

# Poulton Lancelyn Primary School

## Inspection report

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

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>	409
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roger Prideaux
<b>Headteacher</b>	Beverley Greathead
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	Venables Drive Spital Wirral CH63 9LY
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

David Cox  
Jean Tarry  
Pamela Hemphill

Additional Inspector  
Additional Inspector  
Additional Inspector

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

## Information about the school

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

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

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
 Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<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>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

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

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

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

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

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Quality of teaching**

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

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

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

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

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

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

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

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

## Leadership and management

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

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

### Overall effectiveness of schools

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

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

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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



22 June 2012

Dear Pupils

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely

David Cox  
Lead inspector

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