



0-19 Standards Sub-Committee

Date:	Tuesday, 4 December 2012
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 2 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non pecuniary interests, in connection with any item(s) on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

2. EARLY YEARS CENTRES AND CHILDREN'S CENTRES OFSTED INSPECTIONS FEB 2012 - OCT 2012.

3. PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES

4. PRIMARY SCHOOLS OFSTED INSPECTIONS FEB 2012 - OCT 2012. (Pages 1 - 178)

5. SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES

6. SECONDARY SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTIONS FEB 2012 - OCT 2012. (Pages 179 - 200)

7. SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES

8. SPECIAL SCHOOLS OFSTED INSPECTIONS FEB 2012 - OCT 2012. (Pages 201 - 232)

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR

January 2012 – New Ofsted Framework

School	Previous Grading	Overall Effectiveness	Achievement	Teaching	Behaviour & Safety	Leadership & Management	Key Issues
Sandbrook Primary School Jan 18 th – 19 th 2012	2	3	3	3	2	3	<p>Secure consistently good or better teaching throughout the school and thereby improve pupils' achievement by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sharing best practice in teachers' use of assessment and marking effectively throughout the school - ensuring that higher-attaining pupils are always sufficiently challenged by their work - improving behaviour for learning for pupils who, on a few occasions, do not listen or apply themselves as well as others in lessons - planning and implementing more consistent whole school strategies for the teaching of phonics. <p>Provide a more exciting curriculum for pupils by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enabling middle managers to more actively monitor the quality in their subjects - planning more opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their knowledge and skills across different subjects and in different ways.

School	Previous Grading	Overall Effectiveness	Achievement	Teaching	Behaviour & Safety	Leadership & Management	Key Issues
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School January 17 th - 18 th 2012	2	2	2	2	2	1	<p>Build on existing good and outstanding practice by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring pupils are constantly challenged to achieve the levels of which they are capable, particularly in Key Stage 1 - raising attainment in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 to match the high attainment already achieved in English.
Millfields CE Primary School Jan 25 th -26 th 2012	NTI	2	2	2	2	2	<p>Reinforce the ongoing drive to raise attainment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - applying the school's strategies for teaching letters and the sounds they make and developing pupils' writing skills in order to bring standards of reading and writing into line with national expectations in Key Stage 1 - ensuring support and challenge for more-able pupils in Key Stage 2, so that an increased proportion are enabled to reach the higher level of attainment in English by the end of Year 6 - improving resources for information and communication technology, in order to provide a wider range of opportunities for pupils to enhance their learning by using new technologies.

School	Previous Grading	Overall Effectiveness	Achievement	Teaching	Behaviour & Safety	Leadership & Management	Key Issues
Brookhurst Primary School Feb 23 rd – 24 th	2	2	2	2	2	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase pupils' independence as learners and accelerate their progress further by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improving the effectiveness of teachers' planning in providing further challenge, especially for the more-able pupils - increasing opportunities for pupils to take the initiative in lessons - involving pupils more in tracking and planning their own progress. 2. Improving the quality of all teaching to that of the best by developing the role of subject leaders to share best practice across the school and to ensure that pupils deepen their understanding and hone their skills effectively as they move through the school.
Heswall Primary School March 6 th & 7 th 2012	2	2	2	2	2	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance the curriculum to further increase the impact on pupils' achievements by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developing opportunities to enhance creativity - providing better opportunities for developing writing and numeracy skills in other subjects - ensuring the development of knowledge, skills and understanding is built upon as pupils progress through school.

							<p>2. Further improve teaching and learning so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning objectives and success criteria are specific and clear for pupils and support their learning - there is a consistent approach to marking so it provides clear guidance as to pupils' next steps in their learning. <p>3. Develop the teaching of reading and phonics by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - providing training for all staff in phonics and reading - ensuring reading skills are systematically taught and built upon - ensuring lessons and activities fully meet the needs of all learners.
Irby Primary School	2	2	2	2	1	2	<p>1. Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and hence raise achievement further by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improving interaction between teachers and pupils in lessons with regard to listening to pupils' responses and using them as an opportunity to explore learning further. <p>2. Refine systems for assessing individual pupils' performance in subjects other than English and mathematics so that individual pupils' achievement in those subjects can be measured more accurately and improvements made.</p>

School	Previous Grading	Overall Effectiveness	Achievement	Teaching	Behaviour & Safety	Leadership & Management	Key Issues
Hoylake Holy Trinity CE Primary School March 21 st & 22 nd 2012	2	3	3	3	2	3	<p>1. Improve teaching to good and better and raise achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - making the monitoring of teaching more rigorous and resolving identified shortcomings - ensuring teaching is consistently stimulating and provides sufficient challenge for more-able pupils. <p>2. Improve leadership and management by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strengthening the school's systems for tracking and reviewing pupils' progress and using the information to identify and address areas of underachievement - ensuring all leaders and the governing body make more efficient use of all information available to gain a clear overview of how well the school is doing and areas most needing attention - ensuring that the school development plan provides effective strategic direction and that priorities and actions are sharply focused on raising achievement.

School	Previous Grading	Overall Effectiveness	Achievement	Teaching	Behaviour & Safety	Leadership & Management	Key Issues
Holy Spirit RC & CE Primary School March 21 st & 22 nd 2012	2	2	2	2	2	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raise pupils' achievement to outstanding by increasing opportunities for all pupils to extend their reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills across all subjects of the curriculum. 2. Raise the quality of leadership and management to outstanding by fully involving all curriculum leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning across all subjects of the curriculum.

Early Years Centres and Children's Centres

Setting	Overall Effectiveness	Capacity to Improve	Previous Ofsted Judgement	Current Key Issues

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Heswall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105038
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	377167
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2012
Lead inspector	Jane Millward HMI

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	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Turner
Headteacher	John Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2006
School address	Whitfield Lane Heswall Wirral CH60 7SD
Telephone number	0151 3427491
Fax number	0151 3427492
Email address	schooloffice@heswall-primary.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Jane Millward
Bernard Dorgan

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Thirteen lessons were observed, taught by eight teachers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and members of staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the school development plan, pupils' work, progress data, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance data and safeguarding records. They analysed 79 inspection questionnaires completed by parents and carers and those submitted by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Heswall Primary is smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority-ethnic backgrounds is lower than the national average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average. The majority of pupils are from a White British heritage. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the International Schools Intermediate Award and Eco School Green Flag status.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- Heswall Primary is a good school. Pupils enjoy learning and very positive attitudes exist. Pupils succeed in a supportive environment and care provided is of a high quality. Adults know pupils very well and provide effective targeted support to ensure they make good progress. A culture of success permeates through the school. As one parent commented, 'Heswall offers a safe, warm and friendly environment.' The school is not outstanding as some pupils are not making as much progress as their peers and rates of progress are variable across the school.
- Pupils make good progress from typically as expected starting points and overall attainment is above average when they leave school. Pupils with a disability and those with special educational needs make good progress due to the contribution of adults who provide support and targeted interventions.
- Teaching is effective, providing opportunities for pupils to succeed and make good progress. Enrichment activities contribute to the good curriculum. Lessons have good pace and generally meet the needs of all learners although in some instances, the learning intention is not always clear enough. The school follows a phonics (the sounds letters make) and reading programme. However, this is not always systematically applied. Marking of pupils work is variable.
- Well-mannered pupils are courteous and good behaviour is encouraged. They demonstrate a good awareness of unsafe situations and are well supported through the curriculum about dangers such as smoking.
- Good leadership and management are bringing about improvements. There is an ambitious goal to improve achievement and a common united approach ensures staff are working towards agreed aims. Good links have been made with a group of local schools, assisting Heswall in moving forward towards improving outcomes further. Effective strategies have been implemented through performance management to improve the quality of teaching.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the curriculum to further increase the impact on pupils' achievements by:
 - developing opportunities to enhance creativity
 - providing better opportunities for developing writing and numeracy skills in other subjects
 - ensuring the development of knowledge, skills and understanding is built upon as pupils progress through school.

- Further improve teaching and learning so that:
 - learning objectives and success criteria are specific and clear for pupils and support their learning
 - there is a consistent approach to marking so it provides clear guidance as to pupils' next steps in their learning.

- Develop the teaching of reading and phonics by:
 - providing training for all staff in phonics and reading
 - ensuring reading skills are systematically taught and built upon
 - ensuring lessons and activities fully meet the needs of all learners.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that their children are making good progress and that they are taught well at school. This view is supported by the inspectors. Teaching meets the needs of learners and they are provided with opportunities which encourage independence resulting in pupils making good progress. Pupils report that learning is fun and that their teachers help them to improve through setting curricular targets. They are encouraged to work collaboratively, for example, children in Reception devised their own way to record subtraction sums once they had knocked down numbered skittles.

Children start school with skills that are as expected for their age. Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, due to a carefully structured approach, which capitalises on children's interests. Independence is encouraged and children are curious and keen to learn. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities which ensure a balanced range of purposeful activities. Children enter Key Stage 1 well placed to access learning. In Key Stage 1, pupils writing skills are developed well due to a wide range of opportunities for purposeful writing. Attainment in reading is above average at the end of Year 2 and progress continues to ensure pupils' attainment in reading being above average when they leave school. A focus on improving reading is developing in the school. Pupils enjoy reading and are regularly heard to read on an individual basis. The school does not sufficiently focus on developing the higher-order reading skills and professional development for staff has been limited for staff in the teaching of reading or phonics.

When pupils leave in Year 6, their overall attainment is above average and they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils with a disability and those with special educational needs make good progress. Progress by pupils overall is good, with some variation between groups. Some pupils and groups are now making accelerated progress through effective teaching. Current data held by the school show the school is closing the gap in attainment for some groups. This is because teachers know the pupils well and are able to meet their needs in lessons.

Quality of teaching

Good teaching leads to pupils making overall good progress. Activities are well planned and pace and challenge enable most pupils to achieve at least the expected degree of progress. Pupils display high levels of resilience across the school. They work independently and respond to challenge well, for example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson pupils were encouraged to find real-life situations to solve word problems using multiplication. The development of the outdoor environment provides an exciting stimulus for pupils and a valuable source of enrichment of the curriculum. Support staff and other adults effectively support pupils' learning and activities are usually well matched to pupils' abilities, for example, in a Year 6 lesson where sweets were used to understand the concept of ratio. The vast majority of parents and carers report that their children are taught well and pupils feel that they learn a lot in lessons. This view is supported by inspectors. Some marking effectively guides pupils in how to improve their work, especially in literacy, although inconsistent across all subjects and in some instances work does not fully support pupils making their next steps. Older pupils are aware of the levels at which they are working at and most know their targets for improvement.

Where teaching observed was less effective, pupils were directed too much by the teacher which reduced opportunities for independent learning. On occasions pupils were unclear about the learning intention of the lesson as it did not specifically focus on what the pupils were going to learn. Nevertheless, pupils remained on-task and still completed the work set. This is because pupils are keen to be successful in their learning. Although reading attainment is above average, the teaching of reading and phonics does not always systematically build on pupils' skills and understanding and inconsistent intervention is provided once pupils become 'free readers'.

Social skills are developed well through teaching. Learning develops pupils' ability to show consideration, engage in reflection and to appreciate others' points of view. Celebration of cultural differences is developed through links with the wider world, for example, through celebrating festivals and experimenting with foods from other cultures. Personal, social and health education is embedded in the curriculum. This results in a good awareness of health issues and develops pupils' understanding of potential dangers such as use of the internet.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are polite, well-mannered and courteous. They respect each other and are proud of their surroundings. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage readily cooperate and support each other in shared learning opportunities.

Pupils feel safe in school and disruptive incidents are rare. One pupil stated that bullying is often a result 'of a fall-out' and 'teachers sort it out'. They show a good awareness of different types of bullying and can discuss why cyber bullying is dangerous. The older pupils take on play-leader roles where they support younger pupils at playtimes. The role as Year 6 prefect is highly sought after and is highly regarded across the school. Respect, at all levels, is apparent and this shows the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

There have been no fixed-term exclusions or racist incidents in recent years. A few parents and carers voiced concerns about how bullying was tackled in school. Inspectors investigated this and found behaviour to be good overall. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their child feels safe in school. Pupils demonstrate a good awareness of risk and unsafe situations. Behaviour is managed well by staff in lessons and there is very little disruption to learning. Attendance is above average and pupils are generally punctual. The school has a range of appropriate strategies to encourage pupils to attend regularly and on-time.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has established a leadership team which is focused on improving achievement and maintaining a focus on strong personal development for all pupils. He is highly ambitious and has made improvements to the school since the last inspection. He knows the strengths and weakness of the school and leaders at all levels are involved in setting challenging targets for further developments. This provides the school with a good capacity to make further improvements. A new tracking system has been introduced to monitor progress of all individuals and groups of pupils. This has enabled the school to intervene earlier when pupils start to fall behind. Barriers to learning are identified for all pupils and a range of strategies put in place to help pupils catch up, when necessary.

Middle leaders are enthusiastic and skilled in their approach to driving school improvement in their subject areas. They are involved in monitoring the quality of provision and provide constructive feedback to support teachers in moving forward. Strong links between leaders and the governing body exist. The governing body knows the school well and, while proud of its achievements, challenges the leaders to make further improvements. Individual members bring a wide range of expertise to the school, which is then used to support and challenge the decisions of senior leaders.

The school has strong, positive relationships with parents and carers. Useful links have been made to enable better communication, for example, through the school website. Informative workshops provide information for parents and carers to support their children with learning at home, for example, how calculation is taught in Key Stage 2.

The curriculum meets the needs of learners as evidenced by good achievement. Reflection time is built into lessons to ensure pupils' social and moral development is given prominence. Cross-curricular links are in place and a wealth of enrichment activities ensures good pupil engagement. Some activities within 'topic' work,

especially in Key Stage 1, do not provide sufficient challenge to enable all pupils to maximise their potential. The school realises the curriculum should be re-designed to further promote creativity and build more effectively on pupils' skills and understanding. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and leaders promote equality and tackle discrimination. Leaders ensure good provision for pupils with a disability and those with special educational needs.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



8 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heswall Primary School, Wirral, CH60 7SD

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. As you know we came to see how well you were doing and what you said helped us with our findings.

Heswall Primary is a good school. You take care of one another and work hard. What you achieve in English and mathematics is good and most of your lessons are interesting and help you learn. You enjoy learning in the outdoor area and are proud of the outside environment. You have good attitudes and enjoy your learning. We were very impressed with your good behaviour and how friendly you are to visitors. We agree with you that your school is a busy and interesting place to be. All the school staff take good care of you. They know each and every one of you very well and they are able to support you with your work and any worries you have.

It is our job to find out how schools can do even better. We have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governing body to work on three things in particular:

- to re-design the curriculum to help you learn even more
- to improve the quality of teaching
- to develop ways to help you learn phonics and reading.

Thank you again for your very warm welcome and enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward
Her Majesty's Inspector

Brookhurst Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105018
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	377161
Inspection dates	23–24 February 2012
Lead inspector	Judith Tolley

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	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Macauley
Headteacher	Elizabeth Davidson
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2006
School address	Brookhurst Road Bromborough Wirral CH63 0EH
Telephone number	0151 334 4348
Fax number	0151 334 4348
Email address	schooloffice@brookhurst.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Judith Tolley
Barbara Dutton

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed eight teachers and visited 15 lessons, seven of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made other briefer visits to lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and also heard pupils reading. Meetings were held with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation evidence, the school improvement plan, safeguarding documentation, and the school's tracking of pupils' progress. The inspectors also analysed 77 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and others completed by pupils and staff. The inspector looked at the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) but insufficient responses were available for any results to show.

Information about the school

Brookhurst is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The headteacher took up her post in September 2010. The school meets the current government floor standards. The school has Healthy Schools status.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is high and pupils’ achievement is good. Pupils enjoy reading and most read a variety of texts with fluency and understanding. The school is not outstanding because although teaching and learning are good and there are pockets of outstanding practice, there remain some minor inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, and in particular, in some lessons opportunities are missed to increase pupils’ independence as learners and accelerate their progress.
- Teaching is good. The school provides effective support for those pupils who have special educational needs, tailored very closely to their needs. Teachers use themes imaginatively so that pupils are engaged and excited by activities. The emphasis on speaking and listening across the school effectively increases pupils' confidence and develops their problem-solving skills. Although assessment information is used effectively to plan the next steps in learning, it is not always used precisely enough in lessons, so that on occasions some pupils find work too easy.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils typically behave well in lessons and say that learning is fun. Attendance is high. Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning, work very well with others and are courteous and polite. They say they feel safe in school.
- The headteacher, senior staff and the governing body monitor the school’s work closely and provide clear direction. Actions taken to address weaknesses identified at the last inspection have proved successful, providing a clear indication of the school’s good capacity to improve further. The monitoring and performance management by the senior leadership team have had a positive impact upon improving the quality of teaching and learning. Subject specialists provide good advice, support and training, but their role in leading and developing teaching in their subjects is not as fully developed as it could be.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' independence as learners and accelerate their progress further by:
 - improving the effectiveness of teachers' planning in providing further challenge, especially for the more-able pupils
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to take the initiative in lessons
 - involving pupils more in tracking and planning their own progress.
- Improving the quality of all teaching to that of the best by developing the role of subject leaders to share best practice across the school and to ensure that pupils deepen their understanding and hone their skills effectively as they move through the school.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle to learning quickly and happily. They are provided with a wide range of interesting and appealing activities which result in them gaining skills in many areas of learning and which are particularly effective in developing their communication skills and their independence as learners. Overall, they are considerate when sharing things and when 'taking turns' and are confident when asked to explain their views to others or to take the lead themselves in lessons. For example, in a numeracy lesson, children did simple addition and subtraction and explained how they had arrived at their answers in a variety of activities outside and then went on to set similar problems for each other.

Pupils thrive in lessons where they are challenged to achieve their best through working collaboratively with a partner or a small group to solve problems. Year 5 pupils worked enthusiastically in pairs to decide the precise instructions ancient Egyptians might give to an apprentice so that he could mummify a pharaoh. However, the pace of learning, especially for the more -able, slowed considerably because of time spent ensuring that all pupils had understood before beginning to write their instructions. The teaching of reading is effective in encouraging a love of literature and non-fiction. Pupils say they enjoy reading and most do so fluently and with understanding. Pupils' attainment in reading is high compared to that found nationally by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They are able to identify literary devices used by authors and replicate these in their own writing. Year 6 pupils discussed what worked well in their writing with a partner and went on to illustrate their explanations to the class to show how personification and imagery could change the mood in a text. Pupils apply their mathematical skills effectively, especially when they are solving problems. Year 5 pupils worked in pairs to identify patterns in a list of numbers and continue a sequence and, as a result, they were very eager to share their conclusions with the rest of the class.

Most parents and carers feel that their children are progressing well at school. The inspection found that by the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is high when compared with the national average and that they make good progress from their starting points as they move through the school. Swift identification of those pupils who have special educational needs is coupled with individual support tailored closely to their needs. This ensures that

these pupils also make good progress and are able to participate fully in whole-class activities alongside their classmates. In the past, some more-able pupils did not always achieve their full potential. The school has recognised this and is now working to close this performance gap.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers say that the teaching their children receive is good. Inspection findings indicate that teaching is good overall, but there remain some minor inconsistencies across the school. Imaginative, problem-solving activities engage and excite pupils' interest and enable them to practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills in a variety of contexts, supporting their spiritual, moral and social development. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning skilfully to extend pupils' thinking both in whole-class activities and in small group work. Pupils, including the youngest, are frequently asked to share and explain their thinking to others, which is effective in developing their speaking and listening skills, increasing their confidence and independence and developing their social skills.

Teachers use assessment information effectively to plan the next steps in learning but do not always plan in sharp enough detail for groups of differing ability within teaching groups. On occasions, more-able pupils are not always given the challenge they need to achieve their full potential. In the few instances where pupils lose interest or become restless, it is usually because they find the pace of learning too slow or are not always directly involved in whole-class activities. Marking is regular and usually gives good guidance about how to improve. Pupils know how they are getting on and what their next steps are to enable them to improve. They are frequently involved in evaluating their own and each other's work and make the best progress when they engage in a written dialogue with their teachers on how best to improve their work, but this practice is not always evident. The curriculum is used imaginatively to enable pupils to work collaboratively, respect the views of others and to explore other cultures, as well as to empathise with others and to appreciate literature, drama and music.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The pupils say that they feel safe in school, and parents and carers are confident that this is the case. Pupils have a good understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed, both within and outside of school and know how to stay safe and healthy.

Pupils typically behave well in lessons and around the school. They say learning is fun and they are enthusiastic about their learning and their reading. They have very good relationships with each other and with adults in the school and are courteous and polite. Incidences of bullying and exclusions are rare and parents, carers and pupils are confident that the school deals with such occurrences promptly and effectively.

Pupils display high levels of concentration and, when working in groups, organise themselves quickly and without fuss. They take responsibilities seriously and are proud of their achievements, for instance, as school councillors, members of the 'Green Team', as house captains and buddies for younger pupils.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, strongly supported by the senior leadership team, provides very clear educational direction, based firmly on a rigorous analysis of pupils' progress, close monitoring and an accurate evaluation of the school's work. In the relatively short time the headteacher has been in post, she has won the confidence of pupils, parents and carers and staff alike. Members of the governing body play an active part in the school's self-evaluation, monitoring and improvement planning processes. Strategies to improve the quality of teaching, including opportunities for professional development through the local network of schools and the improved use of assessment information, are proving successful in accelerating progress. Leaders, staff and the governing body are committed to ensuring that all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn and take advantage of what the school offers. Discrimination is tackled robustly. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Policies are regularly reviewed by the governing body, and staff kept up to date with training.

Subject specialists use their expertise to good effect in planning the curriculum and to monitor the progress that pupils are making, but they are not yet directly involved in evaluating the impact of this in lessons or in improving the quality and consistency of teaching in their subjects. As a result, leaders currently do not make the most of the pockets of outstanding practice across the school to inspire others. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils well, including those who have special educational needs. The focus on speaking and listening across the school, together with the development of an imaginative curriculum, has had a positive impact upon pupils' enthusiasm for learning, and contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A good range of activities, including drama, musical and sporting activities, as well as a wide range of clubs, broaden pupils' experience significantly. Visits, including a residential visit to Wales, as well as opportunities to work with artists, are all greatly valued by pupils. High standards have been maintained and issues from the previous report have been tackled successfully. These are clear indications that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brookhurst Primary School, Wirral CH63 0EH

I would like to thank you all for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and listening to some of you read. You told us how much you enjoy your learning and how proud you are of your school. We agree with you: you go to a good school. It's an exciting place to learn with lots of things to do. We were very impressed by your good behaviour, the way you get on with each other and adults in your school. We think that you all make a really important contribution to your school through the school council, the Green Team and as house captains and buddies for younger pupils.

Younger children make good progress in the Reception classes and you make good progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Your attainment is high in English and mathematics. Your teachers work very hard and their teaching is good. We were particularly impressed by how well you read and you told us how much you enjoy your reading. We did notice that on occasions in lessons some of you find work too easy so we have asked the teachers to make sure you are always given the right amount of challenge so you can always achieve your best. We also noticed how well you got on when you worked together to solve problems but that sometimes you had to wait too long before you could start the tasks set. We have asked the teachers to put this right. We have also asked the teachers to continue to work together to make sure that all lessons are as good as the best. You told us that the staff look after you very well and we agree. The headteacher and staff are working very hard to make your school even better. You can help by continuing to work hard. We wish you every success for the future and hope that you continue to enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely

Judith Tolley
Lead inspector

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Holy Cross Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105087
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	377176
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2012
Lead inspector	Kevin Johnson

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip McGovern
Headteacher	Jane Bradley
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2008
School address	Gautby Road Bidston Birkenhead CH41 7DU
Telephone number	0151 652 8454
Fax number	0151 652 7715
Email address	schooloffice@holycross.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Kevin Johnson
Chris Maloney

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in seven lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers, talked to pupils, and reviewed some of their work. Meetings were held with staff and members of the governing body, as well as some parents and carers. Taken into account were 34 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those completed by pupils and members of staff. Inspectors also looked at a wide range of documentation which included that relating to safeguarding, the curriculum, the school's self-evaluation, minutes of governing body meetings, national assessment data and the school's own assessments.

Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school in which almost all the pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below average.

Among the school's recent achievements are the Activemark, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy School status. A breakfast club is provided during term time.

The school meets the current floor standard which is the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because although there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, there is scope for further improvement in teaching and in the leadership and management of the school. The quality of care provided for pupils is good. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection
- Children enter the Nursery class with knowledge and skills that are generally well below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress in Nursery and Reception classes. When they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, their attainment is still below average.
- Achievement is satisfactory. From Years 1 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress. Attainment is showing signs of improvement. At the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average in English and below average in mathematics. In English, pupils' reading is stronger than their writing.
- Overall, teaching is satisfactory with some that is good and outstanding. Teachers establish good relationships and ensure that pupils learn in a caring and supportive environment. There are inconsistencies, however, in the pace and challenge of some lessons and the effectiveness of teachers' marking.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe in school. They share trusting relationships with adults. Through their politeness and courtesy pupils contribute well to the friendly, caring ethos of the school. They behave well in lessons and their attitudes to learning are good. Attendance is improving, although still below average.
- Leaders are strongly committed in their drive to secure school improvement and share clear vision for the school's future. Satisfactory systems and procedures for the management of teaching and for the school's performance are beginning to show a positive impact. Future planning outlines the school's main

priorities but does not identify specific measurable outcomes for pupils to help leaders' evaluation of the progress made. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment, particularly in writing and mathematics, and accelerate progress further by building on recent improvements in teaching and learning so that:
 - pupils' work always matches their abilities and levels of understanding
 - marking consistently informs pupils about how to improve their work in all subjects and teachers check whether pupils have acted on any advice given
 - pupils have enough time in lessons to finish tasks and to check targets and evaluate their progress afterwards
 - teachers provide plentiful opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their skills in meaningful contexts across the curriculum
 - attendance and punctuality improves and important learning time is not missed.

- Increase the effectiveness of leaders and managers, including the governing body, by including expected measurable outcomes for pupils in all action planning and evaluating the progress towards them rigorously.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils enjoy lessons especially when there is practical work to do, and they have the opportunity to work with others. They say that they do not enjoy lessons when teachers talk for too long. The large majority of pupils feel that they learn a lot from their lessons. They have positive attitudes to learning and some older pupils already have clear aspirations. For example, one pupil who wants to be a paramedic knows how important science subjects will be at secondary school. Pupils generally work well in lessons but are often not clear about their individual targets and consequently how much progress they are making.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from their well below expected starting points on entering the Nursery. Good provision for their learning and development, especially their personal and social skills, result in their good behaviour and willingness to learn. Letters and the sounds they make (phonics) are taught well. This gives them the confidence they need when they begin to tackle early reading. By the end of the Reception Year, despite good progress from their starting points, children's skills, especially in writing, are generally below average.

Progress throughout the school is satisfactory. It is variable from class to class, although it is more consistent in reading than in writing and mathematics. Progress was hampered for some pupils due to earlier inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, but is now beginning to pick up more pace. Current school assessments, as well as pupils' work, indicate that most are working within the expected levels for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve satisfactorily. They attain as well as others in their group nationally. The school is successfully closing gaps in attainment for all groups.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn satisfactorily and their achievement is satisfactory. A wide range of additional support is planned to boost their basic skills and delivered either one-to-one or in groups as needed. Monitoring of progress and provision, however, is too informal and does not focus clearly enough on specific outcomes for individual pupils.

Attainment in reading at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is average. Pupils in Year 2 have positive attitudes to reading and enjoy stories. They know how to break down the sounds that letters make in order to make sense of unfamiliar words. Pupils in Year 6 read suitably challenging books accurately. They know how to find specific information from books, and what strategies to use to help them understand what they read. However, reading for pleasure is not generally high on their agenda and most tend to read only what the school provides.

Most parents and carers feel that their children's progress is good, but inspection evidence, including the school's assessments indicate satisfactory progress overall.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers are very positive about the teaching their children receive. Teachers value the contributions that pupils make to lessons and always make sure that self-esteem is boosted by praising pupils' efforts and using their ideas to help with explanations. Consequently, pupils feel safe, behave well, and are keen to share their views with the class. Resources are used well, particularly interactive whiteboards which help pupils to focus on learning and make explanations much clearer.

Where teaching is most effective there is good pace to pupils' learning because they are suitably challenged. Time is used well and they are continually questioned in order to assess their understanding and move their thinking on. In a mathematics lesson, for example, high expectations, good quality resources and an activity that had a 'real-life' element helped pupils to understand the mathematical probability of things happening from 'certain' to 'impossible'. There was good challenge in a literacy lesson for pupils, who first searched for information about the Paralympic Games on computers then began to write their own fact sheets. The quality of learning was good and pupils developed a good understanding of others' difficulties and the barriers they have to cross in order to achieve. One Year 4 pupil wrote a motto for the paralympians – 'Train hard and try extra hard'. Teachers are beginning to link writing opportunities across different subjects but there is less evidence of this happening in mathematics.

Where teaching is less effective, work is not matched well to pupils' abilities and understanding. This results in work being too hard for some pupils and too easy for some, particularly the more-able pupils. Teachers occasionally talk for too long, which causes pupils' concentration to lapse and leaves too little time to finish activities and to evaluate their learning. Teachers' marking of pupils' work shows recent improvement, particularly in literacy. However, it is inconsistent in quality across subjects in the level of clear guidance it gives and its impact on pupils' next pieces of work.

Teaching ensures disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that their children are safe and well cared for in school. That view is shared by pupils who say that they always feel safe. They are confident that adults are always on hand to help them if needed. Pupils feel safe in the playground. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and name-calling. Such incidents are rare and school records show that such incidents have declined. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe outside school. For example, they are alert to the dangers of cyber-bullying and of potentially dangerous places in their locality.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are always polite and friendly and have very caring attitudes towards others. They understand the acceptable boundaries with regard to respect for others and their personal behaviour, and rarely cross them. Pupils contribute well to the everyday life of the school. They have a say in school matters through the school council and are conscientious about their eco-responsibilities. The thriving breakfast club, appreciated by parents and carers, has made some inroads into improving punctuality but still too frequently some pupils do not arrive in time. Attendance fluctuates and, overall, is below average. Nevertheless, there is a recognisable rising trend, as a result of the school's continuing efforts and good relationships with parents and carers.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers have embraced local authority support effectively and have begun to make important improvements since the previous inspection. Good progress has been made towards securing a more consistently good quality of teaching. Pupils' behaviour has improved and their academic attainment and progress are showing positive signs. While leaders show satisfactory capability to sustain improvements, they acknowledge that action planning is not sufficiently focused on expected measurable outcomes for pupils. There has been a strong focus on the management of teaching and learning. As a result of carefully targeted professional development, for example, in the teaching of phonics and the use of assessment information, as well as a rigorous challenge to underperformance, the quality of teaching is improving.

The governing body is ambitious for the school and works diligently to raise its profile within the community. However, while encouraging and supporting the school's efforts, it does not hold the school to account rigorously enough. Nevertheless, statutory obligations, including the overseeing of safeguarding procedures, meet all requirements.

The school challenges all forms of discrimination strongly and promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. There are no significant gaps in the attainment of different groups of pupils and their pastoral care and well-being is carefully monitored. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to enjoy first-hand experiences. It contributes positively to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, enriching music provision for pupils and links with the high school raise pupils' achievement in physical education and promote their personal development and self-esteem well.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



6 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, Birkenhead, CH41 7DU

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you about the school. We were impressed by your politeness and good manners and saw that you behaved well in lessons. We also saw how well you care for one another and help to make your school a safe place for everyone. Some of you could improve your attendance, however, and need to try harder to get to school on time. That way you will not miss any important learning.

Holy Cross is a satisfactory school. The standards you reach in English and mathematics are improving and you make satisfactory progress. Your progress in reading is better than it is in writing and mathematics and we would like teachers to provide you with more opportunities to practise and improve these skills. The teachers try to make your lessons enjoyable.

The teachers, the governing body and your parents and carers would like the school to be even better. To help that to happen, we have asked for two things to improve. The first is for more of your lessons to be as good as the very best, by making sure that you are all challenged as well as you should be and that you are always given enough time to finish your work in lessons and then to check on the progress you have made. Also, we have asked the staff to always make it clear exactly what you need to do next when they mark your work and to see that you follow it up. The third thing is for the leaders to check carefully that you are reaching the targets the school sets for you, especially in writing and mathematics.

You can help by making sure you attend school every day and working as hard as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Johnson
Lead Inspector

Poulton Lancelyn Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105031
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	377164
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2012
Lead inspector	David Cox

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	409
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Prideaux
Headteacher	Beverley Greathead
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2009
School address	Venables Drive Spital Wirral CH63 9LY
Telephone number	0151 3345021
Fax number	0151 3345021
Email address	schooloffice@poultonlancelyn.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

David Cox
Jean Tarry
Pamela Hemphill

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 27 lessons taught by 12 teachers and teaching assistants. Two of these were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors talked with parents and carers, groups of pupils, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspectors listened to pupils reading across the age range. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation statement, its records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, the school improvement plan, safeguarding documentation, pupil behaviour logs and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors looked at questionnaires completed by pupils and staff and 106 questionnaires perceived from parents and carers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. There are significantly more boys than girls in most year groups. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a very small percentage coming from a variety of minority-ethnic backgrounds. The school meets the current floor standard, the minimum expected by the government for pupils' attainment and progress. A private nursery operates from the school site and will receive its own inspection report which will be available on the Ofsted website.

The school has achieved Healthy School status and holds numerous awards including the ICT Mark and Artsmark Gold.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because teaching and pupils' progress are good rather than outstanding. The role of subject leaders requires further development in order to eliminate the minor inconsistencies that exist within the solidly good teaching provision.
- Pupils' achievement is good. From broadly expected starting points on entry to Reception, pupils make consistently good progress through the school. Pupils leave Year 6 with skills which are above average in both English and mathematics. Boys' attainment in reading and writing is significantly higher than that seen nationally for boys of a similar age. Pupils' progress in mathematics has not been quite as rapid as in reading and writing although more challenging teaching in mathematics is accelerating progress and closing the gap with reading and writing. Opportunities are not sufficiently exploited to develop pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. In the large majority of lessons work is closely matched to pupils' needs and they are challenged effectively. Although there are examples of good practice in marking, pupils are sometimes unclear as to how to improve their work or how to reach the next level, particularly in mathematics.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and show respect to each other and to staff. They show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Occasionally, name-calling among older pupils becomes an issue but this is dealt with by the school effectively.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has created a very strong team ethos, with a sharp focus on continued school improvement. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance are good. Regular progress reviews provide detailed information which is used well to target

professional development where it is required. The governing body provides good challenge and support to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move the quality of teaching from good to outstanding and eliminate any inconsistent practices by:
 - indicating clearly to pupils how they can improve their work
 - ensuring pupils are clear about what they have to do to reach the next level
 - checking that pupils understand fully what they have learned before moving to the next activity
 - ensuring there are more planned opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their mathematical skills across all subjects.
- Develop further the role of subject leaders by ensuring monitoring and evaluation procedures are more rigorous and school policies are applied more consistently.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

The vast majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires stated that they thought their children were making good progress. Overall, inspection findings substantiate this view. Most children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with the knowledge and skills expected for their age. Children settle happily and thrive in the interesting and secure environment. They make good progress and many leave Reception having exceeded expectations across all areas of learning. While, this year, the writing skills of a small number of boys are below expectations, many of these children entered Reception with relatively weak writing skills and therefore still made good progress.

This good progress continues through Years 1 to 6. The good quality and regular teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) from Reception upwards is having the desired effect on pupils' continuingly good progress in reading and writing. Younger pupils who read to the inspectors were able to use their reading skills to break down and sound out unfamiliar words. Pupils' attainment in reading is above average by the end of Year 2.

By the end of Year 6, attainment is above average in English and mathematics, which represents good achievement for this cohort of pupils. Similarly, in reading and writing, attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. Many boys demonstrate high-level reading and writing skills compared to those seen nationally for boys of a similar age. Across the school, pupils thoroughly enjoy books they have read and can explain why they enjoyed them. Scrutiny of pupils' writing in their books and on display around the school shows excellent attention to detail and good progress. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils were very keen to extend their understanding of the

correct use of present and past tense. Prompted by thought-provoking questioning from the teacher, they were highly engaged in developing grammatically correct language.

Although pupils reach above-average levels of attainment in mathematics and progress is good, their progress has not always been as consistently good as that seen in reading and writing. However, better teaching in mathematics is resulting in accelerated progress and a closing of the gap with reading and writing. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils made good progress when they worked together to solve problems involving decimals.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. In lessons, work is matched closely to their needs. Pupils from minority-ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to their peers.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers returning the questionnaire say their children are taught well. The inspection confirms the quality of teaching as consistently good.

Teachers plan lessons which match pupils' needs closely. In a mathematics lesson in Year 2, teaching ensured all pupils were challenged and were able to work out for themselves the price of different shop items. As a result, the more-able pupils were challenged to achieve well and those with special educational needs also experienced success. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and this enables all pupils to make good progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. For younger pupils, well planned, daily phonics sessions provide them with the strategies to identify and understand key words. Good-quality guided-reading sessions are also very effective. These strategies are contributing well to on-going improvements in pupils' progress in reading and writing.

Teaching constantly promotes team working which, as a result, is a strong element in the personal development of pupils. Staff manage behaviour well. In most lessons, pupils show good levels of engagement because learning proceeds at a rapid pace. Where teaching is slightly less effective, teachers rush activities and do not check whether pupils understand fully what they have learned, which results in some pupils struggling with the next steps in their learning. Pupils are normally very attentive although, occasionally, some are less focused when the teacher is providing an explanation. This results in pupils not knowing how to proceed.

There are many examples of very effective marking, as observed in English. This good-quality marking is not consistently evident in all classes and is less effective in mathematics. Consequently, pupils do not always know how they can improve their work or what they have to do to reach the next level. Although activities are planned carefully for pupils to practise their literacy skills, sometimes opportunities are missed for pupils to apply their mathematical skills across all subjects.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is typically good. The atmosphere around school is warm and friendly. The large majority of parents and carers agree that there is a good standard of behaviour in school. A small minority of parents and carers, responding to the questionnaire, were concerned that lessons are disrupted by bad behaviour and there are incidents of bullying. When the inspectors spoke to pupils about this, they said that, 'Most pupils get on well but occasionally there are incidents of name-calling among older pupils'. While there is evidence of some name-calling, incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Inspectors did find that, occasionally in lessons, pupils are a little inattentive. Pupils have a good appreciation that bullying can take many different forms, such as racial abuse or inappropriate text messaging.

Throughout the day, pupils are considerate and sensible. This is because they are aware of the expectations of staff and the boundaries that are set for them. Pupils treat one another and their staff with thought and respect. They say that they feel safe and the vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree. Pupils understand and respond sensibly to risks. For example, they know how to use the internet safely and take care on the playground. Older pupils look after the younger ones well and show great care and concern for the younger children's well-being.

Attendance is above the national average and pupils are punctual to school and to lessons.

Leadership and management

Members of the governing body and staff at all levels share the headteacher's vision for taking the school forward. There is outstanding team work, for example, the consistent and highly effective approach to the teaching of phonics across the school. The management of performance is good. Senior leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous, with the findings used to inform planning priorities. Staff respond readily to the extensive professional development programmes and there are excellent examples of co-coaching and the development of teams. As a consequence, teaching has improved from satisfactory to good since the previous inspection and has resulted in pupils' good achievement. Effective leadership and a track record of improvement, coupled with accurate self-evaluation, give the school good capacity to make further sustained improvements.

Subject leaders are increasingly influential, adding to their expertise and helping to drive improvement. However, within the good teaching provision, inconsistent practices exist. Senior leaders have identified correctly that the role of subject leaders requires further development. More rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching is required by subject leaders. The purpose of this is to help move teaching from good to outstanding and to eliminate inconsistencies in the application of school policies, such as that for the marking of pupils' work.

The governing body holds leaders to account successfully through a range of monitoring arrangements. A well-organised set of committees ensures a clear

strategic overview for the development of the school. Safeguarding meets requirements with much good practice adopted.

The school promotes equality of opportunity well. The school is a harmonious community where discrimination is not tolerated.

The curriculum ensures pupils' good achievement. The curriculum is enriched by a variety of initiatives. The quality of pupils' art work, based on the differing styles of artists, is of high quality. This makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Older pupils are proud of the opportunities they have had to develop the Key Stage 2 playground. This includes using their design and technology skills to help design aspects of the playground. As a result, the curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The large majority of parents and carers are happy with the way the school communicates with them. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concern that they are not always informed about changes in staffing for pupils in Year 5 and how these might have an impact on their children. Senior leaders are aware that they have not always communicated effectively with parents and carers regarding these issues.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



22 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Poulton Lancelyn Primary School, Wirral, CH63 9LY

I want to thank you all for the friendly welcome that you gave me and my colleagues when we visited your school to see how well you were learning. We enjoyed the time we spent meeting you, watching you learn and talking to your teachers and support staff. This letter is to tell you what we found.

I agree with you that Poulton Lancelyn is a good school. You told me that the staff encourage and support you to do as well as you possibly can. I was pleased by your good, sensible and considerate behaviour. You describe that you feel safe and happy as a result. You also told me of your pride in taking responsibility, such as your notable contributions as school council members and the help older pupils give to younger children.

Even though the school is good, Mrs Greathead and the staff have plans to make the school better still. Positive action is being taken to ensure that the school continues to improve and this can be seen in your above-average standards in English and mathematics. You do well because of the good teaching you receive.

In order to improve the school further, I have asked that your teachers provide you with more opportunities to practise and develop your mathematical skills across all subjects. I have asked your teachers to always check whether you understand what you are learning before moving to the next activity. Also, I have asked them to always provide you with clear guidance for improvement to increase your skills.

You can all play your part by continuing to work as hard as you can.

Yours sincerely

David Cox
Lead inspector

Holy Spirit Catholic and Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	136124
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	382030
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2012
Lead inspector	Clare Henderson

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev John Feeney
Headteacher	Mrs Ann Melville
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
School address	Gardenside Leasowe CH46 2RP
Telephone number	0151 638 5180
Fax number	N/A
Email address	headteacher@holyspirit.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Clare Henderson
Anthony Buckley

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed sixteen lessons taught by nine teachers, listened to individual pupils reading in Years 1, 4 and 6 and scrutinised pupils' work. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. There were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to consider when planning the inspection. The inspectors analysed the 95 completed questionnaires received from parents and carers and those from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average sized primary school. However, it has increased in size by 30% since the last inspection in February 2010. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small and increasing minority are from minority ethnic groups. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. The school meets the current floor standard. A higher than average number of pupils join the school during Key Stage 2. The school has gained the Activemark, Healthy School status and the local authority International School's status.

The headteacher works at the school for three days each week, while the deputy headteacher leads and manages the school for two days. The school runs before- and after-school clubs which were considered as part of this inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is extremely welcoming and inclusive. Its main strengths are outstanding leadership from its senior leaders, the school’s outstanding contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the outstanding engagement it has with parents and carers. The school is not outstanding overall because, although reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills are developed and applied well across the curriculum, there are missed opportunities for teachers to extend the range of these skills within all subjects of the curriculum.
- Children make good progress and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language make at least good progress and achievement is good in Years 1 to 6. When they leave school in Year 6 pupils’ attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average for all groups.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including verbal, physical and racist. They say such behaviour is very rare and is dealt with quickly by staff if it does occur.
- The quality of teaching is good with outstanding practice evident. Teachers and support staff are attentive to pupils’ personal needs and this enables all groups of pupils and particularly those who are new to the school to settle and make at least good progress in their learning.
- Senior leaders and members of the governing body regularly review the school’s performance and have given high priority to improving the quality of teaching and learning. However, all curriculum leaders do not have enough involvement in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning within all the subjects of the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement to outstanding by increasing opportunities for all pupils to extend their reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills across all subjects of the curriculum.
- Raise the quality of leadership and management to outstanding by fully involving all curriculum leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning across all subjects of the curriculum.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

In all lessons, pupils have positive attitudes to learning, showing enthusiasm in all their activities. They are attentive and collaborate well in pairs and small groups. For instance, in a Key Stage 2 English lesson, pupils were investigating issues relating to different weather conditions and learned at a rapid pace. They were successfully challenged to use researching, thinking, and communication skills to evaluate their own and the learning of their classmates, praising their efforts and suggesting how work could be improved. However, occasionally in lessons, pupils do not forge ahead with their learning so much because there is not a wide enough range of opportunities for them to extend their reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills across all the subjects they study.

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally low and particularly in their communication, mathematical and social skills. They make good progress because teaching and provision support their learning effectively. Outstanding links with parents and carers enable children to settle happily and to thoroughly enjoy learning. Good progress is maintained in Years 1 to 6 and all groups of pupils make better progress than similar groups nationally. Pupils' handwriting is generally neat and they present their work well. They can write clearly in a variety of styles to express their ideas and feelings, including narrative and poetry. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 a high priority is given to developing pupils' speech and language and understanding of letter names and sounds. Attainment in reading is broadly average at the end of Year 2 and by the time pupils leave school in Year 6. Pupils have secure mathematical calculation skills. They are becoming more competent at using them to solve real-life number problems.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least good progress and outstanding progress for an increasing minority. This is because of the precise and very effective support they receive. Pupils who are new to the school or speak English as an additional language make rapid progress because of the high quality support the school provides. In their questionnaires, almost all parents and carers agreed that their children were making good progress at the school. Inspection evidence shows this is an accurate view.

Quality of teaching

Comments such as, 'The school has really helped my child with his learning difficulties' and 'I am very happy with his progress and the teaching standard', reflect the unanimous views of parents and carers that the quality of teaching is good. Pupils also say that the teaching

they receive is good. These views are supported by inspection findings. The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage displays outstanding qualities because children become good communicators, readers and writers. For instance, they listen enthralled to a story about a granny's trip to the market and, in response to searching questions, confidently talked and wrote about where they would fly to on a magic carpet. 'I would go to India to see the tigers' exclaimed one child. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 classes is good and occasionally outstanding. This is because most teachers are secure in knowing how well individuals are doing and what are the needs of different groups. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, the pirate theme chosen by the pupils was used very effectively to develop their learning, including their communication, scientific and writing skills as they designed boats that can float and then experimented using differing materials. They employed testing and modifying skills with confidence and consequently learning was rapid and sustained. Teaching is generally conducted at a lively pace with good variety so that pupils are kept interested. For example, in one Key Stage 2 design and technology lesson, pupils' interest was stimulated and held as they designed and subsequently tested the weather vanes they made.

Marking is generally regular and gives clear indications of what pupils need to do to improve their work. Teachers plan activities that are usually appropriately challenging for different groups of learners by age and ability. Teaching assistants make a very effective contribution to the learning individuals and groups of pupils.

In lessons, pupils are encouraged to show respect to one another and to the adults working with them. Teachers enthuse, engage and motivate pupils well and foster their curiosity, imaginations and enthusiasm for learning. For example, pupils develop and apply social and moral issues in their school life and in relation to world issues as they discuss fair trade and sustaining the world's resources

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school is a friendly and welcoming place in which to learn. Pupils behave well and act responsibly in and around the school. They engage well in lessons and are considerate to the needs of others. As a result, any disruption to learning is minimal. Staff, parents, carers and pupils overwhelmingly say that behaviour is good and has been over time. The exceptionally close working arrangements with outside agencies have enabled very effective support to be given to families who have children with behavioural difficulties. This has resulted in significant improvement in the attitudes of the few pupils who find it difficult to act responsibly at times. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers do not express any concerns about bullying. Pupils say that bullying is rare and, again, on the few occasions when it occurs, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Pupils say they feel safe at all times in school, a view shared by parents and carers. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe. This is promoted well through the curriculum, for example, by pupils being taught about road safety and how to use the internet safely. Pupils take on a variety of responsibilities willingly, including being a school councillor or play leader. In so doing, they add to the life of the school. This is seen in the work of the school council in raising funds for charities or to purchase equipment for break and lunchtime use. Pupils' enjoyment of school is seen in their above average attendance and their punctuality. The school identified a few pupils who were persistently absent and, through work with families, addressed the issue. This has proved successful and such

absence is now minimal. Parents and carers are very appreciative of the care taken of their children while in school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are passionate about providing pupils with a high quality education. Their ambitious vision for further development is shared by all involved in the life of the school. The governing body is supportive of the school and influential in shaping its direction. Good quality professional development has improved the quality of teaching and accelerated the progress made by pupils. Robust monitoring and evaluation procedures provide senior leaders with an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, the role is not fully shared by all curriculum subject leaders. The information gained is used effectively to set priorities and plan for further development. The school's good track record since the last inspection gives it a strong capacity for further improvement.

Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and meet requirements. Training for all staff, particularly for child protection, is of good quality. The school promotes equality of opportunity for all pupils to be successful and tackles discrimination well. As a result, pupils' outcomes are positive and any unevenness between different groups is minimal. Outstanding engagement with parents and carers ensures they are very involved in their children's learning. The work of the parent liaison leader and the special needs coordinator are exemplary in building the confidence of families and in enabling each pupil to fully access all the school has to offer.

The good curriculum is enhanced by a variety of enrichment activities, including well-attended before-and after-school clubs. Visits to places of educational interest and opportunities to work with a variety of visitors extend pupils' skills and widen their horizons. Topic work has been introduced to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in more meaningful contexts. However, teachers do not consistently provide enough opportunities for pupils to extend these skills across all subjects of the curriculum. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, curriculum planning for the outdoor area in their 'Forest Garden' very effectively builds upon learning that has taken place indoors and provides children with excellent opportunities to develop their investigative and imaginative skills.

The curriculum makes an exceptional contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is enhanced by many opportunities for pupils to develop an excellent understanding of the diversity in the religious beliefs of others and to learn about a wide range of cultures different to their own. They do this by using the first-hand experiences of the growing number of pupils and families from other cultures who attend the school and through very strong links established with schools in Poland, India and Bulgaria.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



23 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Holy Spirit Catholic and Church of England Primary School,
Leasowe CH46 2RP**

Thank you so much for helping us during our visit. We enjoyed meeting and talking with so many of you. You are right to be proud of your school. It is a good school that takes very good care of you and helps you to achieve well. It was pleasing to hear that you feel safe in school and are confident that the staff will give you help when you need it. We were impressed with your responsible attitude and the way the play leaders and school councillors, in particular, consider the feelings of others well. We read the comments made by your parents and carers. The vast majority were very pleased with all that your teachers do to help you to learn and enjoy school. Please thank them for taking the time to write to us.

Many of you talked about how lessons are fun and interesting and it was good to see how well you worked in many of your lessons, concentrating hard and enjoying all of the different activities the school puts on for you after school. We were very interested to hear you talk about how much you enjoy the topics you study. It is clear that the leaders and managers, together with the governing body and all staff, have worked hard to make the school an enjoyable place for you to learn.

Your headteacher and deputy headteacher and all the school leaders are determined to continue to improve your school so that you all do as well as you possibly can. To do this, we have asked teachers to give you further opportunities to extend your reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills in all your lessons. We have also asked that staff are fully involved in reviewing the quality of the teaching you receive in all the subjects you study.

We hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and to do your best to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Clare Henderson
Lead inspector

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Hoylake Holy Trinity CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105063
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	377172
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2012
Lead inspector	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
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Evans
Headteacher	Peter Ham / Catherine O'Neill Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2006
School address	Market Street Hoylake Wirral CH47 3BH
Telephone number	0151 6324153
Fax number	0151 6320886
Email address	schooloffice@hoylakehollytrinity.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Diane Auton
Jean O'Neill

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 10 teachers in their classrooms and observed 13 lessons. They listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils, parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, safeguarding and equality policies and minutes of the governing body meetings. Parents and carers have not yet responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in sufficient numbers, so their views have not yet been summarised on the Parent View website. However, inspectors reviewed information provided by parents and carers in 51 completed questionnaires. They also took into account the views of pupils in Key Stage 2 and those of staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.

Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than most other primary schools, although numbers on roll have risen since the time of the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs is average. Most pupils are White British, with a very small proportion from other ethnic backgrounds, and most speak English as their home language. The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

A new headteacher was appointed in 2008. Since its previous inspection, the school has experienced an extended period of significant turbulence in staffing and in leadership. This has included both personnel changes and long-term health-related absences; some of the latter are still ongoing. Since January, a temporary leadership team has been in place, with an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher recruited from the school's teaching staff. Since the previous inspection, the school has achieved a number of externally verified awards, including Healthy School status, the Green Flag Eco Award, the International Eco-standards Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The governing body has achieved the Financial Management in Schools Standard.

Pre-school provision and a before- and after-school club are provided on site by an independent company. The school also shares its site with a children's centre. All of these provisions are subject to separate inspection by Ofsted and reports are available on the Ofsted website.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. It is not good largely because of the ongoing turbulence in staffing and in leadership, which has had a destabilising impact on outcomes. As a result, the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school and overall achievement is satisfactory.
- Children's skills are at the expected levels for their age group when they join the Reception classes. They make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve well. Currently, progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory and attainment by the end of Year 6 and across the school is broadly in line with age-related expectations.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features seen in lessons during the inspection. Where teaching is satisfactory pupils are not sufficiently engaged by the content of lessons and the level of challenge is not high enough, especially for more-able pupils. In these lessons the rate of pupils' progress is slower than it might be.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school. The temporary leadership team has worked very hard to ensure that day-to-day management of the school runs smoothly and that pupils are safe, happy and well cared for. Behaviour is good and pupils are considerate of others. They apply themselves well in lessons even when activities do not fully engage their interests.
- Systems to manage performance and provide the essential information to lead the school forward have weakened over time. This means the school has been unclear about priorities and what needs most attention. The temporary leadership team has started to monitor pupils' progress through formal termly reviews. Monitoring of teaching is in place but is not sufficiently rigorous and hence shortcomings remain. These recent improvements are starting to become effective but are not fully developed or embedded.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to good and better and raise achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - making the monitoring of teaching more rigorous and resolving identified shortcomings
 - ensuring teaching is consistently stimulating and provides sufficient challenge for more-able pupils.

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - strengthening the school's systems for tracking and reviewing pupils' progress and using the information to identify and address areas of underachievement
 - ensuring all leaders and the governing body make more efficient use of all information available to gain a clear overview of how well the school is doing and areas most needing attention
 - ensuring that the school development plan provides effective strategic direction and that priorities and actions are sharply focused on raising achievement.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

In the Early Years Foundation Stage learning is effective and children settle in quickly and develop interest, curiosity and positive attitudes to learning. Good teaching and a lively curriculum in the Reception classes enable them to make good progress so that they are confident learners when they join Key Stage 1. Regular, well targeted teaching of letters and the sounds they make is giving younger pupils the tools they need to move their learning forward.

Learning in lessons in Key Stage 1 and 2 is satisfactory and often better because pupils are responsive and apply themselves diligently to their work. They listen carefully to instructions, work well with a partner or in a group, discuss and share ideas collaboratively. They are able to present their ideas confidently and articulately in discussions. Where teaching is satisfactory, however, progress in lessons slows and pupils lose concentration because there is insufficient interest to sustain their enthusiasm. Evidence from the school's assessment data, from lesson observations and from scrutiny of work in pupils' books all confirmed that progress and achievement are satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. More-able pupils do not always make enough progress. Attainment across the school is broadly average. Teachers are starting to build on pupils' early reading skills so that they are becoming more skilled at tackling new words. Many read with interest and enjoyment. Attainment in reading by the end of the Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave school is broadly average.

Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities make satisfactory and sometimes good progress, as a result of the well targeted support the school provides for them. Overall, the majority of parents' and carers' responses indicated that they are happy with their children's progress and attainment, indicating that they may not be fully aware of pupils' current levels of achievement in the school.

Quality of teaching

In their responses, most parents and carers indicate that they are pleased with the quality of teaching provided for their children. However, although inspectors identified several strengths in teaching, they found that it is satisfactory overall. This was because its quality is inconsistent across the school. In some lessons, pupils' interests are not fully captured and tasks are not always matched well to their learning needs; more-able pupils are not always provided with sufficient challenge. In the best lessons, however, planning takes the range of learners' needs into account. Imaginative teaching strategies are used to good effect in these lessons. This was seen, for example, in a very well taught literacy lesson in Year 5 which was linked to a class topic on myths. This was a fast paced lesson, in the course of which pupils tested out their ideas in discussions with a partner, reviewed what they had learned so far in 'mini-plenaries' throughout the lesson and then went on to show that they could improve their work. In most lessons teaching assistants are deployed effectively and contribute well to all pupils' learning and progress and particularly to that of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. All staff establish excellent relationships in the classroom so that pupils are secure and happy and ready to learn.

Where teaching is most effective, curriculum planning often contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils in Year 2, for example, took part in a 'phonics orienteering' challenge in a well planned lesson that required them to work in teams. They approached the challenge thoughtfully and sensibly, cooperated very well with each other, completed the activity successfully and made good progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is good. This contributes well to an orderly learning environment in lessons and to happy playtimes. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of school life. Pupils show a sensitive awareness of the individual needs of their peers especially disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They have great trust in the adults in school. Pupils say that school is a safe place, 'teachers listen', and that help is always on hand if they encounter any problems. Older pupils have a secure understanding of different types of bullying. Pupils are able to explain clearly why they believe that there is very little bullying in the school and that any falling out between pupils that may occur is quickly dealt with. Although a small minority of parents and carers express some concerns about bullying, most feel the school deals effectively with any behavioural issues that may occur.

The school works sensitively in partnership with the parents and carers of potentially vulnerable pupils to help to break down barriers to learning and progress that some pupils occasionally encounter. Attendance dipped slightly in 2010, but has improved

rapidly over the last year and is now above the national average figure for primary schools.

Leadership and management

The school's temporary leadership team is successfully ensuring that the school runs smoothly during a period of change and uncertainty. The good behaviour and safety of pupils are securely underwritten by effective procedures. There is a strong corporate ethos in the school and staff at all levels demonstrate loyalty to the school and care for its pupils. Despite all of these positive factors, however, leadership and management are currently satisfactory rather than good. There is not a sufficiently clear understanding of pupils' current achievement, because the school's assessment data have not been summarised accurately. The school development plan identifies a range of priorities but these are too wide and not sufficiently focused on improving achievement and outcomes for pupils. It is unclear how the success of any change is to be monitored. Current arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching are not rigorous enough and shortcomings in teaching remain. Professional development is not influencing improvements in the overall quality of teaching and pupils' progress. For all of these reasons, the school's current capacity for further improvement is satisfactory, rather than good.

Governors are caring and supportive, but in recent times they have not been actively involved in monitoring the impact of teaching and leadership and ensuring that overall achievement is as good as it should be. They do ensure that the school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding. The school supports the promotion of equal opportunities and access to educational entitlement satisfactorily; discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Closer attention is now being given to improving tracking of pupils' progress, so that all pupils' needs are more fully met.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Subjects are often brought together in topics and themes that are interesting and engaging for pupils. Whole-school curriculum planning is underdeveloped and does not fully meet the needs of all pupils. There is no evaluation of the impact of the curriculum on pupils' achievement. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy school especially the themed events, participation in national competitions and many after-school activities. A range of visitors and visits, including residential trips, contributes effectively to promoting pupils' academic, personal, social, health and citizenship education.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils clearly understand and adhere to the school's code for behaviour. They show a good understanding of the sound moral and social values the school promotes. There are opportunities in lessons and in circle time for them to reflect on and discuss important issues and they show thoughtful attitudes in their discussions. They are gaining valuable cultural insights through visits to places of worship of other world faiths and religions and through the school's link with its partner school in Sri Lanka.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



23 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hoylake Holy Trinity CE Primary School, Wirral, CH47 3BH

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors 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. We enjoyed our visit and it was a great pleasure to meet you all.

We found that Holy Trinity is a satisfactory school and that it is a happy place for you to learn in and grow together. Your education gets off to a good start in the Reception classes. You are well behaved and polite young people. Your attendance is very good. It was good to see that you work hard in your lessons and that you get on well with each other and with the grown-ups in school. They look after you well. We were pleased to hear you tell us how much you enjoy your lessons. Your learning and progress are currently satisfactory.

The school's leaders agree with us that further improvements are needed so that you can all achieve as well as possible. These are some things we have asked them to do next, because we think they will help your school to carry on improving.

- Make sure that teaching is always good or better and that lessons are always challenging, especially for those of you who learn rapidly.
- Improve the ways the leaders track and measure how much progress you are all making.
- Improve the big plan that is made for the school each year by making sure it has a sharp focus on raising your achievement.

You can help by continuing to be happy, hard-working learners. Thank you again for an enjoyable two days and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Diane Auton
Lead inspector

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Prenton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103598
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	376933
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2012
Lead inspector	Steven Hill

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	391
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Parnell
Headteacher	Sandra Lloyd
Date of previous school inspection	11 December 2006
School address	Bramwell Avenue Prenton CH43 0RQ
Telephone number	0151 6082958
Fax number	0151 6090993
Email address	schooloffice@prentonprimary.wirral.sch.uk

Registered childcare provision	Prenton Primary Out of School Club
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	30
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	January 2007



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Introduction

Inspection team

Steven Hill
Stephen Rowland
Bimla Kumari

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 20 lessons, including two joint observations with the headteacher, and visited the after-school club. Discussions were held with members of staff of the school and the leader of the childcare provision, groups of pupils and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, heard a number of younger pupils reading, and observed assembly and break-times. They examined a variety of documentation, including the school's own monitoring and evaluation of its work, the tracking of pupils' progress, case studies of pupils who have particular problems, and information about how pupils are kept safe. Samples of pupils' work were scrutinised in books and on display. Questionnaires were analysed from staff, pupils and from 148 parents and carers.

Information about the school

This is a large primary school, with two classes for each age group. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportions of pupils who are supported at School Action Plus and those with a statement of special educational needs, are above average. The school meets the current floor targets, which are the government's minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

There is a private pre-school and a children's centre on the same site. Neither is managed by the governing body, and both are inspected and reported upon separately. The governing body manages the registered childcare provided in a before- and after-school club, for its own pupils and for some children who attend the pre-school.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not outstanding because teaching has yet to become consistently excellent in order to make pupils' achievement outstanding and because attainment in mathematics is lower than in English.
- All groups of pupils make good progress. By Year 6, attainment is above average in reading and writing, and has improved over the last two years. The school has successfully increased pupils' progress in mathematics this year through improvements to teaching and the curriculum. Pupils now make good progress in mathematics lessons. However, there has not been time for this to make a full impact on pupils' attainment in mathematics in Year 6, which is still average.
- Teachers consistently encourage and enthuse pupils, so they work hard and are keen to learn. In the majority of lessons, the pace is brisk, tasks are demonstrated clearly to show pupils what to do, and teachers make good use of assessment information to match activities to pupils' needs. In a minority of lessons, one or other of these aspects is weaker, so progress is not as rapid. This issue has been accurately identified by senior managers, who are working successfully with colleagues to help them improve their practice.
- The school is a happy and harmonious community where pupils behave well and feel very safe. They are very positive about their learning and say that lessons are fun. Pupils have great confidence in the adults in the school, saying that they can always turn to them for help if they need it, either with their work or with personal worries. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school's leaders have maintained the strengths since the last inspection and have raised attainment and accelerated progress over the last two years. Strong teamwork and a common purpose are improving teaching and pupils' performance well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that all lessons have a good pace throughout
 - making sure that the level of challenge in activities is always matched to pupils' needs
 - more consistently demonstrating tasks for pupils so that they are clear about what is expected.
- Raise attainment in mathematics to equal that in reading and writing by:
 - consolidating the recent improvements made to progress in the subject through the improvements made to teaching and the curriculum in mathematics
 - increasing the effectiveness of homework in mathematics, particularly by helping parents and carers to support their children's efforts in the subject
 - increasing the use of collaborative work in mathematics lessons.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils achieve well regardless of their gender, background or abilities. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same good progress as that of their classmates because work is tightly matched to their specific needs, so that it is challenging, but manageable.

Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of development that vary from year to year but which are, overall, somewhat lower than that expected for their age. By the end of the Reception year (known to parents and carers in this local authority as 'Foundation 2'), good progress means that their attainment is a little above average. By the end of Key Stage 1, improved progress means that standards have been above average for the last two years, including in reading, although this was not the case previously.

At the end of Key Stage 2, recent attainment has been broadly average overall, but improving. This represents good progress for many pupils, because of their relatively low prior attainment. Attainment has improved successively for three years in reading and writing, to be above average. The quality of handwriting is a strength throughout the school. Attainment in mathematics is average. Pupils are now making good progress in mathematics because of improvements in teaching and the curriculum over the current year. Some good use is made of collaborative work in mathematics, although the school has correctly identified the need to extend this.

Reception (Foundation 2) children learn well, both in teacher led situations and when choosing their own activities. They made good progress in consolidating their understanding of addition as they listened attentively to the teacher's clear explanations of how to use a giant number line, contributing their answers thoughtfully. Pupils work conscientiously, seen when pupils in Year 1 wrote facts about India independently and thoughtfully, as the adults worked with other groups in the room. They also work very effectively in pairs or groups, seen when pupils in Year 6 collaborated well to sort out how their ideas about how to interpret line graphs, making good progress in their understanding.

Parents and carers are rightly positive about their children's progress, and many give them good support at home, particularly with their reading. The school has identified that many do not feel as confident in how to help their children with their mathematics homework, and plans are in place to improve this.

Quality of teaching

Teachers' positive relationships with pupils, together with their high expectations, ensure good behaviour, and a purposeful working ethos in lessons that underpins good progress. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to generate interest, and often to model tasks for pupils to show them exactly what is required. At times, this is not done clearly enough, and pupils can take some time to understand what to do. A major strength of many lessons is the way adults monitor pupils' ongoing progress, intervening to address any misconceptions, as well as challenging pupils to improve their work. Teachers often plan different work to meet pupils' varying abilities, ensuring that challenge is at the right level. This contributes particularly to the good teaching of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs. Activities are often carefully tailored to their social as well as academic needs. Good use is made of skilled teaching assistants to provide both support and challenge so that these pupils make good progress. Occasionally, the match of work to needs is not accurate enough, so some pupils are given work that is too hard or too easy for them. Most lessons have a fast pace, and pupils are actively involved so that they are engaged and enthusiastic. In the occasional satisfactory lesson, the pace slows when pupils have to sit and listen for too long without active participation. Reading is taught well throughout the school, with a good emphasis on phonics (how sounds in words relate to how they are written). Pupils use their phonics skills well to write independently from an early age. Parents and carers are rightly positive about the quality of teaching. Pupils like and respect their teachers, a group of Year 6 pupils agreeing that among the best things in school were 'great teachers.'

Teachers consistently promote pupils' personal development well. Good use is made of collaborative work, particularly in English, to actively involve pupils, to help them sort out their ideas, and to improve their oral skills. This was exemplified in an outstanding lesson in religious education. Pupils in Year 6 discussed the implications of moral and social choices, thoughtfully sharing their feelings, because they responded to the teacher's lively explanations and sensitive questioning. The teacher drew well on incidents in her own life to illustrate important moral points, gaining pupils' avid attention and developing their spiritual, moral and social understanding very effectively.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Boys and girls have positive relationships with each other and with adults. They work and play together amicably. They enjoy school and value the friendships they make. They are tolerant of each other's foibles, realise that a few of their classmates sometimes find it hard to conform, but say that the adults make sure that their learning and safety are never compromised. Pupils say that behaviour is good, are confident that the adults will quickly address any issues, and that they would be happy to talk to the adults about any problems. Parents and carers are also, rightly, positive about behaviour. Similarly, pupils are convinced that any incidents of bullying will be quickly addressed. They take an active part in combating bullying, saying that it is rare and that, 'We don't tolerate it'. They regularly discuss such issues in class and in assemblies, including in regular anti-bullying weeks, which give them a good understanding of different types of bullying and the potential

consequences. Pupils are cheerful, friendly and polite. They are keen to fulfil the adults' high expectations, and show a good understanding of the complexities of moral choices, and of right and wrong. They have a good understanding of, and respect for, the variety of beliefs and cultures in this country and around the world. They rightly agree with their parents and carers that the school is a safe place to be, and know how to contribute to their own and their classmates' safety by their behaviour. They have a particularly good understanding of how to use the internet safely, and of its potential dangers. They are considerate of each other's feelings, and older pupils are kind and helpful to younger ones, as was observed particularly in the after-school club.

Leadership and management

The school's leaders successfully focus on improving teaching and hence raising pupils' achievement. Issues identified at the previous inspection have been dealt with well. Regular and rigorous monitoring of lessons clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses, and teachers are given helpful feedback that helps them improve their practice. This has led to more outstanding teaching, and less that is only satisfactory, since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment is monitored frequently and accurately. Information about individuals' progress is used well to identify any who are not doing as well as they could, and to provide extra help so that they catch up. Similarly, the overview of progress enables the accurate identification of general issues, which the staff then address well together. The issues identified by this inspection had already been accurately identified by the school, and they are being addressed. This good self-evaluation and strong teamwork demonstrate that the school is well placed to improve further. The clear picture of different pupils' progress also contributes to ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to do well. A strong focus on pupils' personal development is successful in ensuring that they are happy in school and behave well. The childcare provision also makes a good contribution to the personal development of those who attend. The governing body has a clear view of strengths and weaknesses, provides good support to staff, and holds the school to account well for its performance. They have ensured that the school's safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

There is a good curriculum that contributes well to pupils' progress and enjoyment. A successful focus on literacy and numeracy is complemented by a broad curriculum in other subjects which has a strong international flavour. This contributes particularly well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A variety of good quality work around the school illustrates this, including work on life in India, some high quality models from design technology, and paintings in the styles of variety of artists, including Clarice Cliffe and Kandinsky. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, a good balance is drawn between child-chosen and teacher-directed activities, and good use is made of the outdoor areas.

The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

The school provides childcare for up to 30 children between three and 11 years of age in a before- and after-school club. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage who attend include some from the on-site pre-school provision, as well as some from the Reception (Foundation 2) classes in the school. Currently, ten such younger children attend the club.

Children enjoy the variety of activities provided and make good progress, particularly in their social development and their language skills. They learn to take responsibilities and to stay safe, behaving well and joining in activities happily. This is aided by the direction and interventions of skilled adults, and by the kindness and support of older children. Relationships with adults are good. The accommodation is bright and welcoming, and provides a safe and stimulating environment for play and learning. A good outdoor space is available in the setting’s own garden. Good attention is paid to developing healthy lifestyles, through the reinforcement of hygiene, through active play, and through the provision of healthy snacks. The provision is well organised and meets requirements well. Welfare provision is good and children are kept safe. Staff are suitably qualified. There are good links with parents and carers, and with the school and pre-school, to ensure a coherent provision for children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

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 for the registered provision	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Prenton Primary School, Prenton, CH43 0RQ

Thank you for all your help and your warm welcome when we visited your school. You told us that you enjoyed school, and we could see this was true. We found that you were well behaved, polite and friendly, and we were impressed by how well you all get along together.

Your school is giving you a good education. You make good progress because your teachers are good at helping you to learn, and you work hard in lessons. The teachers try hard to make sure that your work is just right for you, that lessons are fast moving, and they are usually very good at showing you just what you need to do. This happens in most lessons, which is why you are doing well. We have asked the teachers to make sure that all lessons are just as good, so that you do even better. You get plenty of interesting things to do, and you told us that lessons are fun. You are learning a lot about different people around the world. You have done better in English than in mathematics in the last few years, and your teachers are working hard to improve your mathematics skills this year. We have agreed with them that this should be an important priority for them until you catch up in mathematics to your high standards of reading and writing.

The adults are good at organising the school, and they keep a careful watch on how everyone is getting on, so that they can give extra help to anyone who needs it. They are keen to make the school even better, and I know you will be keen to help. You can do this by keeping up your hard work and good behaviour, especially in mathematics.

I hope you carry on enjoying life at Prenton.

Yours sincerely

Steven Hill
Lead inspector

Mersey Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105042
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	377169
Inspection dates	22–23 May 2012
Lead inspector	Martin Pye

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	409
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Kenny
Headteacher	Margaret Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2008
School address	Elm Road Higher Tranmere Birkenhead CH42 0PH
Telephone number	0151 6478197
Fax number	0151 6501021
Email address	schooloffice@merseypark.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Martin Pye
Zahid Aziz
Jean Tarry

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 21 lessons taught by 16 different teachers, observed break times and listened to pupils reading. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including: the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement, pupils' work and assessment information, teachers' planning, monitoring of teaching records, attendance and safeguarding information. The inspectors analysed 46 questionnaires from parents and carers together with questionnaires from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Mersey Park Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs that are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to that found in most schools. In 2011, the school did not meet the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Mersey Park Primary School has gained a number of awards including: Healthy School status, Active Sport Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

There is a breakfast and after-school club on the site. This is not managed by the governing body and will be inspected separately by Ofsted.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school that is showing strong signs of improvement because of the clear-sighted and determined leadership that now operates at all levels. It is a welcoming place and the care it provides is a particular strength. The school is not yet good because achievement over time, particularly in English, is satisfactory. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- In recent years, attainment in English, particularly in writing, has been below average and gaps between the achievements of groups of pupils, in English and mathematics, have been wide. These gaps are narrowing because pupils are now making better progress.
- The impact of teaching over time has been satisfactory, although examples of good and outstanding teaching now exist. Improvements in the quality of teaching mean that all pupils are now making faster progress. However, in some lessons, tasks are not always carefully planned to build on prior learning and some opportunities for pupils to work together and discuss their ideas are missed. Plans to share good practice that already exists within the school have yet to be fully realised.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and they respond well to the many reward systems. The school's caring attention to safety and welfare matters means that pupils feel safe and valued at school. This is reflected in their improved attendance.
- Leadership and management are good. The drive and vision of the headteacher has strengthened leadership at all levels. School leaders monitor teaching effectively and use this information to manage teachers' performance and improve pupils' progress. The school works hard to provide parents and carers with information and support. School leaders are seeking to strengthen the partnership with home in order to assist pupils' learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing so that, by the end of Year 6, it is more in line with the higher standards achieved in reading and mathematics.
- Make sure that all teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - making full use of every opportunity in lessons for pupils to work together and discuss their ideas
 - ensuring that all tasks in lessons are always carefully tailored to build successfully on pupils' prior learning
 - sharing the good practice that exists within the school.
- Strengthen the partnership with parents and carers in order to support pupils' welfare and progress as they move through the school.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers report that they are pleased with the progress their children make at Mersey Park School. Inspection findings show that, over time, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This means that most pupils make progress that is similar to that made by pupils nationally. However, rates of progress have recently accelerated.

Many children enter school with knowledge and skills that are below average and some have skills that are well-below age-related expectations. They make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage because the provision is well organised to meet their needs and adults keep careful records that allow them to plan for next steps with informed precision. Nevertheless, because of their low starting points, the literacy and numeracy skills of most pupils when they start in Year 1 are below expectations.

As pupils move through Key Stage 1, they make satisfactory progress and, while attainment in reading, writing and mathematics rises steadily, it is still below average by the end of Year 2. The recently introduced and innovative whole-school approach to the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is now helping pupils to make faster progress with their reading. The focus on basic mathematical skills is also having a positive impact. Short, sharp daily arithmetic sessions and lessons that give pupils opportunity to use and apply their skills are helping all groups of pupils to improve their mathematical understanding. As a result, attainment in reading and mathematics has been rising and, by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, it is now much closer to age-related expectations. However, over time, attainment in writing has been weaker, with many pupils making slow progress and leaving the school with skills that are well below average for their age.

The school's current data and work in books show the rate of pupils' progress in writing is now improving. This is because of the drive to raise standards. Focused attention to pupils' spelling and handwriting and to what can be achieved in a lesson is driving up expectations. In one well-paced English lesson, pupils were required to

create questions in response to a video clip and then discuss their writing with a partner. This meaningful focus on literacy skills accelerated their progress. However, at times opportunities for pupils to talk about their ideas and reflect on their writing are missed which slows progress.

The school's inclusive nature and extra-support programmes mean that all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are now being helped to achieve equally well. Consequently, the gaps between the achievements of different groups of pupils are narrowing fast.

Quality of teaching

All parents and carers that responded to the questionnaire believe that their children are taught well, and pupils agree. While much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good or better, the impact of teaching over time has been satisfactory. The faster progress now being made by most pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is a clear indicator that strategies to improve teaching are working.

In the best lessons, tasks are finely tuned to meet all pupils' needs and they are given time and opportunity to work with others and to discuss their ideas. In one mathematics lesson, for example, pupils worked in pairs using digit cards to solve number problems. This prompted discussion and allowed the teacher to listen, check for understanding, and then adjust teaching as needed. However, in some lessons pupils do not get the chance to work together or to fully explain and discuss their thinking. These missed opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills and to develop independence in their learning limit their progress and teachers' awareness of what pupils know and can do.

Marking is a strength. A consistent approach to assessment and clear written feedback helps pupils to understand how well they are doing and provides helpful guidance about what they need to do next.

The teaching of basic skills is given a high priority with daily attention to the four rules of number and the development of reading skills. The teaching of reading is increasingly effective because it is structured and systematic and pupils enjoy the mix of fun activities included in every session. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress; fostering positive relationships and helping pupils to overcome difficulties in their learning or in their lives. The caring attention to individual needs builds pupils' self-esteem; helping them to take an interest in their own and each other's learning and in the world around them.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The majority of a parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire rightly believe that behaviour is good. Most pupils also share this view and, while they report some lively behaviour on the playground at break-times, they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Pupils also report that behaviour and attendance is better than it used to be because of the many reward systems and incentives – such as the zone system and class attendance league – that operate in school. There is no doubt

that the actions of the home–school liaison worker coupled with the improving provision at school have helped to improve attendance so that it is now above average.

Pupils have an informed understanding of what constitutes bullying and can talk about what to do if it happens. They are confident that any rare instances that might occur would be stopped and say that the pupils who act as playground leaders are kind and helpful. They are aware of the different risks that they face in and out of school, such as when walking or cycling, and know how to respond to these in order to stay safe. The school motto of, 'be nice, work hard, never give up' is clearly understood by pupils, and all staff encourage them to act responsibly. The recent pupil-led campaign to reduce dog-fouling in the local park, for example, helps them to become community-minded and to realise that their actions can make a positive difference.

A particular feature of the school's work is its commitment to supporting pupils who face difficulties in their lives. These pupils receive extra support from trained staff and this, together with liaison with home and other organisations, is successful in helping them to cope well in lessons and around school.

Leadership and management

Leadership at every level is strongly focused on securing school improvement. In a relatively short space of time, the headteacher has created a capable and ambitious leadership team, developed more precise data analysis and established effective monitoring systems. As a result, although some inconsistencies remain, teaching has improved and staff are increasingly accountable for the standards achieved. The school's self-evaluation informs development planning and links well with the performance management and training cycle for all staff.

The governing body has a clear understanding of its strategic role and takes its responsibilities seriously; members make frequent visits to the school to evaluate provision and ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.

The curriculum is good. Following recent changes, it meets pupils' needs well. Child-led starting points provide a route into topics that allow pupils to practise and develop their basic skills across a range of subjects. Imaginative lessons and enrichment activities make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Whether marvelling over a mystery box containing items from the school's past, enjoying a ukulele lesson or experimenting with sculpture and art, pupils display a sense of wonder and enjoyment in their learning. While pupils' awareness of the wider world is limited, visits to local museums and events such as a recent multi-faith week help to stimulate their curiosity and increase their understanding about the lives of others.

The good pastoral care, assisted by links with specialist agencies, successfully promotes equality and tackles discrimination. Parents and carers appreciate the inclusive nature of the school with one commenting: 'It is a lovely place. My child has come on really well since starting at Mersey Park School.' Support for homework, including reading at home, is not as strong as it could be. School leaders are looking

for ways to strengthen the partnerships with home in order to support pupils' learning beyond the school day.

The pace of recent change and rising standards demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

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.
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Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



24 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mersey Park Primary School, Birkenhead, CH42 0PH

Thank you for your welcome when I inspected your school with two other inspectors. We very much enjoyed our visit. Thank you for telling us about your work and all the other things you do at school.

During our visit, we were impressed by your good attendance and behaviour. You are looked after well and the teachers plan many interesting activities for you to do. This means you enjoy lessons and feel safe.

Your headteacher and staff know how well your school is doing and how to improve it in the future. It is a satisfactory school that is improving very quickly.

We noticed that you make faster progress in reading and mathematics than you do in writing. However, we could see that this is now improving because you are working harder. We also noticed that in the very best lessons the teachers give you tasks that require you to work with each other and you are given time to talk about your work and ideas. Your teachers are now going to make sure that this happens more often in all your lessons. In order to help with this, your headteacher is going to make sure that the teachers in the school share good ideas and ways of teaching that will help to improve your learning.

You can help by continuing to behave so well in school, by always doing your best in every lesson and by keeping up with any homework that you are given.

Thank you again and my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Pye
Lead inspector

Portland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105037
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	377166
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2012
Lead inspector	Heather Simpson

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	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kathy Smith
Headteacher	Mary Walker
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2008
School address	Laird Street Claughton Birkenhead CH41 0AB
Telephone number	0151 6525124
Fax number	0151 6533271
Email address	schooloffice@portland.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Heather Simpson
Michael Blaylock

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 16 lessons taught by nine teachers. They listened to pupils read, spoke with them about their learning and looked at the work in their books. Meetings were held with parents and carers, a member of staff from the local Children's Centre, members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including the school improvement plan, assessment and tracking records, the school's evaluation of its work and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. Inspectors analysed 79 parents' and carers' questionnaires in addition to those completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Portland Primary School is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. Most of the pupils are White British and a very small minority comes from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those supported by School Action Plus and with a statement, is average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the normal time is above average. The school meets the current floor standards which are the minimum standards set by the government for attainment and progress.

The school has achieved a number of national accreditations including the International Schools award, National Healthy Schools status, the Dyslexia-Friendly award and a Quality Mark for basic skills.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Pupils are given opportunities to thrive, develop and achieve as a result of rich curriculum experiences and good teaching. The school is not yet outstanding because pupils make good progress across the school and there are some variations in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' achievement is good. On entry to Nursery, children's skills and knowledge are below those expected for their age. Attainment is rising and is broadly average by the end of Year 6. However, there is some variability in the rates of progress between classes.
- Teaching is generally of good quality and sometimes it is outstanding. Teachers manage pupils exceptionally well and foster very positive relationships. Lessons are generally well-planned and learning activities are adapted to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. However, occasionally pupils do not get enough opportunity to learn independently and work is not always challenging enough in all lessons. The marking of pupils' work is regular and positive, but pupils are not always given the opportunity to build on teachers' written comments or to evaluate their own work or that of others.
- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning, behave exceptionally well and gain a very comprehensive understanding of how to keep safe. The school is very effective in minimising the impact of any inappropriate behaviour on the learning of other pupils. Pupils, parents and carers overwhelmingly feel that the school is a safe place to learn.
- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher, alongside strong support from the leadership team, sets a clear, shared vision of high expectation. Their relentless determination has led to significant improvements. Teaching and performance management are led and managed very effectively. The emphasis on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further by improving the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding through:
 - ensuring that lessons consistently challenge all pupils
 - giving pupils greater responsibility and more time to work independently without too much direction from adults
 - providing more opportunities to share the best teaching practice in school ensuring that pupils have enough time to respond to teachers' comments in marking and assess their own learning and that of their peers.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Progress in almost all lessons observed was at least good. Pupils enjoy learning and teachers plan work that motivates pupils to work hard. The very large majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires feel that their children are making good progress and inspectors endorse this view. One parent or carer expressed the view typical of many, saying 'my son loves going to school and he has come on so well'. Children join the Nursery with attainment levels well below those expected for their age. They make good progress within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are provided with exciting learning opportunities to extend their personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy skills. They are encouraged to make choices and there is good use of the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Consequently, by the time they enter Year 1, many pupils are catching up with others of a similar age.

In Key Stage 1, attainment is rising steadily, especially in mathematics, which is now in line with the national average. Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school and attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average in English and mathematics. This was evident in lessons observed during the inspection where pupils confidently developed their letter-writing skills and added numbers with one or two decimal places. Gaps are narrowing for all groups compared to all pupils nationally. All groups, including pupils who are eligible for free school meals, make better than expected progress when compared to similar groups nationally. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they receive well-targeted teaching and support to help them overcome their difficulties. The number of pupils who join the school other than at the usual time is high. Their abilities are assessed on entry and additional support provided as necessary. Consequently, they are quickly integrated and make good progress.

Attainment in reading is broadly average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 who read to inspectors said that they enjoyed reading and they were able to use strategies they had been taught to tackle unfamiliar words. Pupils' work in a range of subjects is good. They have opportunities to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum including science, history, geography and information and communication technology (ICT).

Quality of teaching

Almost all parents and carers rightly consider that teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and use a wide range of techniques to interest and involve pupils. They have high expectations of pupils and manage their behaviour very successfully. Very positive relationships pervade in all classrooms and this allows teaching to flow without interruption. Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well in lessons by encouraging discussion and drawing on recent and current events, for example the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympic torch relay.

Where teaching is most successful, it draws on pupils' own experiences and links learning to real purpose. This was very evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils had to write a letter of thanks to a recent visitor to the school. The teacher skilfully developed pupils' empathy and understanding, but remained focused on the literacy skills needed and the quality of the work produced. Pupils demonstrated maturity, respect and consideration throughout this lesson due to the high expectations established by the class teacher. This lesson also provided an opportunity to promote and instil important values, further develop moral and cultural awareness, but also capitalise on extending pupils' writing skills.

Work is generally carefully planned and teachers have good subject knowledge which they use to extend pupils' skills and understanding. Teaching assistants support all groups effectively, including those with special educational needs, by clarifying instructions, giving further explanations or posing additional questions. However, there are some variations in the quality of teaching. A few lessons are less effective. In such lessons rates of progress are slower because tasks are not as stimulating.

Children in the Early Years are provided with an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning, but there are fewer opportunities in other year groups for pupils to learn independently and this can also slow pupils' rate of progress, on occasion. Marking generally indicates what pupils need to do next to improve their work. In the best examples seen, pupils set improvement targets for their peers and self-evaluate their own learning, but this is not consistently used across the school. In a few lessons pupils do not have enough time to respond to teachers' comments and so do not benefit fully from the guidance provided.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

'Polite, Pleasant People at Portland' is the mantra of the school and this was clearly evident during the inspection. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their education which are instilled and developed at every opportunity by all staff. Adults continually model respect and good manners and pupils themselves have adopted these values. Excellent relationships both in the classroom and more widely across the school underpin the ability for pupils to work together collaboratively and treat each other with respect. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and friendly to peers and visitors alike and show great care and consideration towards others. Parents and carers have positive views about pupils' behaviour and feel they are well looked after. Pupils themselves believe behaviour to be good and say that any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively. Pupils have good levels of responsibility for their own conduct and peer mediators are effectively used to supervise younger pupils and resolve any conflict issues that arise in the playground. .

Pupils show a high awareness of unsafe situations and recognise the school as a safe place where teachers care for them very well. They are very aware of what may constitute bullying and of the various forms bullying may take. School records show that incidents of harassment, racism or bullying are rare. This is confirmed by pupils who report that if any problems arise, prompt and swift action is taken. The school's strategies to promote attendance, including an activities week during the inspection with an enriched curriculum, are proving highly effective in securing and sustaining attendance that is now average and improving rapidly.

Leadership and management

Excellent leadership and management have accelerated the rate of school improvement. Since the last inspection, levels of attainment and attendance have risen and the quality of teaching has improved. This impressive track record demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity to improve further. A good number of parents and carers made highly-positive comments about Portland, typically describing it as 'the best school by far' and commenting that 'I tell everyone to put their children in this school. It is amazing!'

The headteacher and senior staff lead by example and share an ambitious vision for the school. They are both supported and challenged by a very proactive governing body, which is fully involved in shaping the direction of the school. Governors have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement. They are linked to individual classes and visit the school to observe teaching. Teamwork is strong and staff morale is high. Robust monitoring of both teaching and non-teaching staff ensures that all staff are held accountable for the achievement of their pupils. A strong emphasis on professional development means that the skills of individual members of staff are fostered and developed to meet the school's needs. School leaders have very high aspirations and are continually seeking to improve the school further. They are fully aware of the need to share the outstanding teaching practice in school to bring the quality of all teaching in line with the very best.

There is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils to succeed. The curriculum is broad and balanced and contributes strongly to pupils' excellent personal social and academic development. The school fosters the expertise and shared vision of its partnerships to develop further. Pupils benefit from the school's strong partnerships with parents, local schools, St James' Children's Centre and Tranmere Rovers' Football Club. Specialist teaching enhances pupil skills in music and sport. Cultural awareness is promoted with pupils studying a variety of other countries and learning to speak French or Spanish in Key Stage 2. An extensive range of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum and provide many memorable experiences.

Safeguarding is given a high priority, and arrangements for keeping children safe are very well managed. Leaders ensure the safe recruitment of staff, make full checks on any adult working in the school, and are vigilant about site safety. Staff are well trained in child protection and qualified in first aid.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



20 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Portland Primary School, Birkenhead, CH41 0AB

Thank you very much for the warm and friendly welcome you gave us when we came to visit your school recently. We appreciate all the help you gave us. A special 'thank you' goes to the School Council who gave up some of their lunchtime to talk to the inspectors and tell us what makes your school so special. You told us that you are happy at school and you said you feel safe. Your headteacher leads your school extremely well. Your behaviour is exemplary and you look after each other very well. Your school provides you with a good education and by the time you leave at the end of Year 6, your levels of attainment are broadly average.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do a number of things to make your school even better. We have asked your teachers to help you make even better progress by setting work which is a bit more difficult in some lessons and by allowing you to work on your own sometimes. We have also asked your teachers give you enough time to respond to their marking and to let you check your own work and the work of others in your class to see if you can identify ways you could improve it next time.

You can help to improve your school by continuing to work hard and attending school regularly.

We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Simpson
Lead Inspector

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Irby Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105025
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	377163
Inspection dates	20–21 March 2012
Lead inspector	Kevin Johnson

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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Barley
Headteacher	Annette Palmer
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2006
School address	Coombe Road Irby Wirral CH61 4UR
Telephone number	0151 6482944
Fax number	0151 6484742
Email address	schooloffice@irby.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Kevin Johnson
Mark Hilton

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers. In addition, they talked to pupils and reviewed some of their work. Meetings were held with staff and members of the governing body. Also taken into account were 65 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those completed by pupils and members of staff. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation which included that relating to safeguarding, the curriculum, the school's self-evaluation, minutes of governing body meetings, national assessment data and the school's assessments.

Information about the school

Almost all pupils are White British in this average-sized primary school. A well-below average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average. Healthy School status has been achieved. The school also holds the Basic Skills Award and Artsmark Gold and more recently gained the initial stage of the International Schools Award. The school meets the current floor standard.

Before and after-school care is available on site. This is not managed by the governing body and is inspected separately by Ofsted.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Leaders are consistently channelling their efforts into school improvement. Key areas of the school’s work have improved since the previous inspection and above-average academic standards have been maintained. Pupils’ behaviour and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are major strengths. The school is not outstanding because too small a proportion of the teaching is outstanding and there is room for even higher achievement.
- Children get off to a good start in Reception from broadly typical starting points for their age. Their personal and communication skills are developed particularly well. The good progress they make underpins pupils’ good progress through the rest of the school. Attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement.
- Teaching throughout the school is good and some is outstanding. Pupils learn at a good pace and enjoy their lessons. Relationships are excellent but teachers sometimes miss opportunities to act on pupils’ responses in lessons in order to probe ideas and take learning further.
- Pupils’ behaviour and their attitudes to learning are outstanding. They feel very safe in school. Pupils are consistently courteous and cooperative and demonstrate excellent ability to manage their own behaviour in and out of lessons. Attendance is above average. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body share the school’s vision for success and they work energetically to drive it forward. They contribute well to accurate self-evaluation and the setting of clear priorities for improvement. However, systems for assessing pupils’ performance accurately in subjects other than literacy, numeracy and science are not as refined as they could be. Highly effective management of teaching and performance is a particular strength of leadership and has improved that area of provision. The school demonstrates good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and hence raise achievement further by:
 - improving interaction between teachers and pupils in lessons with regard to listening to pupils' responses and using them as an opportunity to explore learning further.
- Refine systems for assessing individual pupils' performance in subjects other than English and mathematics so that individual pupils' achievement in those subjects can be measured more accurately and improvements made.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typical for their age but an increasing number start with slightly lower language development. All children make good progress. Their language skills pick up because of the strong focus placed on speaking and the learning of letters and their sounds. By the end of Reception all children work securely within the levels expected for their age and a significant number are more advanced.

From Year 1 to Year 6 pupils make good progress. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers share that view. Almost all of the pupils themselves say that they learn a lot in lessons and know how well they are doing. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is rising and by the end of Year 6 it is above average in English and mathematics.

Pupils are extremely attentive in lessons. They work hard and are keen to test themselves. In a mathematics lesson, for example, a pupil asked if it was alright to go to the final stages of calculating an answer without showing the working out because she was confident about her work. There are many opportunities in lessons for pupils to discuss ideas with one another. The pupils' attitudes and willingness to work hard stem from the teachers' very strong promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This develops in pupils a sense of responsibility and instils independence. Pupils receive good guidance on their learning from detailed and helpful marking.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good and sometimes rapid progress. Their needs are identified early and their learning steps are clearly mapped out. Contact with outside agencies is well planned and productive in ensuring that all pupils who are considered to be potentially vulnerable have their particular needs met. Pupils' progress is monitored closely, as is the quality of the teaching provided. Recent gaps between the progress of girls and boys have been successfully evaluated and dealt with. No groups are underachieving.

Systematic approaches to learning letters and their sounds are having a noticeable impact in reading skills in Years 1 and 2. Pupils readily use their knowledge and skills to break down unfamiliar words to help them read. They show good confidence when reading, writing and spelling. Year 2 pupils read accurately and show that they understand what they read by self-correcting when necessary. Most are at the level expected for their age. By the end of

Year 6 reading skills are generally above average. More-able pupils read accurately, with good understanding and expression. Less regular readers occasionally stumble over longer unfamiliar words but their reading is generally accurate.

Quality of teaching

Lessons are planned well across the curriculum. Teachers use the curriculum to encourage pupils to be resourceful and creative. They develop spiritual, moral and social skills very well because they are reflective about their learning and enjoy the wonder and self-confidence that it brings. Improved teaching in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) has a positive impact on pupils' cultural awareness. They exchange ideas via email with pupils in Japan, Uganda and also within the United Kingdom with a school in Coventry.

Teachers use their good knowledge of pupils to cater well for different abilities and build on what has already been taught. Lessons are usually filled with activity so that the pace of learning is good. Teachers monitor pupils' progress in lessons well and are quick to intervene to put right any misconceptions. In class discussion, teachers do not always make enough time to interact with pupils, draw out their ideas and explore them further to move learning to the next stage. The value of doing this, however, was evident in an outstanding English lesson. It was brought to life by the teacher's excellent questioning which developed the pupils' ability to use the text to prove that their ideas about the story were valid. Their high quality discussion led to some impressive drama and individual role play. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They use resources effectively and through excellent relationships create a positive climate for learning in their classrooms.

Teaching assistants are a valued part of the teaching team and contribute well to pupils' learning. They are well trained for the roles they undertake and, along with the teachers, are first class role models for pupils with regard to their relationships with others. Virtually all pupils say that teaching helps them to develop the skills they need and a similar proportion of parents and carers feel that their children are taught well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils typically make an exceptional contribution to school life. They are unfailingly polite and courteous to one another and towards adults. Their excellent social skills mean that they adjust their behaviour to suit the occasion. They show proper respect and dignity during assemblies and enjoy the social setting of the dining room sensibly and with good manners. Pupils manage their behaviour in lessons and move around the school with calm self-assurance. Pupils' attendance is consistently above average and they arrive punctually.

Pupils strongly oppose any kind of bullying or racist behaviour and understand the different forms they can take, including cyber-bullying and use of the internet. They are fully aware of potential dangers in and outside of school. Older pupils take on caring responsibilities in the playground but others step in spontaneously if they see a younger pupil who appears to be alone. Pupils say that they feel entirely safe in school and are fully confident that adult help is always there when needed. The popularity of sports, cycling to school and the after-school healthy cooking club, which is equally well attended by parents and carers are some evidence of the pupils' active pursuit of healthy lifestyles. The school council has been at the forefront of substantial improvement to the school environment and pupils need little encouragement to come up with ideas for discussion. Extensive links with communities overseas, and resulting initiatives that pupils lead to support them, as well as more local

charities show how deeply they empathise with contrasting groups. Pupils and parents and carers alike overwhelmingly share the view that behaviour is good and children are safe in school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's supportive leadership and shared vision with all staff underpins the school's drive for improvement. Staff comment positively about the quality of team work and supportive ethos of the school, as well as how they have improved professionally as a result of well-targeted training opportunities. The school demonstrates good capacity for continued improvement. Robust and constant monitoring, evaluation and support for teachers are outstanding features of leadership which have paved the way to improving the quality of teaching throughout the school. Systems for checking academic progress in English and mathematics have improved as have personal outcomes for pupils. However, the systems for assessing pupils in other subjects are less secure. This is because they do not ensure the same levels of accuracy which could be an aid to teachers' planning and to identify areas for improvement in some subjects. The relocation and resourcing of the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved learning and development in Reception and set the scene for continued progress.

The broad and balanced curriculum engages pupils well. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well through its wide range of activities. It is enriched by good links with other schools who share their expertise, for example, in science, information and communication technology and modern foreign languages by contributing to themed days and events held in the school. Pupils' skills and interests benefit from a good selection of after-school clubs. Teachers plan imaginatively and ensure that there are ample opportunities for pupils to develop skills, especially literacy, across a range of subjects.

There is a good balance of expertise in the governing body to enable it to challenge and support the school well. The school development plan provides clear guidance for improvement and the governing body readily holds the school to account. Good quality information is shared and progress and provision for all groups is scrutinised to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and that discrimination is not tolerated. The governing body fulfils its role efficiently regarding the maintenance of safeguarding for pupils. Policies and procedures are frequently checked to ensure their continued effectiveness.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



22 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Irby Primary School, Wirral, CH61 4UR

Thank you so much for the way you made us welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. It was a great pleasure to talk to you about your work because you are so polite and well mannered. Your behaviour is excellent especially when you are managing your own activities in the playground. We were very impressed by the way you take care of one another and how you help to make everyone feel safe and valued. We also noticed your excellent behaviour in lessons and how keen you are to do well. Well done for keeping your attendance above average.

We have judged your school to be good. Even though you reach above average standards, overall your achievement in English and mathematics is good. You make good progress from starting school to the end of Year 6. You are taught well and some of your lessons are outstanding. Your school leaders manage the school well and provide some exciting activities to help you to enjoy your learning.

We know your school leaders, parents and carers and you would like your school to be outstanding. To help that to happen we have asked your teachers to do two things. First, to make sure there are more outstanding lessons than at present by listening to your ideas in lessons, discussing them with you and exploring ways in which they help you to learn more. The second thing is for teachers to assess your work in all subjects as accurately as they do in English and mathematics.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Johnson
Lead inspector

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Grove Street Primary and Nursery school

Grove Street, New Ferry, Wirral, CH62 5BA

Inspection dates 11-12 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Heather			
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- From their starting points, not enough pupils make good progress in their reading, writing and mathematical skills by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching does not enable all pupils to make good or better progress as work is not always set at the right level.
- Pupils are not given enough time to work independently because teachers talk for too long.
- Teaching assistants are not always used fully throughout lessons.
- Not in every case do all pupils co-operate or engage in lessons and this restricts their progress.
- Leaders and managers do not focus closely enough on the link between pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.
- The governing body needs further detail on the progress all pupils make, especially those in receipt of the pupil premium.

The school has the following strengths

- Clear vision, drive and dedication by the headteacher.
- Improved behaviour management systems, leading to reduced incidents and improved pupils' attitudes.
- Significant improvement in attendance rates.
- The good progress made by pupils in receipt of the pupil premium.
- Good teaching in the Nursery class ensures that children get off to a good start.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are highly positive, contributing to how safe pupils feel.
- Teachers make regular comments in pupils' books and tell them what they need to do next.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, of which three were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the vice-chair of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and members of senior and middle management staff.
- Inspectors took account of the six responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) during the inspection, spoke to parents and carers and looked at previous views' of parents and carers collected by the school. Eighteen staff questionnaires were also scrutinised.
- They listened to pupils read, spoke with them about their learning and looked at the work in their books. The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson	Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Shirley Herring		Additional inspector
Peter Martin		Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Grove Street Primary is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average and the proportion of those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- Almost all pupils are White British but a small number comes from other minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has achieved a number of national accreditations including Healthy School status and an Eco-Flag award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics so that pupils make good progress by ensuring that:
 - information gained from assessments is used to plan work that is set at the right level and consistently meets the learning needs of all pupils
 - teachers plan suitably challenging and exciting activities, which encourage pupils to think, generate ideas and become confident, independent learners
 - teachers enable pupils to move on to their independent work more quickly by spending less time introducing lessons
 - teaching assistants are always well deployed and help pupils to accelerate their learning
 - teachers check pupils' progress and understanding during lessons and make the necessary adjustments to meet their needs
 - there are consistently high expectations of pupils' presentation of their work, especially in mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by ensuring that:
 - the role of middle leaders is further developed so that they contribute to improving the quality of teaching and make a significant impact on school improvement
 - leaders at all levels make full use of all assessment information to evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' progress
 - the governing body focuses its challenge more incisively on the progress made by all groups of pupils, but especially those who receive additional government funding, and carefully monitors the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children join the nursery with a range of skills that overall are below those expected for their age, especially in language and personal skills. They make good progress as a result of good teaching and a welcoming, supportive environment. They settle quickly and well planned, practical activities enable children to develop social skills and good attitudes from the outset. Nevertheless by the time they enter Year 1, their skills and knowledge are below average, especially in mathematics.
- The progress pupils make in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall, although it is generally much stronger in English than in mathematics. Currently, pupils are making satisfactory progress in all year groups.
- By the time pupils leave Year 6, their attainment has been below average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, current school data show that overall attainment is improving, particularly in reading. In addition, work in pupils' books shows that attainment in English and mathematics is improving, particularly in writing.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading. Systems are in place to hear children read regularly and provide additional support for those who are falling behind. Years 1 and 2 pupils who read to inspectors were able to talk about stories.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, although there are examples of good progress, for example, that of low-ability readers in Year 2. Individual progress is more rapid due to programmed, daily one-to-one support. Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. Boys and girls make similar progress in most year groups.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is good in the nursery. This is because the teacher plans a wide range of activities to promote children's learning and enjoyment. These are well supported and supervised by all adults who act as good role models. Resources are used well to engage children. Both the indoor and outdoor areas provide opportunities to promote early literacy and numeracy skills.
- Teaching is variable in its quality across the rest of the school. Where it is good, teachers use well-planned, practical activities matched to pupils' different ability levels. This was evident in a mathematics lesson in Year 2; three different activities were planned which challenged pupils and required them to think and explain their answers about place value to a partner. Additional adults were also used well to support lower-ability pupils.
- Other features within the good lessons are those where teachers use imaginative teaching methods and include the use of technology. For example in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were highly enthused and motivated by the use of i-Pods to create videos, take photographs and locate their house on a map. Collaborative working

was also highly successful.

- Where teaching requires improvement teachers set the same work for the whole class and do not pitch work at the right level for individual pupils. Too long is spent on the introduction to lessons and pupils lose valuable working time. This limits the progress pupils make and hinders their ability to practise and improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills. Expectations of how pupils present their work are also sometimes not high enough, especially in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of the use of additional adults is also variable; some are used to good effect to support those with learning or physical difficulties but in several classes, teaching assistants are not used fully at all times during the lesson.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide useful feedback. Pupils know the levels at which they are working and can describe what they need to do to improve. Checking pupils' knowledge and understanding during lessons is less effective.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs are identified early and receive additional support. Structured programmes are used to meet their needs. Specialist provision is also accessed and utilised well to meet the needs of pupils in receipt of pupil premium. This enables them to make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Overall, pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Whilst the majority of behaviour is good in and around school, there are a few instances of less good behaviour in lessons which have a negative impact on the achievement of some pupils. However, this is generally managed well. Pupils, on the whole, cooperate well with each other in lessons and outdoors. They are polite and courteous and display good manners.
- Pupils know the behaviour policy and the sanctions and rewards in place. They enjoy the 'star of the week' assembly, which recognises good achievement and behaviour, and they value 'golden time'. School rules and codes of conduct are highly visible in classrooms and re-enforce the school's expectations of good behaviour. Pupils say that behaviour has improved over time.
- There are few concerns expressed by parents and carers, staff or pupils about behaviour or safety. Pupils say that isolated incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. They have an awareness of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- The school keeps thorough and systematic records of behaviour incidents which include follow-up actions. Other records show that incidents of harassment, racism or bullying are rare.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and give examples of how the school has taught them to keep themselves safe, for example, on the Internet.
- Effective action has been taken to address attendance. This has resulted in an

improved attendance rate that is now in line with the national average. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility, for example as school councillors, and are proud of their role in organising World Games Day and raising money for charity.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher has set a clear sense of purpose and direction. She works closely with the deputy headteacher and governing body to promote improvement in pupils' learning and performance. Systems introduced have brought about improvements to attendance and behaviour and demonstrate the capacity to bring about further improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate overall because leaders know their strengths and are resolute to raise achievement.
- Middle leaders are beginning to use data to inform their actions for school improvement. They attend training, work with individual pupils and support colleagues. Actions taken to date have not, however, brought about significant improvements to the quality of teaching or increased rates of progress. Designated time has been provided for staff in order to carry out their roles fully.
- Whilst regular and systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching take place, the majority of teaching is currently satisfactory and not enough lessons enable pupils to make good progress. These systems are used in isolation and not enough emphasis is currently placed on linking pupils' progress with teachers' performance.
- The school listens to and responds well to parental and carers' concerns. Good relationships exist with parents and carers and these are formed from the outset in Early Years. Partnership working with external agencies also ensures that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive additional support and are fully included in the life of the school.
- The local authority provides good support for the school and in its last teaching and learning review identified accurate and appropriate areas for improvement. Support is on-going.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - all statutory duties are fulfilled including safeguarding requirements
 - governors have a good overview of the strengths and areas for improvement; they actively support the school, for example, leading assemblies, participating in lesson observations and running a library
 - they challenge the headteacher in relation to financial matters but do not always hold leaders to account for the lack of good progress made by pupils over time nor are they aware of the impact that funding from the government for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium has had.

What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	105011
Local authority	The Wirral
Inspection number	400749

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	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Vobe
Headteacher	Mrs Meg Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	23-24 June 2010
Telephone number	0151 645 2170
Fax number	0151 644 1992
Email address	schooloffice@grovestreet.wirral.sch.uk

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Brookdale Community Primary School

Escolme Drive, Greasby, Wirral, Merseyside, CH49 1SE

Inspection dates

11–12 September 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are well cared for by staff. When asked to express their views, there was strong praise for their learning and the wide range of extracurricular opportunities on offer.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. The teaching of reading is well-developed.
- Pupils treat each other and the school environment with respect and most show good behaviour. Bullying occurs rarely and most pupils say that that it is dealt with very well by staff.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress from their starting points. By the time that they leave the school, they attain above the national average in English and mathematics. Disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs also make good progress.
- The school has successfully addressed the recommendation made at the previous inspection, to improve the tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress.
- The school is strongly led and this has a positive impact on teaching and achievement. School leaders and governors have a good overview of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. With the clear vision and plans of the newly appointed headteacher, the school has the capacity to be even better.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough outstanding teaching and learning across the school.
- Teachers' marking does not always give pupils clear guidance about their next steps.
- Teachers do not use teaching assistants to their full potential in every lesson. There are insufficient opportunities for senior leaders and subject coordinators to develop a deep understanding of school performance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning and teaching in 13 lessons, observed and spoke to pupils at a range of other times and heard a range of individuals read.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's own monitoring of teaching, self-evaluation and the new headteacher's initial plans for the school.
- The inspectors took account of 28 responses from parents and carers to the online Parent View survey and the school's own survey.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- A slightly below average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language.
- The school shares a site with Brookdale pre-school playgroup and an out of school club, Brookdale Paintbox. Neither of these settings were part of this inspection. Children start school in Reception class.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection there is no longer a unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties in Key Stage 2.
- A new headteacher commenced duties in September 2012.
- The school has achieved a number of awards including the Green Flag Eco Award, Artsmark and International School Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by using more activities that fascinate pupils and develop their imagination and by regularly checking on pupil progress throughout lessons and making full use of support from teaching assistants.
- Ensure that teachers' marking consistently provides clear guidance to pupils on the next steps that they need to take to improve their work.
- Enhance the impact of subject leaders and senior leaders through giving them more time to monitor and evaluate teaching and achievement and to share good practice.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- When children start in the Reception class their skills, knowledge and abilities are broadly typical for their age.
- As a result of the well-planned curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children quickly grow in confidence and skill and are well prepared for entry to Year 1.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 continue to make good progress and attain above the national average by the end of Year 2, with mathematics a particular strength.
- When pupils leave the school in Year 6 they attain above average standards. This represents good achievement given their starting points. Some individuals are making outstanding progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- School data indicate that links with a local secondary school have contributed to some children attaining high levels in national tests in mathematics in 2012.
- Across the school, pupils with special educational needs and disabled pupils make good progress because of the careful tracking of their achievement and the effective leadership provided by the special educational needs coordinator.
- Pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium also make good progress from their starting points.
- Parents and carers have an accurate view of pupils' learning and most comment that their children are making good progress.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection consistently said how much that they enjoy books. Those for whom reading is more difficult share this enthusiasm and have a well-developed understanding of the sounds that letters make. Careful use is made of individual and guided reading books at home and school to ensure that children make good progress in their reading.
- Pupils from each year group benefit from a well-stocked library that includes representation of different minority ethnic groups, cultures, faiths and places. Positive illustration of other aspects of diversity is less evident.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Displays around the school give high value to children's learning across the curriculum and good examples of children's writing are presented.
- The school's own evidence and the inspection findings indicate that teaching is mainly good and some is outstanding. In a one example it requires improvement.?
- The impact of the good and better teaching is seen in the good overall progress that pupils make from their starting points and in their enthusiasm for learning.
- In the better lessons, teachers plan lively and interesting activities to capture pupils' interest, imagination and enthusiasm for learning.
- In an outstanding Year 2 mathematics lesson about using mathematical language and articulating their thinking, pupils were totally enthused by the skilful stimulation of the teacher. Her well-planned, open-ended questions extended and inspired children's language and thinking.
- Where teaching is less successful, planned tasks are not sufficiently stimulating and rely too much upon teacher-direction or the use of worksheets and teachers do not regularly check pupils' understanding during the lesson.
- In all lessons there are good relationships between pupils and staff.
- The feedback given to pupils in the marking of their work is not regular and consistent across the school. As a result not all pupils are clear about how to improve their work.
- Teachers use interactive whiteboards well and good use is also made of opportunities to

teach information and communication technology skills.

- Classroom assistants provide effective support for pupils in each year group, particularly those that find learning difficult.
- The best use of classroom assistants was seen in the Reception class, where the strong teamwork was seamless and had a positive impact on the support for all children. In some classes, this valuable resource was not used to the maximum.
- The school has invested significant time, professional development and resourcing into the teaching of literacy. Consequently, this strand of the curriculum is good and parents and carers play a key role in supporting the teaching of reading.
- Staff correctly enunciate the sounds that letters make and carefully track pupils' progress in becoming good readers.
- Pupils spoken to feel that teaching in the school is good and almost all parents and carers believe that their children are taught well.
- Levels of curriculum expertise and knowledge among staff are good and there is a strong commitment to working collaboratively.
- In order to broaden pupils' understanding of the world, pupils visit places of worship from different faiths. Food, dance, art and visitors are used within cultural celebrations and good links have been made with a partner school in Germany.
- Visits to the school by disabled people have further helped children to celebrate and respect differences.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are punctual and work with enthusiasm and interest.
- A typical pupil comment was, 'This is a happy school, we learn a lot and everyone gets on well together.'
- Attendance is above average. However, first-day absences are not rapidly followed up.
- The school manages behaviour well including for those who find self-control more difficult.
- Pupils' behaviour outdoors and in corridors and at lunchtime is lively yet self-disciplined.
- Pupils understand common risks and told inspectors about how to keep themselves safe with regard to strangers, site security and e-safety.
- Low-level disruptions to lessons are uncommon.
- The majority of parents and carers are happy with the school's work on bullying and behaviour.
- Pupils spoken to by inspectors said that they feel safe and they did not regard bullying as a problem and that, if it arises, staff swiftly and effectively deal with their concerns.
- Pupils said that the use of homophobic language has halted because of the concerted efforts of staff. As one child said, 'We don't use the word 'gay' any more, not in a negative way. We've stopped.'
- Case studies of the support given for individual pupils indicate that the school places a strong emphasis upon caring for children's learning and well-being, flexibly and positively.
- Pupils are proud of their school and those who have taken on additional roles, such as on the school council, are particularly pleased to be able to help and support others. Other opportunities for pupils to help others are well-promoted. For example, in a Year 4 classroom there are adverts for a class-register monitor, class librarian and class book provider, and lists by the pupils of the required personal qualities.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders and governors have successfully created a positive learning environment throughout the school where discrimination is not tolerated.
- Staff respect pupils and one another and are committed to supporting pupils to achieve their full potential in line with the school motto, 'striving for knowledge and happiness through learning'.
- Parents and carers are strongly supportive of the school and all who commented said that they would recommend it to other families.
- The school has continued to improve since the last inspection and has addressed the recommendation made at that time about improving systems of tracking pupil progress. As a result staff and governors are much clearer about the achievement of individuals and groups of children.
- Partnerships with other schools are used to good effect to enhance the curriculum and foster good relations among different communities.
- Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities have equal access to a range of learning opportunities and extracurricular activities.
- Within one week, the new headteacher has set out a clear vision for high standards and ongoing improvement which has been welcomed by pupils and staff.
- Regular evaluation of teaching quality is clearly linked to staff development priorities and performance management. School leaders are not complacent and have already planned to sharpen teacher performance-management objectives.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. There are aspects of recording, evaluation and training that are under review.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.

- **The governance of the school:**
 - has a clear, strategic oversight of the provision and outcomes
 - is ambitious and strongly committed to seeing the school improve further
 - is well-informed about staff performance and data and holds senior leaders to account
 - has an adequate oversight of safeguarding.

What inspection judgements mean

School

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School details

Unique reference number	105028
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	402961

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	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephanie Myers
Headteacher	Paul Prescott
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2008
Telephone number	0151 6775170
Fax number	0151 6755170
Email address	schooloffice@brookdale.wirral.sch.uk

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Hillside Primary School

Ridgeview Road, Prenton, Merseyside CH43 9HG

Inspection dates 2–3 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The majority of pupils make good progress and learn well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils say they thoroughly enjoy their reading and they read fluently and with understanding. Those who have fallen behind are given effective help to catch up.
- Since the last inspection, attainment in English and mathematics has improved significantly and is now in line with the national average.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school and some teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and deliver lessons that capture pupils' interest and help them to learn well.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding; children make particularly good progress in communication, reading and personal and social development.
- Pupils enjoy being in school. They are safe, well looked after and have good relationships with each other and with adults in the school. They behave well, are keen to learn and are proud of their achievements.
- The headteacher, strongly supported by the senior leadership team and the governing body, provides very clear direction, focused on improving teaching and learning and based upon a rigorous and accurate analysis of the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of more-able pupils making more than expected progress is not yet high enough.
- Opportunities are missed for pupils to work independently of the teacher and to use their initiative.
- In some lessons, less-able pupils are not always given the resources they need to be able to complete tasks independently.
- Plenary discussions are not always used as effectively as they might be to extend pupils' learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, of which 12 were joint observations with senior leaders. These included a number of short visits to lessons conducted by teachers and trained assistants.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and school staff, including middle and senior managers.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to a parental questionnaire recently carried out by the school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Judith Tolley, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Ian Wellens

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hillside is a smaller-than-average-size primary school.
- Pupils are predominantly of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, although this varies from year-to-year.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a number of awards including Healthy School status, Foundation International Award and Eco School Award.
- There have been significant changes in staff since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress further by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently of the teacher to solve problems
 - ensuring that pupils, particularly the less able, have the resources they need to complete tasks independently
 - using whole-class plenaries more effectively to further extend pupils' learning, particularly that of the more able, and ensure all pupils are fully involved in discussions.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Standards in English and mathematics are in line with the national average. Since the last inspection, standards have risen year on year and continue to rise. The proportion of pupils who make more than expected progress from their starting points compares favourably with national figures.
- Although the less-able pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points, they do not always meet their full potential because the tasks they are set are sometimes too difficult and the resources provided do not always give them the support they need to complete tasks without extra help.
- Many children join the school with attainment that is well below that expected for their age. They make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in developing their communication, reading and personal and social skills. They enter Year 1 confident and enthusiastic learners, ready to access the Key Stage 1 curriculum.
- Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. By the end of Year 6, their attainment is in line with the national average in writing, reading and mathematics. They read a variety of texts fluently and write accurately for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- The school's actions to raise standards and accelerate progress in reading and writing have proved successful. Pupils who have fallen behind or who have special educational needs or behavioural difficulties are helped through a variety of well-tailored intervention strategies and mentoring. As a result these pupils participate successfully in whole-class activities and also make good progress from their starting points.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The overall quality of teaching over time is good and leads to good progress.
- Teachers present new ideas clearly and activities are well chosen to engage pupils' interest. For instance, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils were keen to explain how they had found a variety of ways of sorting counters and recording their findings.
- The teaching of reading is systematic and consistent across the school. Pupils are excited about reading and say how much they enjoy it. For instance, in the Reception (Foundation 2) class, children clearly enjoyed practising their reading and spelling skills using computer programs. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were keen to discuss the Roald Dahl stories they had been reading, referring directly to the text to explain what they had enjoyed the most, and in Year 6 pupils listened avidly to a story about life in Victorian Britain in order to reproduce it as a play.
- Pupils make the best progress when they are given the opportunity to work collaboratively with a partner or in small groups to explore ideas and solve problems. When this is the case, their confidence grows and they are keen to share their ideas with a wider audience. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to promote pupils' independence as learners in this way.
- Pupils sometimes lose interest and become restless when they are not directly involved in plenary discussions. Opportunities are missed to extend pupils' learning and further challenge the more able in these activities.
- Teachers check understanding regularly and adapt their lessons effectively to correct misapprehensions.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively together to plan and deliver lessons. They use questioning very effectively to support and extend pupils' thinking.
- On the whole, assessment information is used to good effect to match work and resources to pupils' needs, although in some lessons the less-able pupils are not always given the resources they need to be able to complete tasks without direct help from adults. As a result, the pace of their learning slows.
- Marking is thorough and usually gives pupils good guidance about how to improve their work in

English and mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well. They are kind and considerate to each other and play well together. They take responsibility seriously and are proud of their contribution to the school through, for example, the school council, the ECO Group and as playground leaders.
- They have good relationships with adults, feel safe and are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively. They are aware of the different forms of bullying that can take place and know how to deal with it, some acting as Anti Bullying Ambassadors for their peers. They know how to stay safe and have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They speak with enthusiasm about their success in growing their own vegetables. Extracurricular activities, including sport, are very popular.
- Children with behavioural and emotional difficulties benefit from programmes tailored to their needs and this has had a positive impact upon their learning and their personal development.
- The school has worked well with outside agencies and with parents to improve punctuality and attendance. Attendance rates have risen to average and persistent absence has decreased.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has acted rapidly and decisively to improve teaching and learning, raise standards and to accelerate progress across the school. He provides very clear direction, based on an accurate evaluation of the school's work.
- He is strongly supported by the senior leadership team and subject leaders who have an accurate view of the school's performance and how to improve further through the monitoring of teaching and learning. This, and the robust analysis of pupils' progress, triggers appropriate interventions for pupils and training for staff.
- As a result of the actions taken by senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching and learning as well as the focus on improving attainment in reading and writing, standards have risen year on year and progress has accelerated.
- Issues identified in the previous report have been tackled successfully. Teachers work well as a team and regularly share good practice. This results in a good degree of consistency across the school. The school has a good capacity to improve further.
- Safeguarding meets government requirements. The school does all it can to keep its pupils safe.
- There are good links with the local high school as well as with the children's centre and the local network of schools.
- The curriculum meets the needs and interests of the pupils well and pupils talk enthusiastically about the topics they are studying. It is effectively adapted for pupils with special educational needs and those with behavioural difficulties. It is enriched by a variety of themed days, a wide range of clubs and sporting activities, visits and visitors. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching in music and Mandarin.
- Pupils have frequent opportunities to reflect and appreciate their own skills and the skills of others, for example, through weekly assemblies and themed days. This is successful in increasing pupils' confidence and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- Since the last inspection, the local authority has worked effectively with the school to improve the teaching of literacy. It now provides light touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - the governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and areas which need to be improved in the school. Governors are very supportive and well equipped to

hold school leaders to account.

What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	131587
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	402483

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	159
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jackie King
Headteacher	Jason Hollywood
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2010
Telephone number	0151 677 9960
Fax number	0151 677 9960
Email address	schooloffice@hillside.wirral.sch.uk

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Pensby Primary School

Greenbank Drive, Pensby, Wirral, CH61 5UE

Inspection dates 10–11 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- As a result of school leaders' strong focus on developing the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement has improved and is now good. By the end of Year 6 attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy school. They are polite and well-mannered and take care of each other and their school environment. Good relationships exist throughout and pupils trust the adults to keep them safe.
- Exemplary behaviour in class and around school is helping pupils to make good, and often outstanding, progress. They are eager to learn and try their best to succeed.
- Most teaching is now of at least good quality with some examples of outstanding practice throughout the school.
- Due to the drive and determination of the headteacher a calm, cohesive school community exists. This follows the upheaval of the recent move to the new building from the separate sites that used to house the pupils.
- Senior leaders, including the governing body, have a very good understanding of how well pupils are achieving. This is used effectively to ensure that training and support for all staff are strongly focused on improving pupils' attainment and progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils consistently reach the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1.
- A small amount of teaching is not yet good and teaching overall is not yet outstanding.
- Opportunities to make links between subjects, respond to pupils' interests and develop their creativity and cultural understanding are not fully embedded in the curriculum.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 15 lessons and made a number of short visits to classrooms to observe teaching and learning. They listened to readers and observed the teaching of early reading skills in the school. The inspectors also looked at examples of pupils' work from the current school year and from previous years.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, one group of parents, the Chair and other members of the Governing Body, one representative of the local authority and members of staff. The inspectors also spoke informally with parents.
- In the course of the inspection, inspectors took account of 19 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), several letters from parents and 21 staff questionnaires.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including a summary of the school's self-evaluation, strategic plan and analysis of pupils' current progress. Planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to behaviour and safeguarding were also considered.

Inspection team

Lyn Pender, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kirsteen Rigby

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is of similar size to most other primary schools.
- A breakfast-, after-school club and wrap-around care provision for younger children are managed by the governing body.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups who attend the school is lower than average and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Fewer pupils than average are supported at school action. The numbers of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is above the national average and has risen since the last inspection. Overall, the school serves a community of average deprivation, although some pockets of disadvantage exist within the local area.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The new school building opened in May 2012. Building work continues on the site to prepare the other half of the school building for the primary special school which will be located there in due course.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, further increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, and make sure that all teaching is of at least good quality, so that all pupils, particularly the more-able at Key Stage 1, make the progress expected of them, by ensuring that teachers:
 - build on the best practice that exists in the school
 - use marking consistently to show pupils what they need to do to improve, and give them time to act on the information provided
 - enable all pupils to use a fluent, joined handwriting style and know how to improve the presentation of their written work.
- By July 2013, develop the curriculum still further so that teachers consistently provide pupils with relevant, active learning opportunities that capture their interests, challenge their thinking and promote their skills to learn independently.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the school with skill levels close to what might be expected for their age in most areas of learning. However, many children's communication skills, including that of writing, are below age-related expectations at this time.
- They settle well into the Early Years Foundation Stage and learn quickly because members of staff work well as a team to provide exciting activities that encourage children to become interested and independent learners. As a result, they make good progress and enter Year 1 with communication skills much closer to what might be expected for their age.
- In Key Stage 1 progress continues at a broadly similar pace, although compared to the national average, fewer pupils reach the higher levels for this age group. Progress accelerates in Key

Stage 2 and the upward trend in attainment which began two years ago has been maintained. Year 6 pupils reached well-above average standards in the Key Stage 2 national tests in 2012 in all subjects, although reading and mathematics are slightly stronger than writing.

- As a result of early identification of need and the good provision made for them, pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make similar, good progress to their peers in the school.
- The very small group of pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils in the school as do the pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding. Leaders are aware that some variation exists between the achievement of boys and girls year-on-year but no overall pattern exists to this ongoing variation.
- Teachers ensure that a focus on developing pupils' speaking skills is successful. Pupils enjoy working together with a partner or in a group so that all ages make good progress in listening skills and demonstrate a willingness to share their ideas with others.
- The teaching of reading has a high profile. Letters and sounds are taught systematically in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 ensuring that early skills are developed well. Volunteer readers play an important role in enabling pupils to read regularly and the light, airy new school library is at the heart of the school and popular with all pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is mostly at least good and some is outstanding. The quality of teaching in the school has improved since the last inspection because of senior leaders' clear focus on pupils' learning and the provision of high quality professional development.
- A common strength in all lessons is the strong teamwork of teachers and teaching assistants. This helps to create and sustain calm, purposeful learning environments that promote high expectations of behaviour.
- Typical characteristics of the most effective teaching seen during the inspection include:
 - teachers with high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - thoroughly planned lessons that set a brisk pace of learning, provide imaginative activities and set a good level of challenge that is well-matched to pupils' abilities
 - effective questioning skills used by teachers and teaching assistants
 - explicit links to pupils' previous learning and clear next steps to help them improve further.
- Teachers' marking generally praises pupils' efforts and the best examples provide guidance about how work can be improved. However, the quality of feedback is variable across the school. For example, pupils are not always given enough information about how they can reach the higher levels, particularly in Key Stage 1, and teachers do not always check that pupils have responded to the guidance provided.
- Inspection evidence indicates that a common handwriting style is not yet in place and not all teachers demand the highest quality of presentation from pupils. The lack of a neat joined handwriting style prevents pupils reaching even higher standards in English.
- Most parents' responses and comments indicate that they are pleased with the teaching their children receive in the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils take a great pride in their school and especially their new building. They are very happy to be on one site where pupils of all ages can play and learn together. Older pupils enjoy helping the younger ones; for example when they move to their playground at lunchtime.
- At playtimes pupils play happily and sensibly. Pupils are courteous and considerate. They understand the different kinds of bullying and say that cases are rare and that, if they do occur,

they are acted upon immediately by the adults in the school.

- Behaviour around school and attitudes to learning are excellent. Pupils concentrate well and, in the best lessons, are engrossed in their learning. Lessons are very rarely disrupted because of incidents of misbehaviour.
- Many pupils enjoy taking on responsible roles in school. Members of the school council contribute to the decision making in the school. The Chair of the Governing Body attends their meeting from time to time and school council members report to governing body meetings.
- Pupils feel safe and are helped to manage risk well. They take care on the playground as they know that space is restricted at the moment. Pupils are looking forward to the time when the building work is finished and the new school field is available for playtimes. They understand how to use the internet safely.
- The Pensby Children's Club, which is now managed by the governing body of the school, provides high quality wrap-around care. The location of the club alongside the Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms helps smooth the transition of those nursery children who attend the wrap-around provision for part of the day. Older pupils enjoy the good range of activities provided in the popular breakfast- and after-school clubs.
- The school has a warm and welcoming ethos which is valued by parents. Above average levels of attendance demonstrate pupils' very positive attitudes to all the school has to offer.

The leadership and management are good

- Staff at Pensby Primary work as a well-organised and effective team. Strategies such as coaching and mentoring are well established and are improving the quality of teaching in the school.
- Since the previous inspection leaders, including governors, have worked successfully to raise the achievement of pupils. The clear vision shown by the headteacher is shared by all and the school motto, 'Be amazing – reach for the stars', reflects the high expectations of pupils and staff.
- Senior and middle leaders' roles are clear and they readily assume responsibility for their subject and management areas. The school knows its strengths well and strategic plans are clearly focused on the correct priorities for development. Arrangements to monitor and evaluate the performance of the school are increasingly effective. This has improved teaching and learning since the last inspection and indicates the school has good capacity to continue to improve.
- The performance of staff is rigorously managed. Pupils' progress is reviewed regularly and teachers are held to account for the achievement of those in their class.
- Gaps in achievement are picked up early through careful analysis of the school's detailed tracking system. If pupils do fall behind, leaders take prompt action to provide the extra support needed to help them catch up as quickly as possible.
- The curriculum is balanced and provides some opportunities for pupils to practise the basic skills of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) across other subjects. However, it does not always inspire or capture the interests of all learners, particularly the more reluctant writers. Opportunities to develop pupils' creativity and increase their cultural understanding were not strongly evident during the inspection.
- Staff promote equal opportunities well and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupil premium funding helps to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve equally well given their starting points. All pupils have equal access to the trips arranged to enrich the curriculum and to the varied extra-curricular activities provided.
- Well-established and effective partnerships have been created with other agencies to support the needs of more vulnerable pupils and their families. A good working relationship exists with the local primary special school that will relocate to the same site when the final building phase is complete.

- The school participates in the school-centred initial teacher training programme. Inspection evidence indicates that the graduate students based in the school are being prepared well for their future career in the teaching profession.
- The school works well with parents to help them support their children’s learning. Workshops on developing early reading skills and new approaches to teaching mathematics help parents to support their children’s academic progress. Parents say that this is a good school and praise school leaders and staff for the care and education their children receive.
- The local authority has provided effective support for the development of this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well led and has a wide range of experience. Governors have a good understanding of how the school is performing. They ensure that senior leaders are held to account and that the school is on a strong financial footing.
 - Governors make certain that the school’s arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements well.

What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	135497
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	402709

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	233
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Spencer
Headteacher	Kate Brown
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2010
Telephone number	0151 348 4145
Fax number	0151 342 0240
Email address	schooloffice@pensby-primary.wirral.sch.uk

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Somerville Primary School

Northbrook Road, Wallasey, Merseyside CH44 9AR

Inspection dates 1–2 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school provides a very positive atmosphere which helps pupils to learn well. Teachers and other adults have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. Pupils say that they enjoy school and that they find their learning exciting.
- Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge which are below, and in some instances well below, those expected for their age. Some pupils make outstanding progress in English and mathematics and almost all achieve broadly average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Most teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. As a result, most groups of pupils, including those who receive support through the pupil premium funding achieve well over time.
- Behaviour is outstanding, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary, as is the respect that they show towards each other and to adults. There have been exceptional improvements in behaviour over time, because staff have skilfully implemented effective systems to manage pupils' behaviour.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and staff have a clear view of how successful the school can be and are keenly focussed on improving teaching and raising achievement for all pupils. The curriculum provides a wide range of first-hand experiences which fire the imagination of pupils and encourages them to succeed.
- Governors are highly effective. They ensure financial stability for the school and hold the headteacher rigorously to account for all aspects of the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils attain better than expected standards for their age in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Improvements in writing have not been sustained, especially for the girls in Key Stage 2.
- While most teaching is good, there is not enough that is outstanding. High-quality marking and feedback, which guides pupils on how to improve, is not yet fully evident across the whole school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also visited lessons for short periods, attended assemblies and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of the responses of the seven parents who completed the on-line survey (Parent View) when planning the inspection, and also considered findings from questionnaires and surveys organised by the school. Questionnaires completed by 22 staff were also taken into account.
- Inspectors met with a number of school staff including the headteacher, senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the Chair of the Governing Body, the vice-chair and other governors and the manager of the Early Years Foundation Stage. A meeting was also held with the local authority school improvement adviser.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, including those pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding.
- Various documents were scrutinised. These included: teachers’ monitoring and planning files, the school development plan and the school’s self-evaluation, safeguarding documentation, behaviour logs, policies, information about pupils’ progress and tracking information.

Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Gillian Hunter	Additional Inspector
Liam Trippier	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is almost twice the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of children who are supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average.
- Since the last inspection several members of staff have left. Three newly qualified teachers have been appointed and two teachers are currently on secondment to the local authority. There have also been recent changes to the governing body, which includes the appointment of a new Chair of the Governing Body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more pupils attain standards higher than expected for age in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2, by helping them to become more confident learners and providing regular opportunities for them to practise their writing and mathematical skills across different subjects.
- Increase the proportion of girls reaching the expected standard in writing by the end of Key Stage 2, by ensuring that the curriculum enables girls to do as well as boys in writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that all lessons are good or better by:
 - ensuring that the work that teachers set always challenges pupils to do their best, especially the more able pupils
 - ensuring that teachers consistently use marking and feedback to help pupils to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with overall skills that are often well below those expected for their age. They make good progress through the school and achieve broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Progress is outstanding for some pupils, with a high proportion making better than expected progress in mathematics.
- The school provides a successful range of activities to support most pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy small group work because it helps them with their comprehension, reading and writing skills. Such actions have been effective in ensuring that gaps in attainment between groups of pupils are narrowing. However, some gains made in writing have not been sustained for all groups, especially girls in writing in Key Stage 2, whose attainment is not as good as it was last year nor matches that of boys.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs do much better than similar pupils in other schools nationally, especially in mathematics.
- Attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 1 has improved year on year and significant improvements have been made at Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' reading skills have improved at both Key Stages 1 and 2 and their attainment in reading is now broadly average. The school's use of the pupil premium funding, for example, to employ additional staff and to provide targeted small-group support, has contributed well towards improving outcomes for those pupils supported by this funding.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good with some that is outstanding. In the best lessons, teachers know their pupils well and always challenge them to do their best.
- A small minority of lessons require improvement because the purpose of the lesson is not made clear to pupils, or plans do not make sure that all pupils have work that allows them to do their best.
- Teachers have outstandingly good relationships with pupils. They listen carefully to pupils and ask searching questions which help them to develop their thinking skills. In the best lessons, pupils work well together in pairs and small groups. However, girls and more-able pupils are not always challenged enough and as a result, they are not as interested and involved as they could be.
- Teaching assistants and other adults support certain pupils in the classroom or in small-group sessions to help them with their learning in English and mathematics. When lessons are well paced and pupils are able to get on with their work quickly, the support given is effective in improving the progress of pupils of average and below average attainment.
- Teachers make sure that pupils know how well they are getting on and what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils are given good opportunities to review their work and to read teachers' comments.
- Teachers make learning as active and interesting as possible through relating classroom work to real-life experiences. A highly effective mathematics lesson involved pupils in small groups planning a bonfire night party. Pupils rose to the challenge with great enthusiasm and set to work on calculating the amount of fireworks they could buy with their given budget.
- Teachers take every opportunity to build pupils' self-confidence by getting them to come to the front of the class and share what they have learned. In a lesson where reception children were practising their sounds and learning to read, some came to the front of the class and identified the correct letters to make various sounds. They enjoyed showing other children what they had learned and all showed their appreciation by applauding.
- Homework is set regularly and pupils are encouraged to use the school's virtual learning environment and website to check on what they need to do. The school encourages parents to

help their children's learning through providing an extended support programmes for parents of children in their first term in the Reception class and by inviting parents to come to celebration assemblies.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in the school is outstanding. There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection, in pupils' behaviour at break and at lunch time. Pupils conduct themselves in an exemplary manner at all times, are welcoming to visitors and treat each other in a very respectful way. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent in the vast majority of cases.
- As a Rights Respecting School, all pupils have been involved in the creation of a school charter. Pupils are aware that with rights come responsibilities. This message is reinforced during lessons and displayed throughout the school.
- Pupils say that they like coming to school and say that they feel very safe and enjoy the friendship of their fellow pupils and the confidence of their teachers. All pupils know how to stay safe and they are confident that they can report any concerns to any adult. Incidents of racist and homophobic bullying are very rare. If they occur parents are always informed and all incidents are carefully recorded. All incidents are followed up and reviewed overtime.
- The school has ensured that attendance has improved year on year since the last inspection; it is currently average. Pupils supported by the pupil premium have improved their attendance and support provided has ensured their well-being.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has a very clear view of how the school can be even more successful. The staff and the governing body are determined to ensure the best outcomes for all pupils. The headteacher and governing body have an accurate view of how well the school is performing and set the right priorities for the future.
- Middle leaders have a good understanding of the strengths as well as areas for improvement in subjects.
- The school works well in partnership with other local schools and engages in joint training events.
- The curriculum is good overall. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to learn through first-hand experiences, including inviting visitors into the school and educational visits. Pupils help with the planning of the curriculum by saying what they would like to find out. However, in Key Stage 2 writing tasks do not always appeal to girls as much as to boys and as a result, girls do not achieve as well in writing as boys.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning. They make regular observations of lessons, and make checks on teachers' planning and marking. They talk to pupils to find out their views about their learning. Senior leaders provide detailed feedback to teachers and other leaders on the strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving strongly.
- Senior leaders manage teachers' performance very well and ensure that staff benefit from further training to improve their performance.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand the notion of rights, respect and responsibility and what is right and wrong. The school enhances pupils' spiritual and cultural development through making sure that different religions and cultural traditions are explored. It has extended pupils' knowledge of local, national and global issues through themed weeks and joining in projects, such as 'East meets West', which compared life and culture in China with that in Merseyside and in the north west of England.
- Safeguarding meets the required government standards and the school has ensured good vetting procedures.

- The local authority is very positive about the school for which it provides 'light touch' support.
- Due to the effective management and thorough checks on the impact of pupil premium funding the gap between the attainment of pupils entitled to free school meals and their peers has narrowed over the last academic year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is an outstanding feature of the school. The governing body knows the strengths of the school as well as the areas for development very well. Governors come into school on a regular basis to meet staff and parents and to look at work in classrooms. Challenging questions are asked of the headteacher and senior staff. Minutes of meetings show that reports presented to the governing body are carefully scrutinised and that the headteacher is regularly asked to report on the quality of teaching, the performance of pupils and on how funding, such as the pupil premium is being used. Governors have directed the pupil premium funding to improve attendance and to employ an extra teacher to maintain smaller class sizes and to provide focused support for those pupils most in need of help.

What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	105000
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	402959

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	475
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr C Griffiths
Headteacher	Mr A Davies
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2008
Telephone number	0151 6385074
Fax number	0151 6391019
Email address	headteacher@somerville.wirral.sch.uk

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Woodchurch High School Engineering College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105095
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	395308
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2012
Lead inspector	Sue Harrison HMI

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,339
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Smith
Headteacher	Rebekah Phillips
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2008
School address	Carr Bridge Road Woodchurch Wirral CH49 7NG
Telephone number	0151 677 5257
Fax number	0151 678 1906
Email address	bennettsst@woodchurch-high.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Sue Harrison	Her Majesty's Inspector
Nell Banfield	Additional Inspector
Anne Thomas	Additional Inspector
David Woodhouse	Additional Inspector
Catherine Laing	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 42 lessons delivered by the same number of teachers. They scrutinised students' books and looked at school documentation that included self-evaluation and development plans, and data on the attainment and progress of the current cohort of students. Inspectors held meetings with groups of staff, students and governors and analysed 335 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as those completed by staff and students.

Information about the school

This larger than average secondary school enrolls about 5% more boys than girls. Around 97% of its students are White British in origin. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free schools meals is double the national average. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well above average. The school houses a designated unit for students with autistic spectrum disorders and special provision is also made for students with medical and physical impairment. The school has gained many awards, including the Wirral Inclusion Award and the North West Special Educational Needs Award. In January 2010, Woodchurch High became a Trust School. The partners who form the Board of Trustees are The Church of England, Liverpool Hope University and a private company that supports the school's engineering specialism. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. The school is consistently over-subscribed.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- Woodchurch is a good school. It is not outstanding as it is not yet successful in ensuring that all students meet their full potential in all subjects. It provides well for students with a wide range of needs and generally ensures they achieve well. It is characterised by an inclusive and caring ethos. An increased emphasis on raising aspirations and standards is beginning to have a very positive impact on achievement.
- In most years students make good progress. The Year 11 cohort that left in 2011 did not achieve as well as expected. However, swift action to identify the reasons for this and take appropriate action has led to significant improvement in the current year. Inspectors found standards of work and the progress being made by students to be good.
- A high proportion of lessons are good or better. Most teachers plan well for the different needs of students in their groups. The school places a high emphasis on developing literacy skills and this is well evidenced in many lessons. Teachers are also skilful at using topics to help students develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness. A minority of lessons fail to engage the students as well, and their progress is more limited.
- The school provides a safe, calm and purposeful environment. The majority of students enjoy school and attend well. Students are generally polite, well behaved and show good attitudes to learning.
- The school is well led. The headteacher sets high standards for staff and students and performance management is strong. The priority placed on improving teaching is proving effective. Tracking systems to monitor students' progress against their targets have improved significantly this year, although it is too early to judge their full impact. The curriculum is very well matched to the range of students' needs.
- The school engages well with parents, carers and the local community and, of the parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted survey, 96% would recommend the school to others.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further so that all is good or better by:
 - continuing to share the good practice that exists
 - ensuring that students are effectively involved in the learning in all lessons
 - ensuring all teachers make frequent checks on the extent to which students understand their learning.
- Monitor carefully the effectiveness of improvements in target-setting and progress-tracking systems this year, and use this to encourage even higher aspirations so that students achieve their full potential in all subjects.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Inspectors agree with parents and carers that students generally achieve well at the school. Students show a positive attitude to learning. They gain a wide range of skills that prepares them well for when they leave school. In science, and a range of other subjects, they demonstrate good investigation and problem-solving skills. For example, in a technology lesson focussing on design and manufacturing, students were able to modify their ideas after their initial trial in order to improve the product. Students work well together in teams, sharing ideas and helping each other. They willingly take on roles of responsibility and show mature judgement in choosing learning mentors with the skills to guide others when working in groups. Students' literacy skills are well developed across the curriculum as well as in English lessons. In a religious studies lesson, students were able to use listening and speaking skills well in a discussion on charities and then employed persuasive language effectively in their written work when designing posters.

Students show a good standard of work in practical sessions. They gain useful work-related skills, particularly in the vocational curriculum. A land-based course is very successful at developing a whole range of skills. Students acquire animal care knowledge and also develop responsibility for ensuring the welfare of the animals. The course is used well to promote understanding of moral and welfare issues and is just one example of the successful promotion of students' social, moral, cultural and spiritual awareness across the school. Students on the land-based courses have won prizes at the Cheshire Show and one progressed to the Young Shepherd National Final.

Students generally enter the school with below average attainment on entry and make good progress against their starting points. Levels of attainment for Year 11 dipped in 2011 but there is strong evidence in the current year that this has been reversed. They achieved well in a number of subjects, including science and humanities, but did not do as well as expected in English and mathematics. The school has carried out a thorough analysis of the reasons for this and put effective actions in place. In particular, progress tracking was not sufficiently effective and this led to inaccurate targeting of interventions aimed at preventing underachievement. In the current year, target-setting and monitoring of students' progress is more rigorous. School data shows a significant improvement in projected outcomes for the current Year 11. This is informed by results from early entry to examinations in the core

subjects. Inspectors' observations of lessons and scrutiny of books showed standards of work and progress to be good across a wide range of subjects, including in English and mathematics.

There are no significant gaps between the achievement of boys and girls. The school is working hard to increase the achievement level of students known to be eligible for free school meals. In 2011 they made satisfactory progress overall, and there is evidence to show further improvement in the current year. Disabled students and those with special educational needs achieve well at the school as a result of a curriculum tailored to their needs, generally effective use of additional support and modifications to learning resources in lessons.

Quality of teaching

Parents, carers and students are positive about the quality of teaching and inspectors found a high proportion of teaching to be good or better. Most teachers have an excellent rapport with their students and are enthusiastic in delivering their subject specialisms. Teachers use their detailed knowledge of the students in their classes to plan learning activities that motivate and help students to understand the work. They provide a range of learning resources for students who are working at different levels. For example, in a history class on the use of source materials, students were given the choice of tackling the subsequent written task using a sheet with minimal guidance or one with more prompts to help them structure their essay. The use of varied resources to meet different needs ensures that students with disabilities and special educational needs are able to participate well in lessons, aided by generally effective support from teaching assistants where appropriate. In some cases, they work in discrete groups with work targeted to their specific needs rather than in mainstream classes.

Students are encouraged to think for themselves and develop confidence as independent learners. Teachers are skilful at the use of techniques to encourage this. Question and answer is used effectively in many lessons to help students extend their thinking and develop reasons for their answers. Inspectors saw several examples of students assessing their own work and that of their peers, and students explained how this helps them to know how well they are doing and what they could do to improve further. Books are generally marked regularly and give clear guidance to students.

The school's emphasis on developing literacy skills is effective. Teachers focus on key words for their subjects and ensure students have regular opportunities to develop their reading skills. Teachers are skilful at using the curriculum to develop students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness. In one example observed, Year 8 students were engrossed in a discussion about basic human rights linked to the work they were doing on the holocaust. In an English lesson where students were studying *'Of Mice and Men'* they were able to use the text to explore concepts of discrimination relating to disability and racism.

In the small number of less effective classes, lessons are heavily teacher-led and do not provide sufficient challenge for students. There is insufficient planning to meet the needs of different students in the group and not enough checking of their understanding.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school provides a calm, orderly and safe environment for learning. The overwhelming majority of students are very well behaved in lessons and around the school. Parents, carers and students are positive about behaviour, although they cite examples of misbehaviour in a small number of lessons. The school sets high expectations in relation to behaviour, students are very clear about the rules and the school is swift to impose sanctions where appropriate. This has contributed to a higher than average rate of fixed-term exclusions, but figures for the current year show a reduction as the school introduces alternative arrangements, including extra work in the evening rather than exclusion. School data also shows that the proportion of exclusions decreases as students move up the year groups. The school enrolls a higher than average number of students with identified behavioural needs and is generally successful at enabling these students to develop coping strategies. Students enjoy coming to school and most of them attend well. The school is working hard to reduce the above average number of persistent absentees. Punctuality to lessons is very good.

The school promotes a good understanding amongst students of what constitutes bullying and harassment and appropriate measures are in place to deal with incidents. A very small number of parents, carers and students who responded to the Ofsted survey are not fully satisfied with the school's response. Students understand clearly how to assess situations for any potential risk and benefit from interesting role-play sessions delivered by the police on the nature of bullying and the forms it can take, including racist, homophobic and gender based bullying.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a relentless focus on improving achievement for all students and sets high standards. In recognition of the need to update teaching and learning techniques, a successful professional development programme is in place. The quality of teaching is monitored regularly and the school has a very clear understanding of what constitutes an effective lesson. As a result of rigorous self-assessment and performance management that is linked well to training, the proportion of teaching that is good or better has increased significantly. The majority of staff support the higher expectations and are keen to implement improvements.

The governing body provides a good level of challenge and support for the school. Members ensure a clear strategy is in place for the governing body's future development and monitor well its performance against targets. They also ensure that arrangements for students' safeguarding meet regulatory requirements. Swift action by the school following last year's lower examination outcomes resulted in immediate and effective action to redress the situation.

The capacity of leadership across the school is improving. Staff who have been appointed to new leadership roles in the core subjects are supported well by the headteacher. They have introduced effective strategies to address issues. The school has a good capacity to make further improvements.

The curriculum is very well matched to the needs of students. At Key Stage 3 they benefit from an emphasis on developing study skills, and they enjoy the integrated humanities projects that help to ensure a smooth transition from primary school. In Year 9, students

are now able to start Key Stage 4 work, where appropriate. They receive good guidance on the wide range of options open to them. The curriculum is enhanced by very effective partnerships with primary schools and post-16 providers. A high proportion of students continue in education or training after leaving school. Enrichment opportunities are extensive and well attended. Curriculum planning for moral, social, spiritual and cultural education is impressive, with detailed schemes of work for each year group and effective use of local, national and international links.

Equality of opportunity is well promoted. For example, the high proportion of students with disabilities and special educational needs are well integrated into the school. Students show respect for each other and those from different cultures.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



13 July 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Woodchurch High School Engineering College, Wirral CH49 7NG

I am writing to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection of your school. Thank you for helping us to find our way around and for giving us your views.

We agree with what many of you told us, that this is a good school. You enjoy most of your lessons and work hard. As a result the standard of your work and the progress you make are generally good. Examination results dipped slightly in English and mathematics in 2011 but are projected to be much better for the current Year 11. We were impressed by how well you know your targets and levels of progress and how teachers guide you on how to improve further. The vast majority of you behave very well and are a credit to yourselves and the school. You enjoy the wide range of subjects you can take, especially at Key Stage 4, and all the extra activities you can take part in. It was good to see how many of you gain prizes and awards for your efforts and achievements. We think the school is very well led. In order to improve it even further, we have asked the headteacher to ensure that:

- you are well involved in your learning in all lessons and that there are frequent checks on the amount of learning taking place
- target-setting and progress monitoring are used effectively to ensure you and your teachers strive for you to reach your full potential in all subjects.

You can help by trying your best at all times and telling staff when you need more help.

Yours sincerely

Sue Harrison
Her Majesty's Inspector

St Mary's Catholic College

Wallasey Village, Wallasey, Merseyside, CH45 3LN

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although significant improvements have been made in the quality of teaching, overall it remains too variable and requires further improvement.
- The quality of assessment within and across curriculum areas is inconsistent.
- The sixth form requires improvement to the curriculum because although it has considerable strengths and most students achieve well, there is too much variation in the outcomes of different courses.

The school has the following strengths

- Attainment has risen sharply over the last two years so that students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, achieve well across a wide range of subjects.
- Pastoral care is very well developed. Support for students whose circumstances make them vulnerable is excellent. The Bosco Centre provides strong support for learning.
- Behaviour is good and students feel safe. One of the college's continuing strengths is the high quality of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Senior leaders have reacted promptly and effectively to recommendations in the last inspection report and have improved many aspects of the college's work. Staff have responded well to higher expectation and challenge. Nevertheless, the college is accurate in its self-evaluation that teaching still requires improvement.
- There is excellent and exciting teaching in some departments such as English, the performing arts, social science and physical education.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 46 lessons taught by 46 teachers. Several of these were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with students from all year groups, members of the governing body, senior and middle leaders and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 71 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), the most recent school survey of parental views and spoke to individual parents .
- They observed the college’s work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the college’s data on tracking students’ progress, planning and monitoring documentation and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Judith Straw, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Christine Addison	Additional inspector
Lenford White	Additional inspector
Derek Barnes	Additional inspector
Bernard Robinson	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary's Catholic College is much larger than the average sized secondary school. It has two specialisms. One is for the performing arts and the other is for applied learning.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is high and includes over one third of the students on roll.
- The great majority of students are of White British heritage with only a small number coming from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of students supported by school action is well above average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The college meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A small proportion of Key Stage 4 students follow vocational part-time courses at the Metropolitan College.
- The college holds several awards in recognition of its work. These include the Artsmark Gold, Healthy School status and the Sportsmark.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of lessons that are good or better by:
 - requiring all teachers to more precisely match learning tasks to the needs of all students
 - providing more opportunities in lessons where students are excited and engaged through problem-solving and working independently
 - ensuring that all department planning provides opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of marking and assessment by:
 - making sure that all students know how well they are doing and are aware of what they need to do to improve their learning
 - encouraging students to act upon and make improvements to their work in response to teachers' marking
 - making sure that students in all year groups know their targets and how they are going to achieve them
 - ensuring that teachers' feedback to students through marking and assessment is consistently good across all classes and that best practice is shared across all departments.
- Implement the recommendations from the sixth-form review of the curriculum to ensure that it is better suited to promote the achievement of all students.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils **is good**

- Students enter the college with attainment that is significantly below that of students nationally. During the last two years the pace of improvement has been such that students' progress has accelerated rapidly, particularly in English and mathematics. Attainment at the end of Year 11 in 2012 was just above average with students making better than expected progress in both English and mathematics. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at A*-C including English and mathematics has risen from 40% in 2010 to 60% in 2012. This is why achievement is now good.
- Past underachievement in mathematics has been overcome so that progress is accelerating beyond national expectations and is continually improving.
- Until recently, girls have achieved less well than boys but this gap has narrowed significantly so that girls are achieving well. Similarly, the gap between the achievement of all students, and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium, has narrowed considerably.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs receive a wide range of support which enables them to make good progress and achieve well.
- Students develop good skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and literacy. National poetry day fell during the inspection and many classes spent part of the day in the library sharing their poetry with each other and learning how poems illuminate human experience.
- Students work well in teams to solve problems. Students following the applied learning courses achieve well. For example, students thrive in the atmosphere of the school's hair and beauty salon where the professional atmosphere has a positive impact on their self-confidence.
- Outcomes for students in the sixth form vary considerably. Students are most successful on AS level courses with achievement in drama, French and ICT being particularly strong.
- More students than average stay in education or training at age 16 and the retention rate for students in the sixth form is higher than average.

The quality of teaching **requires improvement**

- There is good and outstanding teaching in the college. Where this occurs teaching is exciting and students are totally involved in their learning. In the best lessons, learning is a true partnership between teachers and students. Probing questioning stimulates thinking and curiosity. Practical strategies and the effective use of pair and group work promote enjoyment and enable students to learn effectively. In many lessons, materials are relevant, engaging and challenging.
- Good teaching was seen during the inspection in the sixth form. However, over time teaching has not been strong enough to reduce the variation in outcomes for different students and courses.
- Students in the Bosco Centre receive additional support which enables them to achieve well. Similarly the literacy base is a well-used resource in which students are well-supported by staff.
- Where teaching needs improvement it is because lessons are too teacher-led so that they lose the attention of some students. The pace is slower and opportunities are missed to extend learning by setting different tasks for students of differing abilities. Some lessons lack direction and challenge and planning does not always extend the more able.
- As yet, not all departments are providing enough opportunities for students to improve numeracy across the curriculum and more needs to be done to encourage communication skills, particularly in mathematics and science lessons.
- There is considerable inconsistency in the usefulness and frequency of day-to-day marking. Too often marking is cursory at best and not enough advice is offered to students on how to improve their work, both in the main school and in the sixth form.

- Teachers are not making enough reference to students' targets in their planning and marking so that students are not fully aware of what their targets are and how they will reach them.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students in all year groups report that they feel safe and free from all types of bullying and harassment. Students say that they are taught how to keep themselves safe.
- Students, parents and most staff agree that behaviour over time is good, both in lessons and during mid-morning breaks and lunch time. On occasion, when there is weakness in teaching, there is some low-level disruption. The college deals well with any lapses in good behaviour. The number of school exclusions is low and falling each year.
- Students treat each other with respect and are generally polite to each other and adults.
- Successful strategies have ensured that attendance is steadily improving and is in line with national figures and sometimes above.
- Sixth-form students consider the pastoral care they receive to be excellent. They take full advantage of the many opportunities to contribute to their local and wider communities and value the responsibilities entrusted to them. Students have a strongly developed moral and social conscience stemming from the college ethos. Sixth-form students respect others and their differences and are united in their desire to improve the lives of those less fortunate than themselves.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders responded promptly and effectively to the findings of the last inspection. Leadership and management at all levels are good and have led to significant improvements in the achievement of students. Performance in mathematics has improved significantly and good provision in English has been strengthened.
- Inadequate teaching has been eradicated and the college has improved the quality of teaching across the board. The focus now is on increasing the proportion of good and outstanding teaching using a range of strategies, including 'learning walks', staff training days and twilight training sessions. Staff have been reorganised into curriculum areas offering mutual encouragement and support. The college thus has effective professional development strategies to promote improvement in teaching and learning.
- New and robust systems of performance management and a much stronger focus on the tracking of individual students' progress in every subject and in every year group have been established. As a result, teachers are made accountable for the progress students make in their classes from the start of Year 7.
- Middle leaders have a clear view of their roles and what is expected of them. Middle managers have increased their skills in monitoring the performance of students and are setting higher expectations of what can be achieved.
- The college can exemplify exactly how the pupil premium funds are spent and show that the investment in provision for English and mathematics has raised attainment and boosted students' achievement.
- The curriculum continues to be a strength in terms of the variety and appropriateness of courses offered. The college provides a good balance of academic and vocational courses to suit the needs of different students, although plans to develop the science curriculum are still being implemented. A wide range of off-site provision broadens the range of pathways offered to better meet the needs of individual students. Students following these vocational courses achieve well. In addition, the curriculum promotes good behaviour and contributes to the strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.
- In the sixth form the curriculum is being reviewed in order to increase the achievement of students and to ensure that students follow courses in which they can maximise their potential

and achieve well.

- The college enjoys a good relationship with most parents who responded very positively in the most recent surveys and to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire, Parent View. The great majority is pleased with what the college provides and would recommend it to others.
- The local authority has provided strong and useful support including training for middle leaders, members of the governing body and support in ensuring that the pupil premium is invested to give maximum benefit.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - governors support the college effectively and have good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses
 - since the last inspection, governors have undertaken training to increase their skills in monitoring the work of the college and holding leaders to account
 - governors undertake their statutory duties effectively and have ensured that safeguarding requirements are fully met.

What inspection judgements mean

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

School details

Unique reference number	105110
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	404966

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
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	1636
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	323
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Mossman
Headteacher	Anthony Boyle
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2010
Telephone number	0151 6397531
Fax number	0151 2014501
Email address	schooloffice@stmaryscollege.wirral.sch.uk

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Orrets Meadow School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105140
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	377182
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2012
Lead inspector	Brian Padgett HMI

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barry Bourne
Acting Headteacher	Morag Kophamel
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2009
School address	Chapelhill Road Moreton Wirral CH46 9QQ
Telephone number	0151 6788070
Fax number	0151 6774663
Email address	schooloffice@orretsmeadow.wirral.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Brian Padgett
Paul Edmondson

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 12 lessons. They saw nine teachers teach. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, governors, a representative of the local authority and staff. The inspection team received information about the school's partnerships with secondary schools by email and telephone. Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at pupils' exercise books and a range of documentation, including that on safeguarding and pupils' progress. The results of questionnaire returns from staff and pupils were analysed, along with 49 responses from the parents' questionnaire.

Information about the school

Orrets Meadow is a community special school for pupils of primary-school age with specific learning difficulties. Admissions to the school are controlled by the local authority. Most of the pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Their specific learning difficulties include dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit, dyscalculia, Aspergers Syndrome and autism. About three-quarters of pupils have at least one additional learning difficulty, such as social, emotional and behavioural difficulty and/or speech, language or communication difficulties. Twenty-seven of the Year 4 pupils attend the school for one year as part of a new pilot programme aimed at raising the literacy skills of the lowest-attaining pupils in the authority. These pupils, whose special educational needs are identified at the school action plus stage, are admitted on the basis of their reading and writing performance at the end of Key Stage 1.

Most pupils enter the school during Year 4 or Year 5 and stay for an average of seven terms. Most then transfer to mainstream secondary schools. However, some pupils are at the school for a longer or shorter period and a minority transfer to other special schools when they leave Orrets Meadow. A few return to mainstream primary schools. Occasionally, a pupil will spend his or her Year 3 or 7 at the school.

Many pupils, nearly a half, are known to be eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are boys and almost all are of White British heritage.

Since the previous inspection the school has been led by an acting headteacher, nominally for three days each week. She is also the headteacher of a nearby primary school.

The school has Healthy School status and the Basic Skills Quality Award.

The school is the base for Orrets Meadow Services, which provides outreach, training, assessment and advice services for pupils and students with specific learning difficulties within Wirral schools. This service was not inspected.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	1

Key Findings

- Orrets Meadow is an outstanding school that is extremely successful in providing for pupils who are experiencing difficulty with their reading and writing. In the relatively short time pupils are at the school they make remarkable progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. Moreover, they grow in confidence and in self-belief and, by Year 6, they are in a strong position to succeed at secondary school. Parents and carers think extremely highly of what the school achieves and how it involves them.
- Teaching is of the highest quality and is never less than consistently good. Teachers are expert in teaching reading and writing. Staff in general are extremely effective in encouraging pupils' personal development, leading to outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Building on existing success, there is scope to enhance pupils' learning even further by encouraging them to make a bigger contribution to lessons.
- The rules covering the admission of pupils to the school have changed since the previous inspection. Exceptional leadership by the acting headteacher and her team has ensured the school has adapted very successfully to the increase in the range and complexity of pupils' learning needs and to ensuring a very effective start for the Year 4 pilot programme. The curriculum is very well designed to meet pupils' needs and is of excellent quality. The performance of staff is monitored very thoroughly and the school has developed an outstanding capacity to sustain excellence.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and for most, very good. Pupils feel very safe at the school and have exceptional confidence in their teachers. The admission of pupils with additional social, emotional and behavioural difficulties has caused the school to develop strategies to support such pupils. Good progress is being made but there is some improvement needed to eradicate occasional disruption to lessons. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is high, above that for mainstream primary schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop strategies to help pupils with additional social, emotional and behavioural difficulties manage their behaviour in order to maximise their learning and avoid disrupting the learning of others.
- Increase the proportion of teaching judged outstanding through the greater involvement of pupils by, where appropriate, encouraging pupils to make a bigger contribution to lessons, to work cooperatively with other pupils and to be given more choices in their work.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment in basic skills that are low for their age, frequently several years below that of their peers. For pupils on the Year 4 pilot, attainment in reading and writing is among the lowest within the local authority at the end of Key Stage 1, at age seven. All pupils, regardless of their starting points and their additional special educational needs, make outstanding progress. For example, pupils on the Year 4 pilot have, on average, already made 17 months improvement in their reading age from September. Their parents are delighted. Pupils' progress in lessons was never less than good. They responded well to the precision teaching of literacy. Pupils admitted to Orrets Meadow in Years 4, 5 and 6 with statements of special educational needs also make remarkable progress. Their progress exceeds that for pupils with statements generally, regularly being within the top 25% of such pupils nationally. So much progress is made in learning the basic skills that, despite the relatively short time pupils spend at the school, they frequently exceed the progress expected of all pupils across the whole of Key Stage 2. Although most pupils remain slightly below the average in reading by the time they leave the school, nearly all have the necessary basic skills to cope with the demands of secondary schooling successfully. A minority attain the national expectation of Level 4 of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics. Of equal importance to the school, parents and the receiving secondary schools is the growth in pupils' confidence and self-esteem. From being pupils who are reluctant to try they become pupils who are keen to have a go. For example, Year 6 pupils with a wide range of learning difficulties persevered exceptionally well to complete the end of Key Stage 2 tests, including challenging reading assignments, independently.

Quality of teaching

Teachers are expert teachers of reading and writing, with a deep knowledge of teaching literacy to pupils with specific learning difficulties that has built-up over many years. The morning sessions are devoted to the systematic teaching of basic skills, including the development of speaking and listening, using a wide variety of strategies to interest and engage pupils, such as through games and competitions. All aspects of literacy and numeracy are taught precisely and consistently and backed

up by homework. Expectations are high and this can be seen in pupils' exercise books, where pupils' work is very well presented and marked. Teachers call on an excellent range of resources. They make very good use of technology, using interactive whiteboards, and pupils frequently use laptops, for example, to research topics. As a special school, there is a high level of individual support for pupils and teaching assistants play a very important role in class and about school, particularly during small group work when teachers plan to meet pupils' additional special educational needs. Pastoral care is excellent and this is another aspect of the work of the school where teaching assistants make a major contribution.

Outstanding relationships are a keynote for the school, quickly established. Pupils and parents and carers recorded 100% faith in the quality of teaching in questionnaires. Praise and celebration of achievement occurs frequently. Rigorous assessment of the progress of individual pupils enables teachers to set ambitious and realistic targets for pupils and they are very adept at ensuring pupils and their parents and carers are well-informed about next steps.

The quality of teaching observed was never less than good. Just occasionally, teachers missed opportunities for some pupils, whose confidence was high, to play a larger part in lessons, whether in reading for others, for example, or in playing a lead role in managing a task.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

All parents and carers responding to the parents' questionnaire felt their children were safe at school. Virtually all the pupils felt safe. Behaviour is very good. Pupils enjoy school and show care and respect for each other. They do not feel bullied in any way and they have innate trust in the teachers to help them should they require it. Pupils have a clear and developing sense of right, wrong and fairness. As the school has admitted a growing proportion of pupils with specific conditions, such as attention deficit and autism, and as more pupils have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties as additional needs, managing pupils' behaviour and helping pupils manage their own behaviour have become more important. Pupils and their parents and carers acknowledge occasional disruption of learning in lessons. The school is working hard and successfully to become more expert in this aspect of the school's work, including by working closely with a partner special school for pupils with behavioural difficulties. It has a clearly understood set of rewards and sanctions. Nevertheless, as evidenced by a small number of fixed-term exclusions, school leaders acknowledge that further progress is needed and they have developed plans of good quality to achieve this.

Attendance is very good, above the average for mainstream primary schools and well above that for special schools. Punctuality is excellent, as the vast majority of pupils arrive by school bus.

Leadership and management

The learning needs of pupils have changed significantly since the previous inspection as the introduction of new criteria has opened admission to pupils with more complex additional needs. Also, the Year 4 literacy pilot has introduced a complete new cohort of pupils to Orrets Meadow. When the long-serving headteacher retired nearly three years ago, the governing body was unable to recruit a permanent replacement. Working with the local authority, the governing body was successful in

securing the part-time appointment of a headteacher from a nearby primary school as acting headteacher. It is to the great credit of the school, particularly to the acting headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff that, despite such challenging circumstances, the school has gone from strength to strength, meeting every new challenge with success. By the very nature of the pupils' outstanding achievement the school plays an important role in promoting equality, narrowing the gap in achievement between these pupils and others, and tackling discrimination. The existing strengths of the teaching recorded by the previous inspection have been maintained and developed further to meet the more complex needs of pupils entering the school. Staff performance management and professional development have contributed to the school's improvement. School self-evaluation and the tracking of performance are very rigorous. Staff are committed to the school and keen to take on leadership roles. Leadership is distributed effectively at all levels. The governing body commands an impressive range of expertise and experience and has good parent representation. It is well-informed.

The arrangements for safeguarding are rigorous and are of the highest quality. The curriculum is outstanding and exceptionally well designed to meet the pupils' learning needs. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. As a consequence, despite unpromising starts to their primary education, pupils are well-equipped with excellent attitudes and values for secondary education and, indeed, for life.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



16 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Orrets Meadow School, Wirral, CH46 9QQ

You may recall when inspectors from Ofsted spent two days in your school. It was the week when the Year 6 pupils were doing their national test papers in English and mathematics, the SATs. I am writing to you to tell you how we judged your school. First, I must thank you for your help. We learned a lot about the school from watching you in lessons, reading your questionnaire returns and from talking to you.

All of you come to Orrets Meadow because you were having difficulty learning to read and write in your local primary schools. As reading and writing are so important for your future it is really important you catch up. That is exactly what you do. You make truly remarkable progress in reading, writing and mathematics. We also saw how much you grew in confidence because you are learning so well. Your exercise books had writing of high quality that you can be proud of.

The reasons behind your success are straightforward enough to understand although hard to achieve. You are taught by expert teachers of reading and writing in a school where all the staff work extremely hard to make sure you are safe and well cared for. They give you back your confidence. Also, your school is exceptionally well led and run by Mrs Kophamel and her team of leaders and managers, each committed to making the school even better.

We were able to help, by making two recommendations. The first is for teachers to let you, the pupils, make a bigger contribution to lessons, to give you more opportunities to have your say and show what you are capable of. We can only suggest this if you are already learning really well and already show a strong sense of responsibility. The second is for staff to become even more expert in helping those few pupils who find managing their behaviour difficult. Although your parents and carers were 100% behind the school, they, and some of you, worried occasionally that lessons were sometimes disrupted.

Most of you will leave to go onto secondary high schools. We know from talking to those schools that Orrets Meadow pupils do well there and put their new skills and confidence to good use. That was no surprise to us.

Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Brian Padgett
Her Majesty's Inspector

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Meadowside School

Pool Lane, Woodchurch, Wirral, CH49 5LA

Inspection dates 3–4 October 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Most students make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. Many make outstanding progress in their personal development. Progress is equally good for different groups.
- The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection, particularly for older students. They are able to achieve external awards in a range of subjects which are well matched to their interests and abilities.
- Overall the quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Reading, writing and mathematical skills are practised and developed in meaningful contexts by students in lessons across the curriculum.
- Students' behaviour is good and rarely disrupts learning. Where incidents of poor behaviour do occur, they are managed very well to keep students safe and on task.
- The school is well led and managed. The very effective monitoring of students' progress linked to performance management of teachers has ensured the school has continued to improve since the previous inspection.
- The sixth form is good. The varied curriculum prepares students very well for the next stage in their lives with the vast majority of students making successful moves to further education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently take into account prior learning. Consequently, they do not always plan work which is matched to the abilities of individual students to ensure they make the best progress they possibly can in every lesson.
- A very small minority of parents feel they are given insufficient information about what their children are learning. Inspectors agree that this can make it difficult for parents to feel able to support their child's progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. All teachers, tutors and higher-level teaching assistants were observed teaching.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, members of the governing body, the school nurse and a group of students.
- Discussions were also held with a representative from the local authority and with two parents.
- The inspectors took account of the six responses on the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and of the telephone conversations with two parents and one written submission. They reviewed the 35 staff questionnaires completed.
- Inspectors scrutinised many documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, governing body minutes, external adviser reports. Records relating to students' progress data and accreditation, safeguarding and behaviour were also examined.

Inspection team

Hilary Ward, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
John Ashley	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Meadowside is a secondary special school for students who have a range of complex needs including moderate, severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties. All have a statement of special educational needs.
- Over 40% of students also present with autistic spectrum disorders and this proportion has increased since the previous inspection.
- A third of students are in the post-16 or sixth form department.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. There are a very small number of students from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Students in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form access courses at Wirral Metropolitan College, the Vocational College Liverpool, Wirral Youth Theatre and at Woodchurch High School, supported by Meadowside School staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and increase the rate of students' progress so that both are consistently outstanding by:
 - ensuring on-going assessment is used effectively to build on prior learning
 - identifying learning outcomes and tasks that ensure challenge for each individual student in every lesson.
- Improve communication with parents to better inform them about and involve them in their child's learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students with a wide range of needs and abilities all achieve well. Students say they learn a lot in lessons and enjoy what the school has to offer. This view extends to off-site provision.
- Rates of progress can vary depending on the special educational needs of individual students. For instance, some students with more profound and multiple learning difficulties experience periods of hospitalisation or illness which can interrupt their learning. Those with autistic spectrum disorders may have occasions when they find it difficult to engage in lessons. However, strong and supportive relationships between staff and students help to overcome barriers to learning.
- The school makes very effective use of a wide range of assessment materials to track students' progress and set challenging targets for them over time. Careful analysis of their data by school leaders shows that there are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups or in different subjects and those eligible for the pupil premium are closing the gap.
- Students make good progress with their reading and writing and practise their skills across the curriculum. Higher-ability students are able to use their reading skills to research for information on the internet, for example when making a shopping list of items to stock a garden in a horticulture lesson.
- Similarly, students learn how to put their mathematical skills to practical use for their future lives. In a cookery lesson, students across the age range were encouraged to weigh out ingredients independently. In a sixth form business studies lesson students worked out the amount of interest they would pay on a credit card loan to decide if this was a good way to borrow the money they needed for a mini enterprise.
- Students make best progress in lessons where they are challenged to work independently and where work is well-matched to their individual abilities, but this is not yet consistently achieved in all lessons. They respond well to opportunities to evaluate how well they think they have done in lessons and many have a good understanding of the progress they are making towards their targets.
- Students look forward to progressing to the sixth form. The school has improved the curriculum on offer since the previous inspection to better match individual needs and interests and students are very well prepared for their future lives. As a result, all students leave with a range of external awards and most transfer to colleges where they have enjoyed attending courses during their time in the sixth form.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching across the school, including in the sixth form, is mainly good and some teachers deliver consistently outstanding lessons. In these lessons, work is well-matched to individual needs and teachers employ a range of techniques and change activities frequently to maintain interest and engage students in their learning.
- However, in a few lessons, particularly where teachers are new to the school or are teaching a new subject, students' prior learning is not assessed rigorously enough. This results in intended learning which is not always well enough matched to the next steps they need to make.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are particularly skilful in developing communication through sign and visual routines and by developing their own knowledge about the use of communication aids. They are very well supported by therapists and the school nurse to ensure students' well-being so that they are ready and able to learn.
- During lessons, teachers question students well to ensure their understanding and to provide additional support where necessary. They use visual resources to demonstrate difficult concepts, such as using different sized balls to show the movement of the earth round the sun in a science lesson about seasons.
- Effective use is made of teaching assistants in lessons, although occasionally they might be better deployed so that more individualised work is given to maximise each student's progress.

- In the sixth form, the curriculum ensures students develop the knowledge and skills they will need in their future lives. Teachers devise lessons to help students understand how to manage their money, grow and cook their food, how to keep fit and ensure their personal hygiene, for example.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' behaviour and attitudes in lessons and around school are good. Students want to do well and enjoy working for their merits and credits.
- Students benefit from the very good relationships they have with teaching and support staff. As a result they make outstanding progress in their personal development. They build their confidence and independence and make great strides in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Behaviour management is consistent and highly effective. This was observed during the inspection when an incident occurred during a lesson. Staff dealt with the situation quickly and calmly to ensure other students were not affected. All staff are well trained to support students and help them develop self-management skills.
- The school has introduced a new system for analysing behaviour incidents and the use of the resulting information is beginning to impact on behaviour support planning.
- Students say they feel safe in school. They are very confident that adults will deal with any issues swiftly so that bullying, they say, is not a problem. They learn how to keep themselves safe and can give examples such as using goggles for science experiments, opening cooker doors safely and safe use of the internet.
- Off-site learning is managed safely through high quality risk assessments and monitoring by staff who support students on placements. Consequently, students respond positively and their behaviour is reported as good.
- Students are very respectful and supportive of each other. They work cooperatively and share; as one student said, 'We're all a team here'.

The leadership and management are good

- All staff and governors at Meadowside share a desire to continuously improve standards for the students. At the moment, for example, they are seeking ways to improve the learning environment for students with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Although these students achieve as well as others, it is the case that the facilities and resources for them are not currently at the same standard as the rest of the school.
- Additional funds available through the pupil premium or the 16-19 bursary scheme are used thoughtfully to improve equality of access to experiences such as extended day activities, residential or additional specialist support.
- Senior leaders and managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. A recent re-structure has strengthened the management team and provided opportunities for middle managers to develop new leadership skills.
- Improvement planning takes account of national guidance and changes to ensure that the school maintains its good qualities. Very effective performance management of teachers and teaching assistants is well linked to school improvement plans and continuing professional development.
- The curriculum has improved significantly since the previous inspection, especially for older students. It offers different pathways which engage and motivate students' differing needs and interests and ensures they all leave school with qualifications which reflect these. The very good partnerships the school enjoys with alternative providers enhances the curriculum on offer still further.
- Partnerships with a range of other professionals and agencies ensure the very varied medical and therapeutic needs of students are well met so that they can obtain maximum benefit from

their time in school.

- The local authority has an accurate view of the school and rightly provides only very light touch support.
- Links with parents are generally very positive. Parents feel able to approach the school with concerns about their children and are appreciative of the support they receive. A very small minority of parents expressed the view that they would like more consistent information about what their children are learning in school and the inspectors agreed with this.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body effectively support and robustly challenge the school.
 - Members of the governing body ensure good arrangements for safeguarding students.
 - Governors have a reasonably good knowledge of the day-to-day running of the school, although this is restricted somewhat to those members of governing body who are able to visit more frequently.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
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School details

Unique reference number	105133
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	400758

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Geoffrey Gubb
Headteacher	Paula Wareing
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2010
Telephone number	0151 678 7711
Fax number	0151 678 9155
Email address	headteacher@meadowside.wirral.sch.uk

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Foxfield School

Douglas Drive, Moreton, Wirral, CH46 6BT

Inspection dates

31 October–1 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All students start here with levels of ability much lower than most of those in mainstream schools.
- From these very low starting points the great majority make progress that is good or better in all areas of the school.
- Good progress continues throughout their time at the school because the quality of teaching is good. Teachers produce lessons that are interesting and well matched to students' needs.
- The adults skilfully communicate with the students who cannot speak and listen easily. This helps their progress in literacy and reading to be faster than expected nationally.
- Students' behaviour is good and improving rapidly. The management of behaviour by staff is getting better because of the excellent work of the behaviour management team.
- Students enjoy school and they feel very safe.
- The sixth form is good, and the wide range of courses and experiences for students aged 14 to 19 is outstanding. They gain qualifications and certificates from their studies.
- By the time they leave, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and they are very well prepared for moving on after school.
- The contribution of senior leaders and managers has greatly improved the school since the last inspection and is now good. Consequently, the quality of teaching and students' achievement has also improved and is almost always at least good and sometimes outstanding.
- The work of middle managers has also become much more effective; some features of their work are outstanding.
- The governing body provides effective support. Its members know what is going on in the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A very few lessons require improvement. This is the case when teachers do not give students enough to do or when students have to share too many activities and, as a result, waste time waiting to take turns.
- The plans for improving the school and the teachers' planning of lessons do not make it clear enough what students will learn and how their achievements will improve.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors spent around four hours in classrooms observing six lessons and making a number of short visits to classes. They watched students leave school in the afternoon and observed lunchtimes and playtimes and the arrangements for lunchtime clubs.
- Students' work and their learning records were studied. The inspectors listened to students read.
- The inspectors spoke with students during lessons and informally around the school to gain their views and opinions.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other members of the senior team, members of the middle management team including subject leaders, teachers, other workers, including the school nurse, and the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone conversation was held with a senior manager from the local authority.
- The views of staff were noted through meeting with them and by scrutinising their returned questionnaires.
- The inspection took account of the views of parents through viewing the 12 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and by looking at the surveys previously carried out by the school with parents.
- The work of the school was observed and documents concerning self-evaluation, planning, safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and students' progress were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Terry McKenzie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Holmes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Foxfield admits students with a wide range of special educational needs with the majority experiencing severe learning difficulties. For some, their needs are profound and most have multiple barriers to learning including physical difficulties, autism and behavioural difficulties.
- Most students join the school at the beginning of their secondary education and continue to beyond the statutory school leaving age, but they can enrol at any time from 11 to 19. Almost half are known to be eligible for the pupil premium and this is very high compared to most schools nationally.
- There are slightly more boys than girls and the great majority come from White British backgrounds. All have a statement of special educational needs.
- Since the last inspection changes have been made to the middle management team.
- The governing body is at the very early stages of discussing with the Department for Education a possible relocation to new premises.
- Foxfield gained the Sports Mark and renewed its Investors in People status in 2010, the Arts Mark (Gold) in 2011 and an Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) award in 2012. The school helped the local authority gain the Award for Business Excellence in 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Encourage all students always to make good or better progress in lessons by:
 - making sure teachers' planning identifies exactly what they want their students to learn and not just the activities the students will complete
 - ensuring students are given enough to do in the time allocated and that they are given more work they can do for themselves, so that their time is not wasted
 - making sure that the school's plans for improvement make it clear how the intended actions will improve students' achievements.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From very low starting points students make good progress throughout their time at Foxfield. For some, progress is outstanding and this is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.
- Good progress is maintained because the good teaching constantly challenges students to do their best. Students are set learning targets that are above the levels expected by schools for students with these kinds of learning difficulties. An example of this was observed in an outstanding lesson where students with very profound difficulties were using a parachute as a sensory stimulus. Clear targets challenged each student and they were given activities that helped them to move on in their learning. Consequently, they were all highly involved in the lesson; they all contributed and demonstrated great enjoyment.
- Students make good progress in English and mathematics because adults all use the same kinds of methods when helping students, including those in the sixth form. In reading, for example, the consistent use of phonics (the sounds that letters make) helps boys and girls to learn to read well. Students apply their reading skills successfully in other areas, such as in a sixth form lesson where they were seen undertaking research using computers. In mathematics students make good progress in developing the skills they need for using numbers in everyday life.
- The good work of the school with younger students prepares them well for the later stages of education. Older students take part in exciting courses and gain qualifications. They have extended work placements and residential holidays that bring them regularly into contact with different people and communities. Thus, they make great gains in their personal and social developments.
- Students known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress and evidence is emerging that, for some, their progress is improving rapidly and they are closing the gap with others.
- Where students' progress is not good it is because students are too passive, such as when they are waiting to take turns in a group. Sometimes they share activities and this wastes valuable learning time. Very occasionally, students finish their work early and have nothing more to do.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and the large majority of lessons observed during the inspection were good or outstanding. Teachers set work for students which is well matched to their needs and abilities. They use the information from students' previous lessons to set targets that are designed to move them on as quickly as possible in their learning. Students' records of previous work show that they make good progress throughout their time in the school.
- In outstanding lessons activities are very well matched to students' needs and abilities, little time is wasted and, here, students make rapid progress.
- Teachers regularly undertake training and attend professional courses in order to improve their teaching skills. For example, they now make good use of the information that shows students' progress so that they quickly spot where students might be beginning to fall behind and take steps to remedy it. This is a great improvement since the last inspection.
- Teachers gather the information about students' progress regularly and share it with school leaders so that they can identify trends and patterns in teaching and learning. Teachers also keep records of students' achievements in class. These show clearly how students have moved on in their learning and in their personal development.

- Usually, teachers provide interesting things for students to do. Teaching assistants are managed well to support learning so that lessons run briskly. Occasionally, students are required to take turns in activities and this wastes time.
- Students benefit greatly from the skilful use of technology by adults. These include using machines to help students to talk, signing, pictures to represent words and using mobility aids. Students, therefore, have every chance to join in despite their communication difficulties, low levels of sight or hearing, or problems in moving about.
- Adults skilfully attend to students' personal and medical needs so that any lost learning time is minimised. Often these jobs occur while students are engaged in lesson activities.
- Students' self-esteem is strengthened through encouraging them to take part in physical activities such as swimming and using the trampoline. These continuing small triumphs give students the confidence to join in and gain further successes.
- Where teaching requires improvement it is because students' individual needs in learning are not well met or there is too little for students to do. Occasionally, too much is done by the adults instead of the students, and the school is working on changing this.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- On occasions, the behaviour demonstrated in lessons is outstanding. Where behaviour is less than good it is because activities are led by adults too much and there is not enough for students to do.
- Improving the management of students' behaviour by staff was identified as an area for improvement through performance management. The headteacher has provided a behaviour management team for staff in order to help them develop their skills. As a result, students' behaviour is improving. This is demonstrated by the reducing number of recorded incidents. Furthermore, no students have recently been excluded.
- Following on from training of their own, staff are introducing the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL). With the new initiatives being devised by the behaviour management team in the school students learn to understand more about their feelings and emotions. Therefore, they can take some responsibility for their behaviour.
- The school takes every step to try to ensure that nobody is left out, despite the reluctance of some to join in with groups, such as those with autistic spectrum conditions.
- Many students learn to understand about right and wrong. Some develop high moral standards, helping their colleagues in class and with everyday tasks in the school. Where they can be, students are polite and welcoming to visitors.
- By the time that students move into the areas of study for the 14 to 19-year-olds, and aided by the mainly good education that they receive, most show outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This increasing maturity allows students to learn outside of the school. They begin to develop the independence that they will need when they move on to the next stages of their lives.
- Students feel safe at school and this view is supported by parents and staff. They say that bullying does not feature here and any issues that arise are dealt with swiftly by staff.
- The school ensures that students are always safe through supervising them at all times. This extends to work experience and residential holidays, when school staff trained in safeguarding, first aid and any necessary personal care are present at all times.
- Attendance is above average compared with other special schools and is helped by managers keeping students on the school site as often as possible. For example, medical appointments are conducted in the school using the specialist facilities available.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management have improved since the last inspection and, although good overall, some is now outstanding.
- Outstanding management includes the development and use of the information systems that tell managers how well students are doing and that all are fully included in learning. Outstanding leadership is also shown by the behaviour management team who support the students and staff.
- Good management has led to rapid improvements in the quality of teaching through using performance management effectively.
- Good leadership has led to the numbers of physical interventions greatly reducing in the last two years, and students' above-average attendance has been maintained.
- The team of middle managers have improved students' learning, for example, by making sure that courses for the older students provide a more exciting range of opportunities and experiences. Furthermore, middle leaders ensure that all adults involved in developing students' reading, literacy and numeracy skills use the same methods. In mathematics staff use the correct mathematical language. This was witnessed in a lesson where staff made every effort to ensure that students used the correct words, such as 'we are *adding* the banana to the milk'.
- The headteacher's written evaluations of how the school is doing are accurate and lead to effective planning for the next steps. This shows that managers are capable of raising the quality of education even further. However, most planning fails to show the impact of new initiatives on students' achievements.
- The local authority appropriately supports Foxfield through the range of contracts and services that the school buys into. These include aspects of the school meals service and support from the human resources department.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The good governing body clearly understands the school's strengths and weaknesses. It supports and judges the work of the managers, for example, in ensuring that the pupil premium is properly used and that all requirements for safeguarding are met. The governing body works efficiently, with members each taking on an area of responsibility that helps them to get to know the school better. Members have set appropriate performance targets for the headteacher aimed at further improving the quality of teaching and students' achievement.

What inspection judgements mean

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School details

Unique reference number	105131
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	400757

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	123
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Martingell
Headteacher	Andre Baird
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2009
Telephone number	0151 6778555
Fax number	0151 6785480
Email address	headteacher@foxfield.wirral.sch.uk

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