

Woodchurch CofE Primary School

Church Lane, Woodchurch, Wirral, Merseyside, CH49 7LS

Inspection dates 11–12 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not achieve well. They do not make enough progress across Years 3, 4 and 5 especially in writing and mathematics, and standards are, therefore, below average at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is variable in quality and teachers do not always plan work that is matched to the abilities of pupils in each class.
- Pupils use too many worksheets and teachers too readily accept work which is untidy or not of a high enough standard.
- Pupils receive inconsistent guidance or advice through teachers' comments on how to improve their writing or mathematics.
- Checks on the quality of teaching and progress made by pupils in lessons are not regularly carried out by subject leaders, some of whom are new to the role.

The school has the following strengths

- Attainment has risen in Key Stage 1 since the previous inspection and standards are now broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Reading across the school has improved as a result of the training and actions taken by leaders. All pupils make good progress and reach standards which are average or above.
- Pupils get off to a good start in Reception and make good progress in their first year in school and in Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is consistently good in Reception and in Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. They are polite, respectful and friendly.
- The school strongly promotes pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Senior leaders and governors work together well to tackle weaknesses. Action taken by leaders, managers and the governing body is bringing about improvement in achievement and teaching, particularly in reading.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They saw 17 lessons or parts of lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 11 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). They also considered previous survey information collected by the school, letters submitted via e-mail from parents and spoke informally to parents as they brought their children to school.
- Questionnaires from 17 staff were received and their views taken into account.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read, spoke with them about their learning and looked at the work in their books.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, school improvement plans, data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports of lesson observations, minutes of the governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elaine Maloney

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is similar in size to other primary schools and most pupils are White British and speak English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.) At Woodchurch, this includes only pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Daily before- and after-school care is provided on site but is not managed by the governing body and is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching in Key Stage 2, especially in Years 3 and 4, is consistently good or better so that pupils make the progress expected nationally or exceed this by:
 - consistently matching work to the different abilities of pupils in each class
 - reducing the number of worksheets used, especially in writing and mathematics, and ensuring that all staff have high expectations and accept only the very best quality work
 - giving pupils clear guidance through marking that shows them what they need to do to improve and then allowing them time to respond to this guidance.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that:
 - subject leaders have regular time to monitor, support and improve the quality of teaching across the school, especially in writing and mathematics, to accelerate the progress made by pupils, particularly in lower Key Stage 2.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because pupils are not making enough progress over time from their individual starting points, especially in Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics.
- Children join Reception class with skills that are below those typical for their age, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and in their communication and language. They settle quickly and make good progress because they are taught well and exciting activities are planned to develop their early skills.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress and attainment is rising. In 2012, pupils reached standards which were close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. School data show this is set to continue.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 requires improvement because not enough pupils reach or exceed the levels expected. Consequently, attainment at the end of Year 6 is below average in English and mathematics. Pupils in the current Year 6 are making good progress due to the high quality teaching they receive. School data show that they are on track to reach at least average standards in English but are most likely to be still below average in mathematics.
- Achievement in reading has improved. This is because the school has placed a high priority on this subject. Reading is taught well in the Reception Year and children develop an early love of books by reading daily.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 use their knowledge of letters and sounds successfully to tackle new words and become confident readers. Older pupils can talk about their favourite authors and books. Reading volunteers and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to reading standards by hearing pupils read regularly so that they do not fall behind.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress similar to that of other pupils in their class due to the additional support they receive in and outside lessons. Specialist support is also bought in by the school and this is helping pupils with their basic skills.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve in line with their classmates due to the effective use of the pupil premium funding. This provides additional adult time to boost pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and subsidise trips. These pupils are approximately one term ahead of their peers who are not eligible for pupil premium in their attainment in English and one term behind in mathematics.
- Leaders make sure that all pupils are treated equally and discrimination is not tolerated. A local learning support school provides help for pupils with emotional and social difficulties which allows them to be fully included in all school activities. Other links with the local high school provide additional opportunities for pupils to extend and develop other skills, for example in physical education and English.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because teachers do not always set work that meets the needs of all learners within each class. In some lessons, the work set for all groups is the same or is too easy for pupils and this reduces their progress and achievement, especially in Years 3 and 4.
- Too many worksheets are used for writing and mathematics activities and this limits opportunities for pupils to organise and present their own work. Consequently, when they are given these chances, their work is untidy or not set out well. Too often, teachers readily accept this and their expectations are not high enough.
- Teachers mark most books regularly and follow the school marking policy. 'Tickled pink' highlighted work shows pupils what they have got right and highlighted 'green for growth' work alerts pupils to any mistakes. However, pupils are not always given a chance to correct these and not all teachers provide written advice to tell pupils how to improve their work further.

- Relationships are good in all classes and pupils are keen to do well and get on with the work they are given. Team work is very strong in the Reception Year; all adults make sure that children are given the right amount of support and guidance so that they make good gains in their learning. Pupils in all classes work well in groups, with partners or on their own.
- Where teaching is good, pupils are given opportunities to organise their own work and use different skills. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils worked in small groups. They elected a captain and then each group member had to read some science information, summarise it in note form, and then give the key points to their captain who made an oral presentation to the rest of the class. All groups made good progress due to their involvement and contribution.
- Computers are used effectively to support learning and develop pupils' skills. For example, in a well-planned Year 6 lesson, pupils used a mathematics program in the computer room to estimate and measure angles. High levels of challenge were presented by teachers and every pupil was engrossed. As one pupil said enthusiastically, 'I like this!'
- Support staff make a valuable contribution to supporting learning, both in and outside lessons, especially for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. This ensures that pupils keep up with their classmates.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy learning and behave well in lessons and around school. They are polite, respectful and caring towards each other. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, when the inspector asked how the group had chosen their captain, they said, 'she doesn't have a turn very often.'
- Staff in the Reception Year recognise the importance of developing children's personal and social skills. They do this very well and make sure that, right from the start, children learn how to work and play together harmoniously.
- Most parents who expressed their views, feel that pupils behave well and are kept safe. Staff and pupils asked also agree. Pupils know and follow the behaviour policy. As one said, 'our code of conduct is not to hurt anyone with hands, feet, or words and we are taught to think before we do.'
- School records show that incidents of racism and bullying are rare. Pupils say that if there is any inappropriate behaviour, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. They are aware of different forms of bullying, for example, physical, verbal and cyber-bullying. Pupils also have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they are taught about road, fire, water and Internet safety.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well. Spiritual development is supported through celebration assemblies and regular visits to church. The prayer pool and lit candles in the school hall also add to pupils' time for reflection. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, respect and work well with each other and have good levels of understanding about different cultures and beliefs. They also value and enjoy their links with the local church, especially taking part in services at different times of the year.
- Although attendance rates fluctuate, they are broadly average. Figures are affected by pupils who have serious illness or by severe weather.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Checks are carried out on the quality of teaching by senior leaders but not all subject leaders are involved in observing lessons or ensuring that all teaching is good or better. Where subject leadership has been most effective, staff training has been put in place, clear guidance given on how to teach, and checks on learning completed. This has worked particularly well in reading.
- The headteacher has taken action to secure improvements in achievement. For example, a new

mathematics co-ordinator has been appointed and she has already set about identifying the actions needed to raise standards in this subject. A new tracking system is also helping leaders and teachers to monitor the progress made by pupils as they move through the school. However, these improvements have not been in place long enough to have an impact on achievement and some weaknesses remain, especially in Years 3 and 4.

- Annual targets are set for teachers based on school priorities and pupils' progress. These are reviewed by leaders but not always adjusted to ensure that they are met.
- The headteacher and governors have an accurate overview of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and the priorities set are appropriate. Achievement in Key Stage 1 has risen since the last inspection and the focus now lies in lower Key Stage 2, where achievement is still not good enough.
- The local authority provides good support for both teachers and leaders. Their recent review was accurate and helped validate the school's own judgements and identify further support needed. They have confidence in leadership but are working with subject leaders to provide additional training to help them fulfil their roles.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a wide range of experience, are well-informed and are actively involved in the school. The Chair of the Governing Body regularly meets with the headteacher. Other governors visit classes and work with groups of pupils, for example, in mathematics. They have a good understanding of data and know what the pupil premium is used for and its impact on the progress of those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. They set and monitor targets for the headteacher and are aware of the quality of teaching within the school. Governors ensure that teachers' pay is linked to their performance. They undertake training to keep their skills and knowledge up to date, for example, in relation to finance and safeguarding. As a result, the budget is managed well, safeguarding requirements are met fully and all statutory duties are carried out effectively.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105067
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	412002

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Cretney
Headteacher	Brian McGregor
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2009
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