

# Townfield Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131774
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	360322
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Garry Jones

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	507
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Edward Behan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Katherine Lee
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Townfield Lane Oxton, Birkenhead Merseyside CH43 2LH
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. In the maintained school 22 lessons were observed taught by 14 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, staff and two officers of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, assessment data, a range of policies, in particular those relating to safeguarding and reviewed 163 parental questionnaires together with questionnaires from staff and pupils.

- The progress made by pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics.
- The consistency of teaching and assessment in ensuring pupils make good progress.
- The effectiveness with which leadership and management at all levels have brought about improvements in provision and outcomes.

## Information about the school

This is a much larger than average sized school. Its pupils are predominantly of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below that found nationally. The proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities is below that found nationally, but the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school has a support base for hearing impaired pupils. There is a pre-school unit providing child care for children aged 2-4 together with a breakfast, after-school and a holiday club that are managed by the governing body. The school has gained a range of awards including Healthy School status, the Basic Skills Quality mark, the International School's award and Investors in People.

**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. It provides outstanding care, guidance and support for its pupils. The most vulnerable pupils are particularly well looked after and very effective use is made of a wide range of external agencies to meet their needs. The support for deaf pupils is outstanding, and as a result, they are effectively included in all aspects of school life. This reflects the exceptionally high level of attention that is paid to ensuring that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. The school is outstanding in its work to engage with parents and carers and to involve them in the education of their children and as a result, the overwhelming majority of parents and carers value highly the experiences their children receive. The warm and welcoming environment and the attentive support of all the staff ensure that pupils feel exceptionally safe within the school. Pupils know that there is always someone to turn to if they face difficulties. Pupils have an outstanding awareness of how to remain healthy. The overwhelming majority enjoy school, attend regularly and behave well.

The provision of childcare for young children in the Townfield extended day scheme (TEDS) is effective. Children enter the school with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They quickly settle in to the school and make outstanding progress in the very effective Early Years Foundation Stage. Whilst pupils now start Year 1 with skills that are considerably higher than the expected levels for their age, in previous years pupils entered Year 1 with skills that were broadly average. As a result, the above average attainment now being achieved by the end of Year 6 represents good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Progress is stronger in English than in mathematics and the school has identified the quality of teaching in mathematics as a priority for improvement. Whilst improvements have been made in the teaching of mathematics it is not yet as strong as the very effective teaching provided in English. Hence, progress in mathematics, although improving, is not yet as strong as that in English.

The progress made by pupils reflects the good teaching that they receive. Assessment is used well to set targets for pupils and to provide them with clear advice on how to improve their work. The performance of pupils is monitored closely and additional support provided effectively when required. The analysis of data at a whole-school level to inform planning for improvement is effective, though the school has identified that it requires further improvement if this is to become outstanding. The curriculum is well planned and an exciting creative curriculum is being developed to further enhance progress and the enjoyment of learning.

The school is very well led by an experienced headteacher, who has succeeded in promoting a clear vision for the development of an inclusive school that is shared by the staff and the governing body. There is clear evidence of improvement, for example, in attendance, the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the quality

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of teaching. The vision, rigorous systems for effective self-evaluation and track record of improvement show that there is good capacity for improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rate of progress in mathematics to match that in English by:
  - ensuring consistency in the challenge and pace of lessons
  - developing greater consistency in the use of assessment to inform teachers' planning.
- Refining the whole-school analysis of data on pupils' progress to further inform planning for improvement.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy school and their achievement is good. In lessons, pupils are engaged by their work, are keen to do well and make good progress. They apply themselves to tasks with enthusiasm whether working alone or in groups and behave well. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 3, pupils eagerly applied themselves to solving problems in the use of coins and checked their answers carefully. Pupils are eager to participate in lessons and respond well to questioning. They evaluate their own work and are well aware of what they need to focus on to reach their targets. In satisfactory lessons, the pace of learning slows, but pupils generally continue to behave well and apply themselves to their work.

Attainment on entry to the school has been broadly average in past years. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been above average for a number of years. In 2010, all groups of pupils achieved standards that were above the national average for similar pupils. Progress in English has been significantly above that found nationally over the last three years, but over the same period, progress in mathematics has been variable and is broadly average overall. The school has acted promptly to address this dip in mathematics and as a result, progress is again good overall, but remains better in English due to the very effective teaching of English. Progress in Key Stage 1 also dipped in 2010 which was related to staffing difficulties. These have been addressed and progress is now good. There is no variation in the progress made by groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including deaf pupils.

Behaviour is good in lessons and around school. Pupils are polite to each other, staff and visitors. They report that bullying is very rare and that incidents are dealt with promptly. Pupils make a good contribution to the development of the school through an effective school council, as ECO warriors and the healthy living gang. They willingly take on responsibilities as prefects, monitors, house captains and as play leaders. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils know right from wrong and know how to behave in a social and moral manner. For example, in an assembly a pupil pointed out that being a true friend meant stopping someone from doing wrong. Their cultural awareness is well developed through the curriculum and through links with schools in Russia, the Gambia and France. Pupils develop skills for their future life well. They have good levels of basic skills and are particularly adept at the use of information and communication technology (ICT). In addition, they are developing effective research and problem solving skills. The awareness of pupils of how to stay healthy is outstanding and

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they are keen to put their knowledge into practice with the healthy living gang taking a leading role in promoting good diet and exercise. Attendance is above average.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

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

## How effective is the provision?

The outstanding care, guidance and support are particular strengths of the school. There are very effective arrangements for transition into the school, between classes and into secondary school. There is excellent support for all pupils and they are confident that they have someone to turn to if they need support. Those with individual needs have their support planned carefully with the full involvement of their parents and carers and with very effective use of external agencies. There is extremely sensitive support for and monitoring of vulnerable pupils to ensure their involvement in the full range of school and extra-curricular activities.

The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons well. They use their evaluation of lessons to modify the planned activities to reflect what pupils have achieved or found difficult. This is a powerful tool, but such evaluation is not yet used consistently. A good range of activities is planned to meet the needs of the different abilities within each class. Teachers structure lessons carefully to maintain the pace of learning and are good at frequently drawing pupils' attention back to what they are learning. Effective use of ICT and the deployment of support assistants contribute to the good learning. The excellent support provided by teaching assistants to deaf children

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through signing ensures that they are given every opportunity to contribute to lessons. Assessment is regular and pupils receive detailed feedback on how to reach their targets. In a few lessons, planning is less effective and activities do not always fully engage the interest of pupils or challenge them sufficiently. In some others, activities are directed by the teacher for too long and pupils do not have sufficient time to engage in independent learning. In these lessons, the pace of learning slows and pupils make only satisfactory progress.

The curriculum is good. It meets the needs of pupils well and contributes to their personal development. A review of the Year 1 curriculum has resulted in an improved transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage and the continued development of independent learning skills. A clear focus on literacy, with individual or small group support when required, is reflected in the good progress made in English. The development of an exciting creative curriculum in which pupils develop their research and investigative skills is beginning to bring improvement. The teaching of sign language to all pupils reflects the focus on inclusion within the school. The curriculum is enriched well with the use of a range of visitors, trips and residential visits, including foreign trips. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities available through the after-school club. Many of these lead to accreditation with the Children's University. The provision within TEDS is of good quality. It provides a good range of activities; children are well cared for and enjoy their time in the centre.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and her senior colleagues have succeeded well in promoting a shared ambition for and commitment to the development of the school. There are good systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision. These are used effectively to carry out regular and rigorous self-evaluation that informs planning for improvement. The school improvement plan is effective. It has recently been revised with the school currently focusing on making success criteria more specific. Improvement efforts have already paid dividends, but the school is not complacent and knows that there are further improvements to bring about in teaching and learning if it is to become outstanding. The governing body is effective. It is actively involved in the process of monitoring and evaluation and in holding the school to account. There is a strong focus on safeguarding with a specific committee of the governing body established to regularly review provision. Procedures for safeguarding are good and are pursued rigorously with regular training for staff and guidance for pupils. A strong focus on equal opportunities with regular monitoring of the performance and participation of all groups is highly effective in

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ensuring that no group is disadvantaged and all achieve equally well. There is outstanding practice in working with parents and carers to enhance their contribution to their children's learning. Parents and carers are kept well informed of the progress of their children and are given advice on how to support their child through regular workshops. Some parents and carers are supported to gain qualifications as teaching assistants. There are extensive and effective links with partners to enhance provision. For example, links with other primary schools are used well to enrich the curriculum, with workshops for gifted and talented pupils and through work with visiting authors and workshops, such as African drumming. The development of community cohesion is good. An audit has been completed and with an effective range of activities to develop links with the local community and internationally. However, involvement in diverse communities at a national level are less well developed. The leadership and management of the childcare managed by the governing body are good.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly expected for their age, although the skills of those who have attended the pre-school setting tend to be higher. This reflects the good quality provision of childcare in the pre-school setting. The good quality interaction between adults and children extends the development of individual children well. The provision is effectively managed and close liaison with the coordinator of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures effective transition. The requirements for the registration of the provision are met.

For the past two years, children have left the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that have been above or significantly above those expected. This represents outstanding progress. This was not the case in earlier years. The provision is exceptionally well



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organised, providing children with every incentive to investigate and explore. The outdoor learning environment is used very well and contributes to children's delight in learning. Planning is very effective and builds on regular and detailed assessment of their progress. Adults are highly skilled at knowing when to extend children's learning with open questioning and when to allow them to work independently. Excellent attention to the well-being of the children ensures that they feel safe and develop high levels of confidence. The relationships with parents and carers are exceptionally strong and through regular communication and workshops they are actively involved in the education of their child. There is excellent leadership of the unit that has built a strong team. Effective processes of self-evaluation have resulted in a track record of strong improvement.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

The response of parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire was broadly average. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are happy with the school. They feel that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and prepared well for the future. They are content with the progress that their children are making, are happy with quality of teaching and feel that they are kept well informed. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about progress and the extent to which their child's individual needs are met. A few also felt that their views were not taken into account. Inspectors investigated the aspects raised through inspection activities and judge that pupils generally make good progress and that the needs of individuals are well met. Inspectors found that the school makes every effort to consult with parents and carers and to take account of their views.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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

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

The inspection team received 163 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 507 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	98	60	55	34	6	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	97	60	63	39	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	86	53	74	45	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	82	50	68	42	9	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	90	55	64	39	4	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	78	48	78	48	2	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	90	55	67	41	1	1	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	83	51	75	46	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	82	50	69	42	9	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	69	42	84	52	5	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	33	93	57	11	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	79	48	78	48	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	87	53	68	42	5	3	0	0

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

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

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

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



16 December 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Townfield Primary School, Birkenhead, CH43 2LH**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to me and my colleagues when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and listening to your views on the school.

We agree with you and your parents and carers that Townfield is a good school. You achieve standards at the end of Year 6 which are above the national average and this shows that you have made good progress. This is because the majority of teaching is good and some is outstanding. You make better progress in English than in mathematics. The subjects that you study are well planned and there is a good range of additional activities and visits to make learning exciting. The provision for the youngest children in the school is outstanding and they make extremely rapid progress before they enter Year 1.

You told us that you enjoy school and that you feel safe and well looked after. This may be because the quality of care and support that you receive is outstanding. The staff know you well, care for you and are always there when you need support. If you need additional support this is well planned to make certain that you can achieve your best. Your behaviour is good and you attend school regularly. You have exceptional knowledge of how to keep yourselves safe and stay healthy.

The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and her colleagues. We have agreed with her to make certain that you make progress in mathematics that is as good as in English by making certain that all the teaching is as good as the best and by further developing the system for looking at how well you are all doing.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Garry Jones

Lead Inspector

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