

# Woodlands Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104881
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	355649
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 April 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Byrne

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>	318
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Robert Uffendell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Simon Grilli
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Woodlands Road Formby, Liverpool Merseyside L37 2JN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01704 876444
<b>Fax number</b>	01704 831747
<b>Email address</b>	head.woodlands@schools.sefton.gov.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Two inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons, taught by 13 teachers, and held meetings with representatives of the local authority, governing body, staff, pupils and parents. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation provided by the school, including records of pupils' progress and the school improvement plan and policies for securing safeguarding and child protection. The team analysed the questionnaires returned by 201 parents and carers and also evaluated those supplied by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well children make progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Whether the quality of teaching is suitably challenging for all pupils to make sufficient progress and to work independently.
- Whether the quality of the curriculum affects the rate of pupils' progress, especially that of boys.
- How well the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels raises attainment and drives learning forward.

## Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low as is the proportion identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. There have been changes in staffing since the last inspection with the appointment of new staff with management responsibilities and some job-shares have been established. Major upgrades have been made to the school buildings and aspects of the outdoor provision. The school provides before- and after-school provision, which 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: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. It achieves its aim of providing, 'a happy, caring, secure and stimulating community' for pupils and their families. Pupils' level of academic attainment is high and there are outstanding aspects of personal development. Pupils have a good foundation for learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and start Year 1 with above average attainment. Between Year 1 and Year 6 pupils' progress is good and, by the end of Year 6, the level of attainment is high in English, mathematics and science. The good results mask a degree of underachievement in writing across the school, particularly amongst boys, and in the performance of girls in mathematics in Key Stage 1. Pupils make good progress in aspects of their personal development. They develop an extremely advanced understanding for their age of how to act safely and are very aware of the importance of eating sensibly and taking regular exercise. Behaviour is good and bullying is rare. Pupils enjoy school, and this is one reason for their high rates of attendance and excellent punctuality.

The quality of teaching is good with particular strengths in the Early Years Foundation Stage and upper Key Stage 2. Staff work hard to challenge and extend the advanced knowledge of many pupils. Lessons are generally exciting and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well, but expectations for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning are frequently low; this reduces the progress of the highest attaining pupils. Pupils talk positively about how the more active curriculum is improving enjoyment and learning. Planning, however, is not yet refined enough to enable staff to monitor the pupils' achievement in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Good care, guidance and support enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, to access all aspects of school life.

Effective leadership and management, including that of the governing body, have improved the school since the last inspection. Achievement is now outstanding, teaching is better, the engagement of parents and carers is outstanding and excellent partnerships benefit pupils. The strong management team evaluates the school's effectiveness thoroughly. It uses information gained from its robust systems, such as those that track pupils' progress, to set ambitious targets for future development.

Given the current strengths within the school, it has a good capacity for sustained improvement and gives excellent value for money.

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

- Ensure that all aspects of underachievement are addressed by:

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- improving the performance of boys in writing across the school and of girls in mathematics at Key Stage 1
- raising the overall quality of teaching to give pupils, especially the more able, more opportunity to work independently
- refining the planning of the curriculum so that pupils' achievement in all subjects can be monitored.

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

**1**

Outcomes for pupils are outstanding. Pupils enjoy learning, are conscientious in lessons and set themselves high standards. They leave Year 6 with high levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science. Given that the starting points for most children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are typical for their age, this represents outstanding achievement. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school accelerating noticeably in upper Key Stage 2. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, attainment has been consistently high in recent years and improved since the last inspection, although attainment in writing tends to be lower than in reading. This is primarily because the performance of boys in writing tends to be lower than that of the girls. In Key Stage 1, however, boys tend to do better than girls in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from good support and make good progress towards their individual plans.

Pupils grow into polite and mature young citizens of the future and are prepared extremely well for their next stage of education. They acquire an exceptionally good knowledge and understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives. A high proportion understand the importance of eating healthily, for example, by avoiding too much sugar and fat in food, and most value regular exercise by participating in sport and cycling to school. The pupils' voice is valued and influences aspects of the school's organisation; the school council has given ideas about resources for activities at playtimes and the eco-council is energetically developing the new, high-quality wildlife area at the school. Pupils are aware of the plight of others less fortunate than themselves in terms of the global dimension. They have a mature understanding of a range of global and political issues, for example, the contribution made by Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela to Human Rights. Initiatives are taken to raise funds for a partner school in Namibia as well as contributing to charities nearer home. The pupils' understanding of those different from themselves in terms of cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds, although satisfactory, is a relative weakness which is being acted upon by the school.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<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>1</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<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?

Teachers bring a good understanding of most subjects to their teaching. Imaginative approaches are employed. In lower Key Stage 2, for example, pupils explored the preservation of bodies by the Egyptians by making their own mummified fish! Staff are confident in their ability to structure pupils' learning to enable them to make good progress. Good use of in-class support makes a significant contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Lessons have clear learning objectives and usually, though not always, provide a good balance between increasing knowledge and applying skills. A strong emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils to discuss their thoughts and explain their conclusions. At times, however, lessons are over-directed and too little scope is provided for pupils to develop their own lines of enquiry. Thus, the more-able pupils are sometimes not challenged as fully as they could be. Teachers make good use of assessment to check on the progress of pupils. Pupils' work is marked routinely and carefully with helpful comments indicating what they have achieved. In most cases, but not all, these comments include suggestions about how to improve, to which pupils often respond readily, setting up a dialogue with their teachers about their work.

The curriculum effectively meets the needs of all pupils. Much time is devoted to the basic skills of reading through dedicated sessions to build up the pupils' understanding of sounds and letters. The introduction of a more creative curriculum is in the process of

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being established and is already motivating all pupils. The quality of writing is improving. This is because of the increased time given to role play in English lessons and through expanding writing tasks for a wide range of purposes. The success of such motivational strategies is constantly under review and being refined. A positive result of these initiatives is that the gap between the difference in attainment in writing of boys and girls across the school is narrowing. The pupils' confidence in using computers to support learning is demonstrated by pupils in Year 6 creating high-quality research booklets on mountains. Pupils benefit from access to French at Key Stage 2 and opportunities to develop confidence in singing and musical performance. External visits are arranged to support learning in lessons, for example, to the local city museum. Pupils are inspired by a variety of visitors such as authors, musicians and sports people who share their talents. Out of normal lesson times, pupils have access to a variety of extra-curricular activities including drama, dance and music.

Pupils receive good care, guidance and support. Those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable benefit from effective systems to support them, including those for child protection. Regular review meetings for pupils involve parents and carers so that good support is gained at home as well as that provided in school. Excellent partnerships with outside agencies from education, health and welfare provide additional expertise as required. Much is done within school to support families when children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including meeting parents and carers at their home. Any difficulties encountered by pupils moving on to the next stage of education are minimised by very productive relationships with the secondary schools.

*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>2</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

There is a strong sense of teamwork and shared responsibility amongst all who work in the school. The headteacher, supported by a dedicated deputy and senior leadership team members are determined to tackle any areas of weakness. Systems to check how well the school is doing are regular and thorough but managers are not yet drawing conclusions about pupils' learning in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

Development plans are very detailed in ways of tackling any weaknesses in literacy and numeracy and other key areas for development. A thorough analysis of data about individual pupils' performance is used to set very challenging targets for attainment. The governing body is effective. It keeps a critical eye on the school's performance and sets high expectations for staff and pupils. Members of the governing body ensure that the school complies with all legal requirements. Good procedures are in place relating to

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safeguarding and child protection. The school site is safe and secure and all reasonable risks are removed.

The school has outstanding partnerships that provide many opportunities for pupils that would otherwise not be available. This is exemplified by links with a local specialist high school that enable pupils to explore aspects of science, design and technology and French. Parents and carers are heavily involved in school life. Excellent communication and interaction with school keeps them very well informed about their children's achievement. Much is done to engage parents and carers in their children's learning both in school and at home. A strong commitment exists to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. Steps are being taken to narrow the gap between the performance of boys and girls. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's religious, ethnic and socio-economic context and pupils make a good contribution to community cohesion. The school's commitment to this is demonstrated by the school's support for a school in Namibia and also the opportunities for pupils to meet people of other cultures, for example, people who have lived in South Africa and others from Nigeria. Excellent management of resources available to the school enables it to meet the needs of the large majority of pupils and achieve high-quality outcomes. The accommodation is extremely well maintained and regular investment is on-going, for example, in developing the school grounds.

*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>2</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>1</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The provision for children in Early Years Foundation Stage is good. It is well managed and ensures that children are safe and secure at all times. From starting points that are broadly typical for their age children's attainment rises to above average by the start of Year 1. This good progress is the result of good teaching and an exciting and stimulating



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curriculum. Activities are well balanced between those led by adults and those initiated by children. For example, adults helped children to make chocolate Easter Eggs, while an imaginary Sea Life Centre was constructed by children using their own ideas. Warm relationships encourage children to share equipment happily, take turns and look after each other. Whilst many children have a good vocabulary and speak well, their knowledge of letters and sounds is a relative weakness and holds down the development of writing for some. To tackle this, staff provide topics that build on the interests of all children but with care to attract the interest of boys, using themes such as 'Dr Who' and 'Pirates'. Writing opportunities are provided in all areas of learning. In the construction area, for example, children were encouraged to list the materials used. Assessment is used constructively to guide planning so that the needs of each child are met. Close and very effective partnerships with parents and carers benefit the children's education. Lively, twice weekly family learning sessions have enabled parents and carers to gain an insight into ways of helping their children with numeracy at home. There is a clear vision for improvement within the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the aim of improving aspects of outdoor provision, which as yet does not match that of the indoors.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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 percentage of parents and carers returning their questionnaires was just over a half. The large majority rate the school highly and they are unanimous that their children are safe at school. The large majority feel that their children enjoy school and are making good progress. Teaching is rated highly in meeting the needs of pupils and preparing them for their future. A small minority of questionnaires expressed concern about the way unacceptable behaviour is managed and some parents and carers were also concerned about the effectiveness of leadership and management. Inspection findings endorse the positive comments of parents and carers. On inspection, behaviour was found to be good and to contribute to good learning and relationships within the school. Leadership and management were judged to be good because they promote high attainment and good progress.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woodlands 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 201 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 318 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	130	65	64	32	3	1	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	145	72	53	26	1	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	89	44	95	47	12	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	94	47	79	39	16	8	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	94	47	93	46	7	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	87	43	102	51	10	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	94	47	99	49	6	3	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)	81	40	99	49	10	5	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	88	44	98	49	11	5	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	62	31	93	46	27	13	7	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	68	34	107	53	16	8	5	2
The school is led and managed effectively	71	35	97	48	17	8	9	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	105	52	85	42	7	3	1	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and 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 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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.**



26 April 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Woodlands Primary School, Liverpool, L37 2JN**

On behalf of the inspection team, thank you for sharing your time with us during our recent visit to your school. You attend a good school with good teaching and a curriculum which is increasingly interesting and exciting. You are well cared for and good attention is given to those of you needing support. The school has excellent partnerships with your parents and carers and does much to encourage their involvement in your education.

You told me that you like school and this is shown in the high rates of attendance. You behave well and are polite and thoughtful with others. Your understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives is excellent and sets you up very well for a happy future.

Academically, your attainment is high and reflects good progress in your time in school.

There is room for improvement however and I have asked the school to continue to find ways of improving your writing, particularly that of boys. In mathematics you do very well, although in Key Stage 1, girls could do even better and this is another area to be strengthened.

The many good and outstanding features of your school are the result of good leadership and management by staff and governors. They keep a close eye on what works well and what needs improving. Although learning is fun, more needs to be done to check on how well you do in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. I have asked the school to seek ways of doing this and you may be part of the solution.

I trust that you will continue to work hard, enjoy learning and continue to be helpful to others. I wish you all the very best for your future lives.

Yours sincerely

David Byrne

Lead inspector

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