils' learning is satisfactory rather than good. It is for this reason the overall quality of teaching and of pupils' learning is good rather than outstanding. Senior staff are aware of this

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

relative shortcoming and are taking effective steps to ensure assessment is used consistently well throughout all classes. The high quality curriculum evident at the last inspection has been maintained. This is true not only of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but also of the many themed events. These include international weeks, sporting themes and exhibitions, imaginatively modelled, for instance, on the Great Exhibition of the 19th Century. Activities outside lessons are excellent and frequently linked to the Children’s University, offering awards, certificates and medals. Promotion of pupils’ talents and expertise is a particular feature and full encouragement is given to pupils and their parents to help pupils reach their potential. Highly effective provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils, maintained since the last inspection, is bolstered by good partnerships with outside agencies. These help the more vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to achieve well. Very good arrangements for pupils to help them as they start school and move on to secondary school mean pupils gain confidence and feel secure.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Since appointment, the headteacher has built on the strengths of the school exceptionally well, acted effectively to address the issues from the last inspection and astutely delegated responsibility to ensure the professional development of middle leaders. Staff report they feel part of the outstanding drive to improve provision and are very motivated to contribute. Governors make a good contribution to school improvement and bring excellent expertise to their roles. They discharge their responsibilities well and challenge the senior leadership to account for its actions. Staff are highly committed to do the best for all pupils and the school is highly effective in providing equality of opportunity. The school adopts recommended good practice across all aspects of safeguarding, including the safe recruitment of staff, and systems are robust. With several strong international links and good local partnerships, the school’s support for community cohesion is good. However, it has yet to formalise any action plan committing the school to this role.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in Reception with attainment that is broadly average. By the end of the year the great majority of children are working at or beyond the early learning goals expected for their age and are ready to transfer confidently into Year 1. They show a high level of independence, imagination and concentration. They behave very well and are confident in speech. They understand about staying safe and looking out for one another, evident when they use the large wheeled toys outside. Early skills of reading and writing develop very well. For example, a group composing a letter of sympathy to the nursery rhyme characters Jack and Jill, wrote very clearly and legibly in full sentences with good attention to spelling and punctuation. This good and often outstanding progress is the result of good provision. Children have opportunities to work and play indoors and outside. Resources are used effectively and teachers’ planning is detailed and adapted imaginatively to follow the interests of the children. A particular strength is the outstanding system of assessment that both teachers and support staff use to monitor children’s progress. Leadership and management by the key stage leader and the Early Years Foundation Stage staff are good. They take careful note of trends in performance. For example, they have acted promptly on a trend for boys not to choose to write. They have identified the need for improved resources outdoors to promote mathematical understanding. However, the use of the outside area is restricted in poor weather. Staff are aware of this aspect for improvement.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents responded positively to the parents’ questionnaires. Parents wrote of how the school encourages pupils to want to learn. Several parents commented on the supportive nature of the staff and how the headteacher provides good leadership. Many say their children are happy and very settled at the school. Inspectors agree with these positive views. It was evident that a significant minority of parents would like more information about how well their children are doing, what National Curriculum levels mean and how best they can support their children in their school work. The school has good systems of communication with parents and sends home information about the curriculum and guidance on homework. Successful workshops for parents on subjects, such as, mathematics have also been held.

Nevertheless, the headteacher and senior staff acknowledge these suggestions by parents and have agreed to canvass their views further, with a view to providing even more information for parents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Meols Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received **124** completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 387 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	50	57	47	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	69	56	53	43	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	22	86	70	11	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	30	74	60	9	7	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	45	36	70	57	7	6	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	35	67	54	12	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	52	42	63	51	7	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	34	27	76	61	6	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	33	68	56	10	8	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	25	81	67	3	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	22	74	60	12	10	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	38	29	72	59	10	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	38	64	53	10	8	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
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Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



1 February 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Great Meols Primary School, Wirral, CH47 7AP

It was a pleasure to inspect your school. You were all very friendly and helpful and we enjoyed finding out from you how you are getting on. On behalf of the inspection team I would like to share with you what we found.

Your school is providing you with an outstanding education. You make good progress in lessons and, by the time you leave at the end of Year 6, you reach high standards in English, mathematics and science. This is because the teaching you receive is good and you work very hard. You behave exceptionally well and look after each other. You told us how much you enjoy all the many physical activities and clubs the teachers provide. You have learnt a great deal about how to stay safe and healthy and you take part in many events with other schools and in the community. We think the opportunities you have for trips out of school, events in school and residential trips are outstanding! Your headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants take excellent care of you all and make sure that you all feel safe and secure.

Part of my job is to identify how the school can be even better. There is one improvement to make.

- For your headteacher and the senior staff to plan how to promote the school's role in the community.

Please continue to work hard. I send you all my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

**Mr Frank Carruthers
Lead Inspector**

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Pensby Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135497
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	341656
Inspection dates	13–14 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Pat Kime HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Spencer
Headteacher	Mrs K Brown
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
School address	Kentmere Drive Pensby Wirral CH61 5XW
Telephone number	0151 6482643
Fax number	0151 6481583
Email address	headteacher@pensby-primary.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with staff, pupils, governors and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including records of pupils' progress, development plans and curricular planning. Inspectors received responses to the inspection questionnaires from 36 parents, 16 staff and 120 Key Stage 2 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- why, for last year's leavers, progress in Key Stage 2 was much better in English than in mathematics
- pupils' current achievement
- how effectively this new school has been established and the management of change since it was created four terms ago.

Information about the school

This average-sized school was formed in September 2008 on the amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools and a small primary school. Some staff came from the predecessor schools but half the class teachers and the headteacher were new appointments. There are nine classes from Reception to Year 6, all but one catering for single year groups, and there is a Nursery attended part-time by 40 children. The school serves an area with pockets of considerable disadvantage. The proportion of pupils having free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average for this size of school. Plans for a new school building are well-advanced. The school holds a number of awards, including Basic Skills Quality Mark and Activemark.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school has made great strides since it opened just four terms ago. Parents, governors and staff told the inspectors about improvements, especially in teaching, the curriculum and pupils' behaviour. Under good leadership from the headteacher and senior team, the school has developed into a unified primary school which provides a satisfactory standard of education. Aspects of its work are good. These include pupils' personal development, pastoral care, and the leadership and management of the school by the senior staff and the governing body. What has been achieved to date, along with the accurate identification of areas for development, shows the school is well placed for further improvement.

Pupils' academic progress is satisfactory overall, though variations in the quality of teaching mean that the rate of learning differs between classes and some brighter pupils do less well than they could. Taken overall, teaching is satisfactory. Children are making good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception). Progress is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 most pupils are making good progress in English. Attainment in mathematics and science lags behind but has begun to improve. The school has established good systems for keeping track of each pupil's progress. Nonetheless, in a few instances, teachers' assessments do not match the standards of work in pupils' books.

Last year staff worked hard and successfully to improve the teaching and curriculum in English. As a result pupils made rapid progress in English in Year 6 and attained well above average standards in the 2009 national tests. This shows what the pupils are capable of, and staff know that the challenge now is to push up standards in mathematics and science to the same level. The school's curriculum has been reviewed and it provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to write with a purpose in many subjects. This has been a contributory factor to the rise in standards in English. Sound plans are in hand for a similar drive to improve standards in mathematics as the next priority.

Pupils' personal development is good. They are well-informed about how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They develop a good sense of right and wrong and good social skills and they contribute well to the school and the wider community. Their knowledge and understanding of diversity in Britain and the wider world, is however, less well-developed.

Leadership of this new school has been well-judged. The headteacher tackled appropriate priorities in the school's first year. These included establishing whole-school policies and routines, improving teaching and securing the leadership and management of core subjects (English, mathematics and science) at senior level. These subjects are led well. However, leadership and management of other subjects have not been sufficiently developed to underpin work across the curriculum under the school's new curricular arrangements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve pupils' progress in mathematics and science by:
 - strengthening teachers' understanding of how to teach these subjects well
 - raising teachers' expectations
 - integrating more effectively the development of pupils' knowledge and their skills to use and apply it.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is good or better, in particular by:
 - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - ensuring that the more able pupils are sufficiently challenged in lessons
 - ensuring that all teachers assess pupils' attainment accurately against the levels of the National Curriculum.
- Strengthen the leadership and management of subjects beyond the core of English, mathematics and science.
- Improve pupils' cultural development and the promotion of community cohesion by providing a wider range of opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural, ethnic and social diversity in Britain and the wider world.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and there are clear signs of improvement. For example, children's rate of progress in the early Years Foundation Stage is better this year than last and attainment in mathematics in Year 4 is broadly in line with expectations for the pupils' age. When children start the Nursery, many can do less than is typical for their age, particularly in early literacy and numeracy. Children are now making good progress in Nursery and Reception, though this was not the case for those who moved in to Year 1 this school year. For them, attainment was below average in early reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils' satisfactory overall progress in Key Stage 1 results in standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 2. However, expectations are not always high enough for the older and the more able pupils in this key stage. This was evident in the assessments last year, when few Year 2 pupils reached an above average

standard, particularly in mathematics, and in the teaching seen and work examined during the inspection.

In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make good progress in English where the standards of work in Year 6 are currently at least in line with expectations for their age. Test results last year were considerably lower in mathematics and science. Inspectors focused on mathematics and judge that attainment is rising and Year 6 pupils are on course to do better this year. Mathematical progress for the more able pupils is hindered in some lessons when work set for them is not sufficiently challenging or offers limited opportunities to use and apply their mathematical knowledge. Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities are identified early and supported well. They make sound progress in their learning.

Learning is supported well by pupils’ good attitudes. They are usually well-behaved, attentive and hard-working in lessons. They enjoy learning and are keen to reach their targets. In the most successful lessons observed, pupils sustained concentration very well and worked very productively both individually and in pairs.

Throughout the school pupils make good progress in their personal development. They are generally well-behaved and, in some of the lessons observed, behaviour was exceptionally good. Pupils say incidents of bullying are very rare. Discussions with pupils and their responses to the inspection questionnaire show that they feel safe at school. They have a good understanding of the importance of diet and exercise. They benefit from good opportunities to participate in a range of sports and are encouraged to walk or cycle to school. Pupils learn about world faiths but are not well-informed about diversity in Britain and the wider world. Pupils are well-prepared for the future because they develop good social skills and personal attributes and a clear sense of right and wrong, they establish a pattern of regular and punctual attendance and they acquire sound key skills.

These are the grades for pupils'/children's outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but it varies considerably. In the lessons seen on inspection teaching ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. The school’s senior team is aware that the quality has occasionally slipped to inadequate. Typically staff encourage pupils and provide work that is varied according to pupils’ different levels of attainment.

In the teaching which was good or better:

- learning moved along at a good pace which kept pupils engaged and productive
- pupils had good opportunities to work together and learn from each other
- teaching assistants were deployed well and made a good contribution to pupils’ learning
- assessment was used well and teachers adapted their plans ‘on the hoof’ in response to how well pupils grasped the work.

When teaching was at its most effective, relationships were excellent, with the teacher highly attuned to pupils’ individual learning needs and providing highly effective but unobtrusive support and challenge. She explained very clearly the skills pupils were to learn and practise during the lesson so they knew what was expected of them and could judge their own success.

The shortcomings which made some teaching simply satisfactory were primarily:

- lack of precise matching of work to pupils’ learning needs, including pitching work high enough for the more able pupils
- missing opportunities to help pupils use and apply what they know, for instance, to find ways of working out mathematical calculations and to correct misconceptions.

Marking of pupils’ work is often good with clear, well-focused guidance about how to do better. There are instances, however, of teachers not complying fully with the school’s marking arrangements and of some generous assessments of attainment.

The school offers a satisfactory curriculum which covers all requirements. It includes some good enrichment activities and a range of clubs out of lesson time. The curriculum has been developed during the last year. For example, the curricular plans have been adapted in order to teach several subjects through themes which are designed to appeal to pupils. For the most part the curriculum supports pupils’ personal development well but it is simply satisfactory in the provision for pupils to learn about diversity.

Pastoral care is good. Pupils know that the staff care about them and the school works in good partnership with other agencies to support those with additional needs. Pupils’ responses to the inspection questionnaire show that they feel well-supported as they move up through the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3

The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads the school well and she is well-supported by senior staff and the governing body. There has been a relentless drive for improvement and much has been achieved. The focus in the school's first year was understandably on establishing a unified school with shared, agreed policies and procedures, and improving teaching where necessary. These priorities have largely been achieved. Additionally, there has been a successful drive to raise attainment in English, assessment procedures have been strengthened and the curriculum has been reviewed and adjusted, though there is more to do to consolidate and fine tune it.

The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are led effectively by senior staff with a determination to ensure that all pupils do as well as possible and this commitment to equality is shared by governors. At whole-school level, planning for continuing development is well-focused, with mathematics as the next priority. However, the arrangements for leadership and management of other subjects are not always sufficiently robust or influential. The school is aware of this issue and has plans to tackle it.

The school has good systems for setting targets for pupils' progress each year and regular assessments of their progress towards them. As part of this process of establishing a culture in which teachers are held to account for pupils' progress, much has been done to support accurate assessment. Nonetheless, senior staff are aware that a few instances remain where teachers' assessments are not fully convincing. The governing body makes a strong positive contribution to the school's development. Governors have good working relationships with staff and are well-informed about the school's performance. They strike a good balance between support and challenge.

The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to contribute to school life and they learn to work together purposefully and cooperatively. They learn about diversity in religious education and from some visitors to school. However, there is scope to broaden this provision so pupils understand more about diversity in Britain and the wider world and have more opportunities to meet and engage with those from different backgrounds.

The procedures for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and the school works in close partnership with other agencies to safeguard pupils. Staff are well-trained in this regard. There are good arrangements for regular reviews of all relevant policies and updating for staff and a governor maintains oversight of safeguarding arrangements. Appropriate risk assessments are undertaken and kept up to date.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account:	2
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The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management of this key stage have resulted in strong teamwork across the key stage and good achievement for the children. Teaching is, in the main, of good quality and the school's records show that children are now making good progress from a below average starting point.

Partnerships with parents are good. Induction to Nursery and transition to Year 1 are managed well. Links with the on-site 'wraparound care' are strong and contribute positively to the good quality care, support and guidance provided for children and to a coherent educational experience for them.

Teaching assistants are deployed well and contribute significantly to children's learning and development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The table below shows that the overwhelming majority of parents who returned the inspection questionnaire are satisfied with the school, their children's progress and the teaching. They know their children enjoy school and feel they are listened to. A few parents are dissatisfied on some points. The inspectors considered these matters but found no evidence to support their view. For example, the school's curriculum covers healthy lifestyles well, there are a number of sporting activities on offer and staff go to considerable lengths to encourage pupils to participate in them. The school's leaders are doing a good job and, as a result, there is already evidence of improvement in provision and achievement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pensby Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 240 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	69	10	28	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	78	8	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	64	9	25	4	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	58	12	33	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	64	12	33	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	64	11	31	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	50	14	39	4	11	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	53	14	39	2	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	61	13	36	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	44	16	44	2	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	56	15	42	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	69	7	19	3	8	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	67	11	31	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

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Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
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Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pensby Primary School, Wirral, CH61 5XW

You may remember Mrs O'Keefe, Mr Helm and I visiting your school recently to check how well you are all learning. Thank you for making us feel welcome and for talking to us about your work and life at school. We learned a lot from seeing your lessons, looking at your work and talking to you. This letter is to tell you the main things we found out about your school.

Mrs Brown and the governors are doing a good job. They and the teachers have done well to create a single school out of three schools and to make quite a lot of improvements, all in just four terms. We know that you have helped too. For example, people told us that behaviour has improved. We were pleased that you behave well and work hard in lessons. You are making satisfactory progress in your learning in Key Stages 1 and 2 and the children in Nursery and Reception are getting a good start. Last year's leavers did very well in English. In some of your lessons teaching is outstanding but we think some lessons could be better. This would help to raise standards in mathematics and science, where you do not do so well as in English, and help the most able pupils to do better.

The adults at school care for you and you are looked after well at school. You all get on well together and you show concern for others who sometimes have very different lives from yours. We would like you to learn more about the lives and traditions of people from different backgrounds in Britain and the wider world.

We are confident that the school will keep getting better because the grown ups are determined that it will and they know what needs to improve. We know that you will have some good ideas to help. You have our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Kime
Her Majesty's Inspector

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Upton

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105068
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336413
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Frank Carruthers

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided School
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nick Dutton
Headteacher	Miss Julie Kenny
Date of previous school inspection	June 2007
School address	Moreton Road Upton Wirral CH49 6LL
Telephone number	0151 6773970
Fax number	0151 5220266
Email address	schooloffice@stjosephs-upton.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, and held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including policies on safeguarding, the school development plan, teachers' planning, assessment files and records of pupils' progress, including individual education plans for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They considered the views in questionnaires returned by staff, pupils and 109 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress and achievement of pupils in Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics
- progress of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the school's provision in information and communication technology
- all aspects of safeguarding and provision to secure the welfare of pupils.

Information about the school

The school serves a socially mixed area close to Birkenhead. Its pupils come from a wider area than the immediate locality. A very large majority of pupils are White British. A few are Asian or British Asian, or White or Black African. Few are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. About 10% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. None has a statement of special educational needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes. A privately run pre-school playgroup and a before- and after-school club operate in the school and are subject to a separate inspection. The school has the Investors in People award, Healthy Schools Standard and Basic Skills Accreditation.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school in which pupils achieve well to reach high standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The range of children's attainment when they start in the Reception classes is wide and overall, is broadly average. Children make satisfactory progress in the Reception Year and thereafter pupils make good and, at times, outstanding progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Progress and achievement are particularly strong in Years 4 and 6. These outcomes constitute significant progress since the last inspection, when progress in Key Stage 2 was found to be satisfactory rather than good and too few pupils were reaching the higher level in national tests in Year 6. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave and concentrate well in lessons. All pupils take with them to secondary school good skills of teamwork, independence and commitment to learning.

The quality of teaching and the curriculum are good. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and have high expectations for what they can achieve. They adapt their teaching effectively to accommodate the range of attainment in their classes, some of which have a mixture of two age groups. The curriculum has particular strengths in how it links subjects together. For example, religious education, history, science and information and communication technology often contribute very well to what pupils are learning in English lessons. The care, guidance and support provided by staff are good so that pupils feel safe and know who to turn to if they have concerns. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in the curriculum for these children which is now play and activity based.

Leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, assisted by an expanded senior leadership team, has been successful in tackling shortcomings found at the last inspection. Together the team is driving forward good improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning, though satisfactory, is not as sharp as it could be and has insufficient focus on how to improve. This is important if achievement is to improve in the Early Years Foundation Stage and progress in all year groups is to match the best in school. A very large majority of parents are positive about the school. They praise the school's ethos and many are pleased with the progress their children make and the way staff are approachable and respond to any concerns they might have. However, a very small but significant minority expressed some concerns in the inspection questionnaire for parents and carers. For example, they consider

that the school does not provide enough information about the school and how well their children are doing.

Senior leaders and governors have a good understanding of how the school is performing thanks to an accurate process of self-evaluation. School development planning is detailed and focuses on key outcomes. Day-to-day management is smooth. The school's overall effectiveness has improved since the last inspection and the school has good capacity to maintain high standards and improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- When senior staff monitor the quality of teaching they should focus attention on how pupils' learning can be improved so that their achievement in all year groups matches the best in the school.
- Build on existing strengths to improve links with and support for parents and carers for the benefit of their children's achievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

A key feature of how well pupils achieve and how much they enjoy their learning is their positive response in lessons. They are quick to offer ideas and answer questions and they readily settle down to independent or group work. They have developed good working routines and share ideas sensibly with a partner. For example, they are able to explain the processes they follow in solving a problem in mathematics. They present their written work with care and attention to handwriting, spelling and punctuation. As a result, a good proportion of pupils in Year 6 reach above the expected level in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This has been an improving trend in recent years and has contributed to the overall high standards. The school has taken effective steps to correct any dips in standards, for example, in mathematics last year, so that standards in the current Year 6 are buoyant. Already over 40% of pupils are working at the higher Level 5 in all three subjects. Pupils' progress in different year groups is never less than good and in some years is outstanding. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their classmates.

Pupils' understanding of personal safety and how to lead a healthy lifestyle is good. They report that they feel safe in school and bullying is not a concern for them. If they do have any concerns they know what to do and who to turn to. Attendance has been either in line with or just above the national average in recent years and the rate for the current term is in line with the average. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and put a lot of effort into raising money for charities. They take on responsible positions in school well. The school council is active and provides good opportunities for the pupils' views to be considered. A recent innovation has been the setting up of an eco-school council which has already planned a 'Switch-Off Fortnight'.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and maintain a brisk pace to learning in lessons. They question pupils well, giving them time to think before answering and asking for clear explanations. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to lessons, supporting individuals and groups with special educational needs and/or disabilities particularly effectively. Lesson planning is generally clear and caters for the needs of pupils, though in a small number of lessons, teachers do not always check on how well pupils who work without adult support, are getting on. Recent developments in assessing how well pupils are doing and checking their progress are good. There are examples of exceptional practice in teachers' marking of pupils' work, for instance in Year 6, but this is not consistent across all age groups. Teachers' use of information and communication technology has significantly improved since the last inspection. In one outstanding lesson in Year 6, for instance, both the interactive whiteboard and pupils' laptops were used exceptionally well for pupils to design and write a newspaper report.

The curriculum is enriched with a wide range of visits and good links with other schools and institutions, for example, the local secondary schools and the 'Learning Lighthouse'. Subjects such as science and information and communication technology are promoted particularly well in this way, thus helping the learning of all pupils including those with talents in these areas. The curriculum is carefully planned on a two-year cycle to cater for the mixed-age classes. It promotes pupils' personal development well, for example, through lessons in personal, social and health education and religious education. There is a residential trip and a good variety of cultural and sporting activities after lessons.

There are effective systems to cope with the special requirements of more vulnerable pupils. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities have clear targets which help them to make good progress. Links with associated Nursery classes, including the privately run one which the school hosts, and with secondary schools are good. They ensure a smooth transition into school and on to the next stage of education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leaders make good use of all relevant data about the performance of the school to help them to plan the next steps in the school's development. Staff report they feel part of this drive to improve provision and are motivated to contribute. Senior staff closely monitor the learning of specific groups of pupils in order to confirm they are taking full advantage of the opportunities the school offers them. They acted quickly and effectively, for instance, when it was noted that boys were not doing as well as they should in English. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning is not sharp enough. Governors have a good awareness of the strengths of the school and areas for improvement but rely on senior staff for information rather than their own systems for gathering the views of parents and pupils. The school's engagement with parents to find out how they perceive the school is satisfactory, although a very small minority consider the school does not do enough to keep them informed. However, staff take satisfactory steps to inform them about their children's progress and the general life of the school. The school adopts good practice across all aspects of safeguarding, including the safe recruitment of staff. Staff are well-trained as a result of the very full programme of training in issues of child protection. The school has well-established links with the church and local schools and has an action plan for improving wider links, including those with schools further afield and abroad. Overall, the school's promotion of community cohesion is developing satisfactorily.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their year in the Reception classes. They grow in confidence and independence. Their speaking and listening skills develop well and their knowledge

and understanding of the world are good. By the end of the year, the achievement of the majority has been satisfactory and their attainment is in line with local and national expectations. However, there are few who have reached above the expected levels in key areas of learning such as communication, language and literacy.

Provision is satisfactory overall. There have been good improvements in the curriculum since the last inspection, so that there is now a clear focus on activity and play-based learning. The quality of learning indoors is better than outside, partly because of the limited outdoor space. However, staff use the outdoor area continuously and plans are in hand to make improvements and provide shelter from poor weather. All adults support children’s learning well and interact with them to promote their language and understanding. At times, however, there are missed opportunities for children to explain to adults and other children what they think about an investigation and this was observed when they were comparing the weight of objects. In addition, there are times when staff do not check closely enough on the progress of children working independently from an adult. Safeguarding arrangements are good as are all aspects to promote the children’s welfare. Teachers’ planning is generally good and assessments are made regularly of how the children are progressing.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Good features include teamwork and the positive drive towards improvement which is clearly evident in the well-focused action plan for the key stage. This not only refers to developing the outdoor environment for learning, but also the need to improve the achievement of all the children so that more are working above the expected level by the time they move into Year 1. Arrangements for the transition into Year 1 are satisfactory and links with parents are good.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Just over one third of parents responded to the inspectors’ questionnaire. A very large majority of these responded positively. Those who wrote an additional comment praised the ethos of the school and how well their children were progressing. Further comments praised the way the staff are approachable and respond to their concerns. A few parents reported they do not know enough about how their child is doing and that they are not given the support they need to help their children. However, inspectors noted that the staff have an open-door policy on meeting parents, there are three parents’ evenings each year and a termly communication about the curriculum for each year group. A few parents do not feel action is taken to deal with unacceptable behaviour. There is, however, little evidence to support this and none to indicate that behaviour is anything less than good in lessons. Senior staff are aware that playtimes are restricted by the shortage

of space in school playgrounds and this can lead to minor incidents of conflict between pupils. They are actively seeking ways to make playtimes more enjoyable and less crowded.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Upton to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 109 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 310 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	55	44	40	2	2	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	58	53	45	45	2	2	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	36	61	55	9	8	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	34	65	59	3	2	4	4
The teaching is good at this school	46	42	53	48	6	6	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	34	53	51	12	12	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	40	59	55	3	3	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	30	27	58	54	11	11	3	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	34	61	55	5	5	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	24	63	56	10	10	6	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	25	65	59	10	10	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	34	31	54	51	13	13	4	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	40	54	51	5	5	4	4

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



07 December 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Upton, CH49 6LL

It was a pleasure to inspect your school. You were all very friendly and helpful and we enjoyed finding out from you how you are getting on. On behalf of the inspection team I would like to share with you what we found.

Your school is providing you with a good education. You make good progress in lessons and, by the time you leave at the end of Year 6, you reach high standards in English, mathematics and science. This is because the teaching you receive is good and you work hard. You behave well and look after each other. You told us that you enjoy using the computers and laptops in lessons and visiting places like the 'Learning Lighthouse'. You particularly like the extra-curricular events, such as the fencing, golf and gymnastics, and the residential visit. Your headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants take good care of you all and make sure that you all feel safe and secure.

Part of my job is to identify how the school can be even better, I am suggesting two areas for the school to improve.

- The senior leaders, such as the headteacher and deputy headteacher, should do more to check on how well you are learning. Then they need to advise your teachers how to help you learn even more.
- Some of your parents say that they would like to know more about what the school is doing and how they can best help you so I am asking the staff to give more attention to the links they have with your parents.

Please continue to work hard. I send you all my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Carruthers
Lead Inspector

St Paul's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105070
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336414
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Graham Martin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	115
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs C Corvers
Headteacher	D Weeden
Date of previous school inspection	June 2007
School address	Farmfield Drive Beechwood Prenton CH43 7TE
Telephone number	0151 6527828
Fax number	0151 6527828
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited five lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, parents and representatives from the local authority and the faith community. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at teachers' lessons plans, documentation for safeguarding pupils, the analysis of pupils' progress and test results, the school's plans for future developments and a range of policies. In addition, inspectors analysed 16 questionnaires returned by parents, 13 returned by staff and 40 completed by pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of the school's work on improving pupils' progress and raising standards
- teachers' use of assessment information and its impact on pupils' progress
- the capacity of leaders to bring about sustained improvement.

Information about the school

Most pupils attending this smaller than average school are White British, with very few from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school serves an area with levels of unemployment much higher than the national average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is four times the national average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is double the national average. A similar proportion to that found nationally has a statement of special educational needs. Since the last inspection the school has successfully resisted a proposal to close it. There have been considerable staffing changes, including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher, in the last school year. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Healthy Schools and Sports Mark Awards. It has also received a locally coordinated award for teaching fire safety awareness.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. It is a caring school where pupils feel safe. It provides good support for pupils with emotional or learning difficulties. Pupils are safeguarded well and receive effective support for their emotional well-being, underpinned by warm relationships between all staff and pupils. Pupils enjoy school, are eager to learn and behave well. Parents are supportive, want to help their children to succeed and are keen for their children to make the best possible progress.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are average. In 2009, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 were similar to national averages. National test results for Year 6 pupils in 2009 were below average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Historically, achievement from a very low starting point is satisfactory and currently remains so. However, recently introduced systems for assessing achievement and promoting better learning are improving progress so that it is now good in Key Stage 1 and upper Key Stage 2.

Although most families ensure that their children attend regularly, a small number of families have unsatisfactory attitudes to attendance. The school makes great efforts to improve attendance but does not always apply its policies consistently. As a result, attendance is below average.

Teaching is satisfactory. It includes examples of good and outstanding practice, with a particular strength in the teaching for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6. Most teachers use their assessments effectively to plan work that matches pupils' abilities but this is not consistent throughout the school. For example, the marking of work does not always give pupils the support or guidance they need to help them make better than satisfactory progress. Support staff make a good contribution to learning because they are well informed about the needs of the pupils they support. The skilful Early Years Foundation Stage staff work hard to provide a satisfactory variety of learning activities for the youngest children but a lack of resources hinders their efforts.

Recent appointments have strengthened the leadership team, who work well together. Self-evaluation is effective and accurate. The school is now clear about how it will improve provision and raise standards, and it has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in all subjects, and particularly English and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that teaching is consistently good for all year groups
 - ensuring that assessment and consistent, appropriate marking of pupils' work are used well to promote better learning and progress
 - ensuring that pupils are aware of their learning targets and the best ways of meeting them.

- Improve attendance by:
 - consistently applying school policies on dealing with poor attendance.

- Improve the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - significantly improving the range and quality of resources so that teachers are able to use their skills more effectively to benefit children's learning.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils/children

3

Attainment is now in line with national averages in Key Stage 1 but below average in Key Stage 2. Pupils enjoy learning and are eager to extend their knowledge. They collaborate well in groups, as seen in an outstanding lesson for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils when they were asked to write a description of the journey of the Polar Express. This was a difficult task for some pupils but they persevered because the teacher gave them clear steps to take to succeed. Lesson observations indicate that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Their progress is better when the support for them is carefully planned. The more able pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons and this is accelerating. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving.

Pupils say that they feel safe and recall important messages from the Rescue Service and other visitors. Pupils are successful in developing healthy attitudes and are eager to keep fit and healthy. They enjoy being given responsibilities; for example, Year 6 pupils take a mature approach to helping to supervise Key Stage 1 pupils at lunch times. This contributes to the friendly community atmosphere. Pupils' contributions to the wider community are less well developed, although pupils work well to support their chosen charity, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD).

Pupils show a good understanding of how to respect and support others and their good moral development is reflected in their positive attitudes and behaviour. As one pupil explained, 'We want to help each other to be good and helpful.' Pupils have a clear understanding of the traditions of different faiths and cultures as a result of the school extending their awareness of life in a multicultural society.

Pupils' good spiritual development is evident in their response to lessons that inspire their creativity and how they reflect on their aspirations in discussions about their future hopes and dreams.

These are the grades for pupils'/children's outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons carefully and make good use of support staff. This leads to lessons running smoothly because pupils have ready access to help. In most lessons, teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively to develop a point and add interest to the lesson. In the best lessons, teachers clearly explain the learning steps needed, often allocating a set amount of time to complete a task. This helps them to understand clearly how they can meet the lesson objective and produce work that shows exceptionally good progress. In other good lessons a variety of activities such as role play, drama and partner discussions, help improve communication skills. However, this good practice is not yet consistent throughout the school and across subjects. Where teaching is less effective, lessons do not always provide the range of opportunities needed for the different learning needs of pupils. In a few lessons expectations are not high enough and occasionally tasks do not closely match pupils' ability.

Marking in pupils' books is completed regularly and often includes encouragement and advice. There are examples of good marking but marking is not used effectively enough throughout the school in order to help pupils improve their work. Pupils are beginning to be involved in evaluating their own learning but this good practice is not fully embedded. Although pupils have targets, they do not always understand what they mean and so are unsure as to how to achieve them.

The school's programme to extend pupils' personal and social skills makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral and social development. The move to combine subjects and provide a curriculum based around activities that meet pupils' interests and make learning more relevant is yielding benefits in pupils' enthusiasm for new topics. A good range of visits, such as to a chocolate manufacturers while studying Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, enrich the curriculum. Similarly, visitors such as

team members from the nearby league football club, promote pupils' interest in sport and living a healthy lifestyle.

The school's caring atmosphere contributes positively to increasing pupils' self-esteem and supporting their progress. Additional activities, such as good whole-school assemblies based around principles such as respect and tolerance, along with individual counselling sessions where required, are indicative of the school's commitment to supporting the more vulnerable pupils in the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior management team collects a wide range of useful information on teaching, the curriculum and pupils' progress. The use of this information to drive improvement is developing but there are more steps to take to ensure that practice is consistently improved. For example, checking how well teachers use their assessments to improve progress has enabled leaders to identify weaknesses in marking and to provide appropriate support. The school tackles discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity effectively, ensuring the full integration of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with a range of difficulties. With the more robust focus on improving the achievement of all, pupils are increasingly reaching their potential.

Governors play a suitable role in leading the school. They have been instrumental in making key appointments to the school staff and improving the condition of the building. They are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Having recently strengthened the governing body, governors are now confident to challenge the school to ensure that it sustains its recent improvements.

The school works hard to involve parents in supporting their children's learning. Communication with families, parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff are available as children arrive at school each day and parents welcome the opportunity to discuss their children and raise any concerns. Links with other partners are good, as seen very clearly in the support provided by the diocese and the local authority. Other good links, such as those with health providers, enable the school to provide well for pupils' welfare. The school makes every effort to ensure pupils' safety. Staff are checked for suitability to work with children, child protection arrangements are in place and all safeguarding systems are effective.

The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. A suitable range of activities help the school to establish links with the local community and the work with CAFOD helps pupils to support the needs of other communities internationally.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with skills and understanding that are very low compared to those usually seen for this age, particularly in their communication and social skills. Staff work closely with parents and this helps the children to settle quickly. Children play confidently in safe areas, developing positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn. They talk happily about what they are trying to do but often struggle for the right words because their vocabulary is limited. Even so, they thrive on success and show real joy in learning something new. Teachers' observations carefully record these learning steps so that assessments of children's progress help to inform the planning for their learning needs. Children's welfare, health and well-being are catered for successfully through diligent observations by the staff and good, caring and supportive relationships. Children play safely together, are friendly and enjoy sharing the games and toys available to them. They make good progress in their social development because they are well cared for and have a good rapport with their teachers. Teaching staff have good skills and work effectively to give the children suitable learning opportunities. They support children's learning well by planning activities that are topical, such as the winter theme North Pole role play area, and relevant to the children's interests. However, the quality of teaching is satisfactory because it is hindered by a lack of suitable resources to interest and engage the children. The result is that by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's attainment remains low. Leadership is satisfactory and the school is beginning to address the lack of resources. For example, toys for physical development have recently been improved with the purchase of cycles and scooters, enabling teachers and children to make better use of the outside areas.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The response to the pre-inspection questionnaire was small and was largely positive about the quality of provision provided by the school. Comments included, 'I think that the pupils and teachers have done an amazing job with the changes in the last few months'. Inspectors agree. A small number of parents felt that the school could improve the way it communicates significant changes to them, such as the recent appointment of the new staff. Some also felt that they could understand the work of the school better if, for example, the reasons for employing supply teachers could be explained to them. Inspectors agree that the school has not always taken effective steps to communicate with parents about its staffing arrangements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Paul's Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received **16** completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 115 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	8	50	5	31	2	13	1	7
The school keeps my child safe	9	56	3	19	4	26	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	8	50	5	31	2	13	1	6
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	56	5	31	1	7	1	7
The teaching is good at this school	8	50	6	38	2	13	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	44	7	44	1	7	1	7
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	5	31	10	62	1	7	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	5	31	9	56	2	13	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	5	31	10	62	0	0	1	7
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	44	6	38	2	13	1	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	31	8	50	2	13	1	7
The school is led and managed effectively	7	44	6	38	3	19	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	7	44	7	44	1	7	1	7

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



27 November 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of St Paul's Catholic Primary School, Prenton, CH43 7TE

Thank you all so much for the friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit at what was a busy time for the school, with you all making a start on the preparations for Christmas performances, which I know your families look forward to. Activities like this are obviously among the reasons why you enjoy school and are eager to learn. You behave well and care for each other and I agreed with your comments about your school being a friendly place. It was good to see you all being so energetic at play and keeping fit. I was also pleased to hear that the school teaches you how to keep safe. St Paul's provides a satisfactory education and is getting better.

To improve your school I have asked your headteacher and governors to:

- help you all to make good progress and reach higher standards, especially in English and mathematics
- make sure that your lessons are exciting and check that you are given work with the right level of challenge and difficulty
- check that you all understand your learning targets and that your teachers all mark your work in ways that tell you how to make it better
- improve your attendance
- provide the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage with resources that will help them to improve their learning.

I am sure that you will help, especially by attending regularly and by trying to do your best. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Graham Martin
Lead inspector

Well Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105050
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336408
Inspection dates	09–10 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Denise Shields

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Blaylock
Headteacher	Mr Michael Mellin
Date of previous school inspection	June 2007
School address	Well Lane Tranmere Birkenhead CH42 5PF
Telephone number	0151 645 9844
Fax number	0151 645 4863
Email address	headteacher@well-lane.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons or part lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, parents and representatives from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and scrutinised a range of documentation, including pupils' past and present work, assessment and tracking information, monitoring and evaluation records and additional evidence of the support for vulnerable pupils. Inspectors also looked at whether the school meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. In addition, 45 parental questionnaires and a representative sample of questionnaires returned by pupils were scrutinised. No staff questionnaires were returned.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' attainment and progress in all year groups, to determine whether it is improving quickly enough
- the quality of learning in all classes to establish whether teaching is sufficiently challenging in meeting the needs of all pupils, in particular, the more able
- the impact of revisions to the curriculum in increasing engagement and improving outcomes for pupils
- the rigour of tracking arrangements and the use of assessment information to promote learning and progress for all groups of pupils
- the quality of arrangements to monitor and secure improvements in pupils' attendance
- the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation by leaders and managers at all levels to drive improvement.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British. Eligibility for free school meals is more than four times the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average and rising. A Nursery and a Reception class form the school's Early Years Foundation Stage. The school has gained the Healthy School status. Since the previous inspection there has been a high turnover in teaching staff and a new headteacher was appointed in January 2009.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is of the opinion that this school requires special measures. This is because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Leadership and management at all levels, including governance, are ineffective. The senior leadership, together with subject leaders, work well as a team but their roles are not clearly established. Monitoring, evaluation and review procedures lack both rigour and any links to improvement planning. Priorities identified by the school are largely driven by a range of representatives from the local authority. The school has not tackled all the improvements required from the previous inspection, despite the widespread additional support it is receiving from the local authority. As a result of the weaknesses in leadership and management, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate.

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. They get a satisfactory start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The indoor learning areas aid the development of children's skills and knowledge in all aspects of the curriculum. In fine weather, the outdoor area is used continuously throughout the day, but the range of resources are limited and this holds back children's learning and progress if they choose to be outside.

As a result of the weaknesses in teaching, the use of assessment and in the curriculum, pupils do not make sufficient progress during their time at school and achievement for all groups is inadequate. By the end of Year 2 attainment is low and has been for the last five years. By the end of Year 6 attainment in English, mathematics and science is significantly below average, although it is rising steadily and has been for the previous three years. The improvement is because teaching and learning are strongest in Years 5 and 6. Nevertheless, throughout the school teaching is too variable and, despite isolated examples of outstanding practice, much teaching is not effective in fully engaging pupils. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always sufficiently high. Assessment does not always make clear to pupils the progress made or the steps required to improve. The curriculum is organised into themes, but is not adapted to meet the needs and

abilities of pupils in Years 1 and 2. In all year groups there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their basic skills in a range of contexts.

All staff provide caring support for pupils and their families, of whom a significant proportion experience considerable difficulties in their lives. The school has a range of links with outside agencies and these are used well to promote pupils' emotional and social welfare. However, the school does not comply with current statutory requirements for safeguarding and child protection. Attendance is well below average. Most pupils enjoy school, but a small minority say they get bored and do not learn much in their lessons. Behaviour is inadequate. The majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. However, in some lessons the behaviour of a small minority is not managed well enough, too much time is wasted dealing with low-level disruption and, on occasions, poor behaviour. This interrupts the learning and progress of other pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build the school's capacity to work independently of external support by improving the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels and ensuring that:
 - monitoring and evaluation arrangements are rigorous, outcomes are clearly recorded and addressed and clear links made to the implementation of robust improvement planning
 - assessment arrangements are accurate and the system to monitor pupils' progress is robust so that any underachievement is quickly identified and tackled
 - the governing body regularly reviews and evaluates the school's provision and contributes effectively to helping set its strategic direction
 - safeguarding and child protection arrangements comply with current statutory requirements.

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that:
 - more activities are provided to increase pupils' eagerness to write in all subjects
 - pupils have more opportunities to improve their speaking skills
 - the presentation of pupils' work is improved, in particular, their handwriting
 - there is a consistent approach to teaching mathematical calculation in all classes with regular opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in a range of contexts
 - pupils have regular opportunities to take part in practical science investigations and have more opportunities to discuss their tasks and record their work independently.

- Improve the quality of teaching to a consistently good or better standard by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons
 - assessment information is consistently used to match work precisely to pupils' needs and abilities, in particular, those of the more able

- all teachers use questioning that challenges pupils to think more deeply about their learning
 - the management of pupils' behaviour consistently matches the quality of the best practice
 - pupils are regularly involved in the assessment of their progress, and that marking indicates how they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Improve the curriculum by ensuring that:
 - in Years 1 and 2 it meets the needs and abilities of all pupils
 - there are planned opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills in a range of contexts
 - sufficient resources are available so that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage can choose activities during learning outdoors whatever the weather.
 - Improve attendance by ensuring that:
 - arrangements to monitor attendance are rigorous and robust and steps are taken to encourage good attendance and reduce persistent absence.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Standards are too low and pupils' achievement is inadequate. The vast majority of pupils enter Year 1 with skills that are below those typical for their age. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils make inadequate progress and by the end of Year 2, attainment is low. In Key Stage 2 progress is patchy. In Years 5 and 6 it is stronger because teaching is more effective. By the end of Year 6, attainment in English, mathematics and science, although steadily rising, is significantly below average because pupils do not make up for the legacy of past underachievement quickly enough. In all year groups, far fewer pupils than average attain the higher levels because they are not always given sufficiently challenging work to enable them to reach their full potential.

In the best lessons, the pace is lively, activities are practical, matched to pupils' interests and new technology is used. Pupils' attention is captured, they become engrossed in learning, apply themselves to their tasks diligently and their progress speeds up. This is not always the case, however, and too many pupils fail to work effectively and tasks are often incomplete. This is because work is either too easy or too hard for them and they lose interest and give up. Many pupils lack the skills to work independently of an adult. Learning and progress are also less effective when low-level chatter and disruptions as well as occasional poor behaviour divert the teachers' attention. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make inadequate progress because, although the guidance they receive in lessons from teaching assistants is supportive, tasks are not closely enough matched to their needs.

Pupils enjoy tending the school allotment and helping with the redevelopment of the local park, but in school pupils have few responsibilities. There are no effective channels for pupils to express their opinions and bring about improvements and most pupils do not feel they have an effective voice in school. Inspectors agree. Pupils say

they feel safe and are confident there is an adult to turn to if required, but a significant minority do not feel that incidents of bullying are always dealt with effectively enough. Most pupils are friendly and generally have good relationships with adults. A third of pupils who returned the questionnaires did not feel that behaviour is good enough. A significant minority say their learning is disrupted because of the inappropriate behaviour of others, while many say behaviour is too boisterous at lunchtime because they do not have equipment to play with. Inspectors agree and judge that behaviour is inadequate. Attendance is well below average and for a small minority persistent absence is too high and shows no signs of improvement. Most pupils are not developing the skills to prepare them successfully for their future beyond school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	4
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons, teachers have good expectations of what pupils can achieve and ensure the presentation of pupils' work is neat and tidy. They make good use of interesting resources and new technology; this increases pupils' enjoyment of their activities. Questioning is effective and makes pupils think more deeply about their learning. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to share ideas about their tasks or to talk in pairs; this successfully promotes speaking and listening. These features, however, are not consistent in every class and too much teaching is inadequate or barely satisfactory and fails to fully engage pupils. The pace of too many lessons is disrupted when teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour effectively enough. The accuracy with which teachers assess pupils' progress is too variable. Although there are examples of good practice, teachers' use of assessment information to adjust lesson planning is patchy. As a result, work is not tightly matched to the needs of individual pupils. In the best practice, marking is helpful and provides constructive comments to help pupils improve, but this is not so in all classes.

The curriculum has recently been revised but it is too early for amendments to impact on pupils learning and development. Pupils do not have enough opportunities

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

to practise their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills and this limits the development of their basic skills. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 in particular is not modified to meet their abilities and needs. There are satisfactory arrangements for the personal, social and health education of pupils. The breadth of the visits and visitors to enrich learning is satisfactory, but the range of activities available beyond lessons is too limited and pupils, especially girls, indicate they would like a more varied choice.

The school provides good levels of pastoral care and support. Teachers know pupils well. There is good support for individuals and vulnerable groups, which has led to noticeable improvements in their self-esteem. Arrangements to help pupils move from year group to year group and then on to secondary school are good. The school does not take sufficiently rigorous steps to monitor and encourage regular attendance, although there has been some success with a few individuals, Safeguarding procedures do not meet requirements.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership has established a shared vision among staff to bring about improvement. However, responsibilities are not always clearly defined, and this dilutes the capacity of individuals to drive improvement. Management systems to monitor and evaluate the work of the school are insufficiently rigorous. New arrangements to track and assess pupils' progress, so that any underachievement can be quickly identified are not robust. The school is not using target-setting well enough to raise pupils' achievement. As a result, pupils' achievement and progress are held back. Although very supportive, the governing body does not hold the school to account by regularly checking the quality of provision and contributing to driving school improvement. As a result, it has too little impact on the work of the school. The local authority is providing extensive support in the school, for example, best practice to secure improvements in teaching is being shared, but is yet to impact on the quality of education for all pupils.

Satisfactory arrangements are in place to promote equal opportunity and tackle discrimination. Relationships with most parents are satisfactory and they are involved in their children's learning, well-being and in the life of the school. There is a suitable flow of information and their views are regularly, although informally, sought. The role of the home/school link officer is underdeveloped. Although some success has been achieved with individual families, a small minority does not engage with the school. Community cohesion has strengths in pupils' involvement in the local community. However, the school does not evaluate or have a clear plan to improve its contribution to the wider and global community. The effectiveness of safeguarding and child protection procedures is inadequate. This is because record keeping and

some referral procedures do not fulfil current statutory requirements. Although there is a suitable number of staff and adequate resources, the school provides inadequate value for money because outcomes for pupils are inadequate.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. As a result of careful analysis, there is an accurate view of what to do next to develop the phase further. Recently, actions are being successfully implemented to bring about improvement. Children enjoy learning and have trusting relationships with adults. Satisfactory welfare procedures are in place and children are kept safe. Planned activities have a suitable balance between those that children can choose for themselves and those led by an adult. In the outdoor area the range of resources is limited. Access is not continuously available when the weather is wet and so children cannot choose for themselves if they want to learn outside. As a result, this holds back children's independent learning and progress. As a result of satisfactory teaching, children make satisfactory progress. By the time they enter Year 1, a few children are working within the expected levels for their age, but the vast majority are below. Observation and assessment are satisfactory. Information is used to plan activities; however, these are not sufficiently tailored to children's needs and abilities, especially those of the more able. Satisfactory relationships have been fostered with parents, who say that they feel welcome in the school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Inspectors received questionnaire responses from 45 parents which represents around 20% of the total. Analysis of responses indicates that in the main parents are happy with their children's experience at school and their children enjoy school. Most parents felt the school encouraged their children to live healthy lifestyles; inspectors endorse this view. The majority indicated that they thought teaching is good, their children are making enough progress and the school keeps their children safe. Inspectors do not agree and judge that teaching could be better and pupils should make more progress. Inspectors also judge that safeguarding and child protection arrangements do not meet current statutory requirements. A few parents expressed concerns about how well the school meets their children's particular needs, the school arrangements to deal with unacceptable behaviour and the effectiveness of leadership and management of the school. Inspectors endorse these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Well Lane Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 177 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	53	18	40	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	26	58	16	36	1	2	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	58	16	36	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	62	13	29	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	29	64	11	24	1	2	2	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	64	12	27	2	4	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	64	12	27	1	2	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	23	51	16	36	0	0	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	56	14	31	2	4	2	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	49	16	36	3	7	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	49	19	42	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	23	51	17	38	3	7	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	64	11	24	2	4	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
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New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



11 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Well Lane Primary School, Birkenhead, CH42 5PF

Thank you for welcoming us when we came to inspect your school. I enjoyed talking to you all and watching the youngest pupils prepare for their nativity concert. I listened carefully to what you had to say about your school. It is good that most of you enjoy school and know there is an adult who you can ask for help if you are troubled or sad.

We have judged that the school needs additional help to give you a better education and so we have placed your school in 'special measures'. This means that the school will get extra help and support. Inspectors will return regularly to check that the school is making progress. The school should:

- help you all do better and reach higher standards in English, mathematics and science
- improve the work of leaders and managers, including governors, so that they carefully check the school's work and take action quickly to improve matters if they find that something is not right
- improve teaching so that more of it is good or better, make sure you have lots of opportunities to learn new things and ensure younger children are given more outdoor learning activities
- ensure that the teachers help you know what you need to do to improve your work
- look and find ways to work with pupils and their families where their attendance is not good enough
- ensure that some very important pieces of paperwork designed to help keep you safe are completed quickly.

You can all help by trying your best in lessons and coming to school regularly.

Yours sincerely

Denise Shields
Lead inspector

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Woodchurch CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105067
Local Authority	Wirral
Inspection number	336412
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Jennifer Platt

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Cretney
Headteacher	Mr Brian McGregor
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2007
School address	Church Lane Woodchurch Wirral CH49 7LS
Telephone number	0151 6774788
Fax number	0151 6779306
Email address	schooloffice@woodchurch-pri.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at teachers' planning, documentation for safeguarding pupils, the school's assessment records and test results, plans for future development and a range of policies. In addition, inspectors analysed 30 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 21 from staff and 101 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current progress, especially in Key Stage 1 and for the more able pupils, in mathematics
- the quality of teaching and the use of assessment when planning lessons
- the rigour and accuracy of the school's self-evaluation and the drive to raise standards.

Information about the school

This is an average size school. A well above average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals and very few are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. There is an Early Years Foundation Stage in one Reception class. The school provides extended school provision after normal school hours but this was not part of this inspection. The school holds several awards including the National Healthy Schools Award, Active Mark and Bronze Bike-it Award. The school has earned recognition for its involvement with Family Works which promotes partnership with parents.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school and parents are justified in their confidence in it. It has many strengths, including the high quality of care, which lead to a secure and happy atmosphere conducive to good learning. Pupils enjoy school and show respect for visitors, staff and each other. They have a good understanding of keeping healthy and know how to look after themselves and keep safe.

Pupils make good progress in lessons especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2. From starting school with skills that are lower than usually seen pupils achieve well and leave school having reached average standards. Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2 where teaching is consistently good. In Key Stage 1 and in mathematics in Key Stage 2, although there is a rising trend in attainment, the more able pupils are not always making enough progress. In a few lessons teachers are not always pitching work at the correct level and this leads to a lack of challenge. This is not the case in other lessons where teaching seen was outstanding proceeding at an exhilarating pace that excited and sustained learning.

Many visitors and visits add interest to the curriculum as do the themed weeks and special events. As yet, the school does not link subjects together on a regular basis and the opportunities to advance other skills, especially mathematics, are not fully exploited to make learning more purposeful.

The more thorough systems now in place to track progress are impacting positively on leaders' monitoring and self-evaluation. Plans are in place to reduce the time between assessments and check even more rigorously that all pupils make enough progress. The school now has a clear view of its strengths and the good response to identified weaknesses is evident in the gradual rise in standards. There is a strong commitment to improve mathematics which has proved to be more resistant to change than the other subjects. This ensures good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase progress for the more able pupils in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:
 - making sure all lessons are delivered at a brisk pace
 - using assessment information more effectively to ensure tasks are sufficiently challenging.
- Make the curriculum more imaginative by linking subjects together so that learning is more purposeful and basic skills, especially mathematics, are developed in a

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

range of subjects.

- Embed the new tracking procedures by making more frequent checks on pupils' on-going progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Progress in the majority of lessons is good and in some cases is excellent. The older pupils especially are very keen to learn and do well. They display maturity in their responses in lessons and rise to the challenge to extend their ideas and clarify their thoughts. In many lessons pupils work together well and make good use of the time given to discuss their ideas with a partner. Where teaching is less effective, especially in Key Stage 1, pupils become restless and do not complete work to the best of their ability.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress in their first year. Although progress is inconsistent between Years 1 and 6 it is good overall especially accelerating at the end of Key Stage 2. Consequently, by the time pupils leave Year 6 standards are average in English, mathematics and science. The very small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups makes good progress because they play a full part in school life. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective because their needs are dealt with through individual plans and by experienced support staff. As a result they make good progress. Pupils' good understanding of the importance of leading healthy lifestyles is evident in their choice of healthy food and energetic play. Many opt to walk to school. Pupils behave well and in the school's act of worship behaviour was excellent showing respect for visitors and extremely attentive listening. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities as can be seen by the older pupils acting as play leaders and helping at lunchtime. Relationships are good and pupils say they know who to approach with any worries, such as bullying. Their class rules show they understand that they are responsible for their actions and an awareness that they can upset other pupils. Attendance is average and pupils are soundly prepared for the future. The good progress in social skills ensures they face the next stage of their education with confidence.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Good relationships and clear expectations in lessons ensure they run smoothly. Many lessons include a variety of different activities that sustain pupils' interest. This was reflected in the literacy lessons for Year 6 pupils who have been inspired to enjoy reading Macbeth because of the effective use of drama, photographs and collaboration. Although standards in mathematics are not as high as in other subjects, lessons include practical activities. These often consolidate learning but occasionally tasks are rather time consuming, including examples such as colouring, cutting and pasting, which are not sufficiently challenging. Marking has been a focus of improvement since the previous inspection and teachers now inform pupils how to improve. Targets are also set to guide pupils but these are not referred to sufficiently in marking to keep them at the forefront of pupils' thoughts as they set to work.

Personal, social and emotional development is promoted well in the curriculum and pupils learn in an orderly and calm atmosphere. Good quality art on display and the opportunities to play a musical instrument show the school has sustained a breadth of experiences. To make these even more interesting the school is looking to link subjects and increase events such as the focus weeks which also include parents.

This is a caring school and the vast majority of parents felt the school is committed to putting the needs of children first. Transition, as pupils move to the next stage of their education, is good. Visitors advise pupils not only how to keep safe but also on possible future careers so they can make informed choices about the future. The more vulnerable pupils are given additional support so that any difficulties are overcome.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection many initiatives have been put in place to raise attainment. These have been more effective in English than in mathematics but there are now signs of rising standards especially for the more able pupils. The drive for higher standards continues with the development of the role of subject leaders. Their action plans are extremely thorough showing a good analysis of data and practical activities in place to tackle any dips in progress. Actions include improving teaching in Key Stage 1, which is remedying previous underachievement that was not spotted quickly enough in the past. Although the new systems are not yet fully established, new information is emerging that is enabling governors to be more informed and so extend their role as critical friends to the school. Supportive governors fulfil their other roles successfully, especially ensuring all safeguarding procedures are in place. Appropriate checks are made to see staff are suitable to work with young people and all are trained in child protection.

The plan to promote community cohesion shows the school has made good inroads in extending local links and in widening contacts with schools that have a more diverse mix of cultures. The extent to which this provision is evaluated is at an early stage.

Leadership values its links with parents and carers, recognising their support is vital to pupils' progress and well-being. Staff are readily available so that any concerns can be shared. Workshops, for parents, extend knowledge in a range of aspects including how to help their children. Partnerships with external agents are extensive and used especially well to obtain guidance for the more vulnerable pupils. This reflects the school's determination to provide equal opportunities for these pupils and the school is moving to ensure the needs of the more able pupils are more fully met.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Reception with skills that are lower than those typical for their age especially in personal and social skills and communication. Effective teaching enables them to make good progress although they do not quite reach average standards by the time they enter Year 1. Good progress is very evident in the development of their social skills and the children show good independence and an ability to stay on a task for a good length of time. The day is well organised with a good balance between free choice and activities led by an adult. Children love referring to the picture on the task-board that shows them their daily options. Staff lead focus activities very well with practical activities, rhymes and effective questioning making learning fun as well as purposeful. Outdoors is small and activities seen lacked the variety of the indoor ones. The children enjoy using the interactive whiteboard and although computers are available they are not easily accessible for free choice. Leadership effectively plans for the future making good use of the children's well-kept individual records.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The response to the pre-inspection questionnaire was small and was mostly positive. Parents and carers regard the teaching as good and appreciate that their children enjoy school. There were no significant trends in the small number of criticisms offered in the questionnaires but inspectors did consider all of these as part of the process of evaluating the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodchurch Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 213 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	50	13	43	2	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	50	12	40	3	10	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	37	13	43	3	10	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	43	13	43	4	13	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	43	14	47	1	3	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	40	13	43	4	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	43	16	53	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	14	47	10	33	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	40	16	53	2	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	43	12	40	3	10	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	33	15	50	5	17	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	43	14	47	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	50	13	43	1	3	1	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



26 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Woodchurch Church of England Primary School, Wirral CH49 7LS

Thank you all so much for the welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school. We appreciated your friendship and the time you gave to us to tell us about your school. You go to a good school and because of the effective teaching and your hard work most of you make good progress. You behave well and know how to keep safe and recognise the importance of keeping healthy. The headteacher and all of the staff are committed to providing the best for you to ensure you learn in a safe and happy school.

To improve your school, I have asked your headteacher and governors to:

- improve the progress you make in Years 1 and 2 and make sure you all make as much progress as possible in mathematics
- make more of your lessons of good quality and check that the work you are given is always just at the right level of difficulty
- link subjects together more so that learning is even more exciting
- check more closely that you are all making enough progress.

I know you would all like to play a part in making your school even better and you can do this by continuing to do your very best and listening closely to your teachers. I especially enjoyed visiting your church and watching your rehearsal for the Christmas play. I am sure it went well and I wish you every happiness for Christmas and the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jennifer Platt

Lead inspector

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The Observatory School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	127715
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	341003
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Allan Lacey

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 students	11–16
Gender of students	Mixed
Number of students on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr. T Harney
Headteacher	Mrs Sandra Reilly
Date of previous school inspection	June 2007
School address	Bidston Village Road Bidston Prenton CH43 7QT
Telephone number	0151 652 7093
Fax number	0151 670 0641
Email address	schooloffice@theobservatoryschool.wirral.sch.uk

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Introduction

An additional Ofsted inspector carried out this inspection. The inspector visited six lessons, and held meetings with governors, parents and carers, staff and groups of students. The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following: the school's development plan, safeguarding policies, students' books, assessment records and case studies, minutes of various meetings, including governors, and the school's own data on parental views. The inspector also analysed the 12 parents' and carers' questionnaires and 23 students' questionnaires received.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work, looking in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of the school in meeting the very diverse needs of the students
- how well the curriculum is designed to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of all students
- how effectively the school works with parents and carers, and other agencies to promote students' learning and well-being
- the effectiveness and reliability of the safeguarding of students.

Information about the school

The school provides education and support for students with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. The school was opened in 2005 and was last inspected in June 2007. Most students join the school in Year 7, with a small number joining at different ages in their school career. All students have a statement of special educational needs. The great majority of students are of White British heritage. Most students come from the local Wirral area. The girl to boy ratio is one to five. Currently, 10 students are looked after by the local authority and four are on the child protection register. Well above average numbers are entitled to free school meals. The school operates an extended day with all students attending a breakfast club. The school has the Healthy Schools Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The Observatory School provides a satisfactory quality of education. It provides an outstandingly high standard of care, guidance and support for every student. Behaviour is good and the school has forged very effective links with parents and carers

Many students join the school having experienced significant difficulties, often resulting in high absence, low attainment and poor self-esteem. The calm and supportive ethos, high expectations of behaviour and well-embedded systems of rewards provide students with the structure and security they need to engage in learning. Although students' attainment remains low overall, the majority of students leaving school in 2009 gained basic qualifications in English and mathematics. Most students are making at least satisfactory progress in their learning and some make good progress. Teaching is satisfactory, with some examples of good teaching. There is some variability between classes. As a result, a few students are not always fully challenged in their learning. Students enjoy coming to school and as one said, 'It is great here! I hated school and I never went, but I love coming here!' The school has close and extremely effective links with external agencies and other partners to ensure health, well-being and good prospects for students.

Excellent care, guidance and support are central to the school's provision. The school rightly prides itself on how well it understands and appreciates the challenges its students face. Students enjoy the opportunities provided by the satisfactory curriculum to undertake a wide range of activities. However, there is a lack of opportunities to develop skills of enterprise and information and communication technology (ICT).

Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the needs of the local community informed through direct contact with neighbourhood groups. The school contributes to its local community well with a number of important links established.

The leadership team is clearly focused on achieving the best for every student in the school. The recently appointed headteacher is ensuring that each member of the team has a clear understanding of the school's vision and is instilling an underlying ethos of challenge for all students, regardless of their difficulties. The leadership team carries out extensive monitoring activities. However, their findings are not always evaluated rigorously enough to determine the impact of initiatives and

developments on outcomes for students. The school has maintained satisfactory improvement in a time of significant change since the previous inspection. For example, there has been a significant trend of improvement in students' behaviour and their attendance, and a reduction in the numbers of students being excluded. Essential systems are in place to enable the school to continue to develop and the school has a satisfactory capacity for further sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve learning and progress across the curriculum for students of all abilities by:
 - making more effective use of assessment to ensure that teaching consistently meets the needs of all students
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations of what students can achieve are always sufficiently challenging.

- Develop the curriculum by:
 - creating interesting and challenging teaching programmes which reflect the needs, interests and aspirations of all students
 - improving the provision for the development of information and communication technology and skills of enterprise
 - increasing the range of appropriate accredited courses.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of students/children **3**

Attainment on entry to the school is well below the national average for the majority of students. Many students have had negative experiences of the education system, with many having been excluded from mainstream schools. A number of students have some degree of underlying learning difficulty or specific learning difficulties. A small minority join with attainment broadly in line for their ages. Students are keen to learn from a wide range of new experiences. They make satisfactory progress in their learning, with good and sometimes outstanding progress in their personal development.

Students feel safe from bullying in school and regard the school as a safe place to be. They say that if bullying does take place it is dealt with fairly and consistently. Behaviour is good throughout the school. The incidents of challenging behaviour that may interrupt learning are decreasing and are managed very effectively through the school's thoughtful and effective approach. Parents and carers strongly agree that their children feel happy and safe at school. Students have a good understanding of the factors to promote a healthy lifestyle, personal safety and well-being both physically and psychologically. Students make a satisfactory and developing contribution to the local community. The school council effectively represents the views of all students and influences school development. The school has put in place effective strategies to improve attendance and these have brought about an

improvement in overall attendance and a reduction in the number of children who are persistently absent from school. The number of exclusions has reduced and this is an indication of the effectiveness of the school's systems for rewarding good behaviour and dealing effectively with inappropriate behaviour.

Students' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. Students talk about their feelings and understand the need for good behaviour. They show a good understanding of what constitutes racist behaviour and why racism is wrong. Students learn about and have had a number of experiences of engaging with people from other cultures, for example, through a developing link with a school in Madagascar. Effective advice and guidance play a key role in encouraging the students to continue in education and training or to actively seek employment when they leave school. Students are equipped well on a personal and social level to leave school and to take the next steps in their lives due to the effective programme provided by the school. They achieve some success in nationally recognised awards; however, the range of such qualifications is limited. Boys and girls do as well as each other and looked after children also achieve as well as others in school.

These are the grades for students' outcomes

Students' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Students' attainment	4
The quality of students' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which students' feel safe	1
Students' behaviour	2
The extent to which students adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which students contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which students develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Students' attendance	4
The extent of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In most lessons, teachers and their assistants motivate students well by identifying and praising their achievements. Students' attention to what they are doing is usually good; they try exceptionally hard to do as well as they can. On occasions, teaching is less effective because, assessment has not been used well enough to ensure that teaching meets the different needs of the students. As a result, the expectations of teachers in a few lessons are not as high as they could be. In lessons, teaching assistants provide valuable support to students. Relationships between students and staff are excellent and students help one another where they can.

Care, guidance and support are of the highest quality. Students have a high level of trust in staff and are confident to ask for support. Care and support meet the needs of individuals on a day-to-day basis and during periods of crises. Partnership work with a range of agencies contributes effectively to sustain the engagement of

vulnerable students in learning. Leadership of care, guidance and support is exemplary.

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is an appropriate emphasis on the basic skills that students need in literacy and numeracy. The exciting curriculum developments which are taking place in art and design, design and technology, personal and social education, and science, have yet to be reflected in other curriculum areas, most notably literacy, numeracy and ICT. The work-related learning that takes place for the older students is of high quality and provides an effective bridge to the next stage of students' lives. The teaching and cross-curricular use of ICT is underdeveloped, as is the incorporation of enterprise skills into the curriculum.

Risk assessments are rigorous. Planning for the movement of students from the one class to the next is good. Similarly, the transition from school to other placements and establishments is well considered and effectively planned.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets students' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has instilled passion and commitment in the staff team. This is evident in their students' enjoyment in coming to school and in the outstandingly positive esteem in which the school is held by parents and carers. The strong vision for school improvement is shared by all staff.

The school's self-evaluation is generally accurate. Nevertheless, the school does not analyse its performance as well as it might, for example, by using available data to identify the impact of actions and initiatives on students' outcomes. The school's moderation of the assessments of students' work is underdeveloped, as is its use of local and national data to compare students' performance with that of students with similar levels of special educational needs and/or learning disabilities nationwide. Subject leadership is developing, but does not involve comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of subjects. The governing body includes a good range of expertise and fulfils its statutory duties satisfactorily. It has yet to develop its role as a full participant in the planning, execution and evaluation of the plans for school improvement.

The school successfully promotes equality of opportunity. It has a deep understanding of every individual and is closing gaps in students' behaviour, attendance and achievement often from a low starting point. Support meets the needs of young people in care and actions to remove barriers to their learning enable them to become fully involved in the curriculum provision.

Engagement with parents, other partnerships with local schools, health professionals, the police service, and other support services are outstanding. They make a major contribution to the students' learning and well-being as evidenced, for example by the outstanding work of the school based community police office in establishing relationships of trust and respect among the students for the local police service.

The school is a very harmonious community which the students clearly enjoy being a part of. Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the needs of the local community informed through direct contact with neighbourhood groups. The school has established a number of important links with its local community and plays an important role within it.

The school's systems to safeguard students are of good quality.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are supportive of the school and many commented on how well staff know their children and adapt learning to meet the individual temperaments and needs of all students. They recognise the high level of staff commitment in supporting their children and greatly value the 'down to earth' approach of all staff. Regular and helpful information sharing as well as personal contact are strong features of why parents and carers feel engaged and supported by the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of students registered at The Observatory School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 12 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 49 students registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	8	58	4	42	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	4	33	8	67	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	4	33	8	67	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	6	50	5	42	1	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	8	67	4	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	58	5	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	50	4	33	2	17	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	6	50	6	50	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	58	4	33	1	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	67	3	25	1	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	33	8	67	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	75	3	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	75	3	25	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its students' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its students well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its students.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its students. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the students' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well students acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of students. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets students' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which students are learning in lessons and over longer periods. It is often measured by comparing the students' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



14 January 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of The Observatory School, Prenton, CH43 7QT

Thank you for your help with the inspection. I enjoyed meeting you and learning about your school. I am writing this letter to tell you what I found.

The Observatory School is a satisfactory school which cares for you exceptionally well. Most of you enjoy your work, feel safe and have someone you can talk to if you are upset or worried. You told me that the curriculum and the sports activities, trips and visits are the features you like the most. I especially liked the pictures of your visit to the Magistrate's Court and the Santa ride on the plane. Most of you are making progress to improve your attendance and behaviour. I, agree with the school staff that you could make even faster progress in all your school subjects too.

I have asked the staff to keep a closer eye on how well you are doing and to help you make better progress by:

- checking on how well you are doing to find out what else they can do to improve your progress. You can help by letting your teacher know if the work you are given is too easy or too difficult
- making sure that your lessons are even more interesting and challenging.

I have also asked the school to look at:

- providing a greater range of qualifications for you to gain before you leave school.

Good luck in all you do and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Allan Lacey
Additional Inspector

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