

# Irby Primary School

## Inspection report

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

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>	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Graham Barley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Annette Palmer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Coombe Road Irby Wirral CH61 4UR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 6482944
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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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## 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.
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](http://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.



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## 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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