

Woodchurch CofE Primary School

Inspection report

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

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Cretney
Headteacher	Mr Brian McGregor
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2007
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Introduction

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

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

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

Information about the school

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

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

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

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

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

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

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range of subjects.

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

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

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

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

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

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

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

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

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

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

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

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

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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

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

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

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

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

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

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

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

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



26 November 2009

Dear Pupils

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

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jennifer Platt

Lead inspector

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