

Woodchurch Road Primary School

Woodchurch Road, Oxton, Birkenhead, Merseyside, CH42 9LJ

Inspection dates 8–9 April 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This caring and welcoming school successfully lives out the sentiments of one of its many displays, 'We may all be different fish but we all swim together.'
- All pupils, particularly the most able, make at least good progress and achieve well because teaching is good and sometimes outstanding.
- The results achieved by pupils are consistently above the national average by the time they leave in Year 6.
- Children get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because not a moment is lost in learning.
- Pupils behave well. They work hard, enjoy learning and want to do well.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. The school looks after pupils well, and teaches them how to stay safe.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They develop well as thoughtful, responsible young people.
- The headteacher leads the school well and, together with senior leaders, has made a strong impact on the school's success in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement well since the last inspection.
- Governors are effective at both supporting and challenging school leaders to improve the school further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress is not always as rapid as it could be because the marking of pupils' work does not consistently provide them with the next steps they need to take to improve their learning and achieve their very best.
- Middle leaders are not fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in their areas in all subjects.
- Senior leaders do not systematically check how well the strategies in place to improve pupils' behaviour are working.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body, a group of parents, a representative of the local authority as well as with groups of pupils.
- Inspectors examined the school’s documentation relating to pupils’ progress, school self-evaluation and policies relating to safeguarding. They carried out a scrutiny of pupils’ work in their books.
- The inspectors listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 6 read and spoke informally to pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes.
- They took account of the 29 parent responses received at the time of the inspection from the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school’s own parental questionnaire.
- Inspectors took account of the 24 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Bimla Kumari	Additional Inspector
Anthony Buckley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above average-sized primary school.
- 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 who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress, in 2013.
- The school has a breakfast club, which is managed by the school.
- The school has a wide range of awards including International Schools Award, Eco School Status and Bike-it Silver.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the rates of progress for pupils by making sure the marking of their work consistently tells them the next steps they need to take to improve their learning and achieve their very best.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - middle leaders are fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and pupils learning in their areas in all subjects
 - senior leader systematically check how well the strategies in place to improve pupils' behaviour are working.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with skills which are below those expected for their age and, for some children, low in their social, speaking and listening skills. They make outstanding progress because they have excellent opportunities to develop their literacy, mathematics, physical development and knowledge of the world through highly imaginative play. As a result children are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Since the last inspection, standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have steadily improved and were average overall in 2013. Standards for the most able, however, were above-average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents at least good progress for these pupils. Pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 are achieving well and make good and, for some, outstanding progress from their individual starting points.
- Standards by the end of Year 6 have been consistently above average in reading, writing and mathematics since the last inspection. This represents good progress for all groups of pupils.
- School records and pupils' work in their books show that standards are currently above average for pupils in Year 6 and particularly so for the most able pupils, with a good proportion securely on course to make and exceed the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The standards reached by the pupils eligible for free school meals in Year 6 in 2013, though similar to the same group of pupils nationally, were below those of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics by about one term. School information shows this gap is rapidly closing. Extra support, where needed, enables the pupils currently supported by the pupil premium fund to progress at the same rate or, for some, faster than their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are fully included and supported in all activities and make similar good progress to other pupils. This reflects the school's commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils.
- Pupils learn to read successfully. Their understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is rapidly improving. Pupils enjoy reading, and are encouraged to read regularly at home. They talk with enthusiasm about their favourite books and authors. Pupils say a recent visit from a theatre group performing *Romeo and Juliet* gave them a real thirst to read more of Shakespeare's work.
- Pupils extend their writing skills well. They have chances to write at length for different purposes and audiences across a number of subjects. In addition, they extend their mathematical skills well as a result of the school's strong focus on developing their mental mathematics and problem-solving skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- The classroom displays, work in pupils' writing, mathematics and topic books, along with the school's records of the checks made on teaching, indicate that teaching is typically good and that an increasing proportion is outstanding. This contributes well to pupils' good achievement.
- Pupils say teachers and support staff, 'really help you to learn lots of interesting things, about the past'. Pupils particularly enjoyed preparing and producing a pod-cast of 'Top Tips for SATs' (Year 6 national tests) which they say, 'Helps any child in the world with their SATs preparation.'
- A group of pupils shared the facts they had researched from the 1960s as part of their topic about Liverpool. They enthusiastically performed songs and shared the facts they had learnt with parents and inspectors. Such work extends their performing, reading and writing skills very well and helps them become mature and responsible young citizens.
- Another group of pupils, as part of their Greek topic, designed a slipper for a Greek God. All groups of pupils enthusiastically explained their designs whilst considering how improvements could be made. Adults' good subject knowledge and challenging, thought-provoking questions

made the pupils think hard and explain their ideas.

- Such exciting work captures pupils' imagination and provides interesting opportunities for them to apply and extend their reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology skills very well within real-life situations.
- Pupils' learning is rapid when, for example, adults frequently check pupils' understanding through high-quality reviews of how well they are learning within lessons and through insightful marking. However, marking does not always provide enough guidance to pupils on the next steps to take to improve their learning.
- Children learn very well in the Early Years Foundation Stage because adults, through challenging questions, encourage children to think and quickly become learners who can find things out for themselves, love school and have a real thirst for learning. The children are busy from the moment they arrive at school, investigating and finding out more about the world in which they live, for example, when working together happily sorting numbers to 20, solving subtraction problems or using the sounds they have learnt in phonics to write sentences. Such activities advance children's mathematical, reading and writing well and ensure they get off to a flying start to their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most pupils are keen to get on in lessons so that very little learning time is lost. There are strong levels of mutual respect between adults and pupils.
- Pupils are proud of their school and take on a wide range of responsibilities such as eco and school councillors, with maturity. Older pupils responsibly check everyone is walking quietly along the corridors. They are aware this is even more important whilst the building work is taking place. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is reflected in their rapidly improved attendance rates, which are now broadly average.
- Pupils work well together, for instance, when looking for similarities and differences between *Romeo and Juliet* and the Alfred Noyes' poem *The Highwayman*.
- The school has clear expectations of behaviour which most pupils willingly follow. Pupils say that occasionally a few pupils do not listen to adults straightaway but, overall, they say behaviour is good. Records of how well pupils behave are well kept by staff but the impact of these are not systematically checked by senior leaders.
- Pupils know about different forms of bullying and understand how saying hurtful words can upset people. The thinking tree, for instance, provides a meaningful opportunity for pupils to reflect on their actions and how these might offend others. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated and incidents of bullying are rare. On the few occasions when incidents have occurred, they have been well managed by the staff concerned.
- A small minority of the parents who responded to Parent View indicate they that they do not feel the behaviour of pupils in the school is well managed or that the school deals effectively with incidents of bullying. However, all the pupils and parents that the inspectors spoke to and the school's own recent survey of the parents' views overwhelmingly say that because of the school's zero tolerance to poor behaviour or bullying any such incidents which may arise are dealt with effectively.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe, and trust adults to look after them. They know how they can help to keep themselves safe. Their understanding of e-safety is comprehensive and they appreciate the need to stay safe on the roads, and the benefits of cycling to keep you healthy.
- The breakfast club and the time spent with the home/liaison member of staff before school starts provides a positive and sociable start to the school day for those pupils who attend.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders lead the school well. Together with the support of the governing body and all teaching, support and office staff they have created a strong team who share their values, support them well and play a vital part in raising standards. As a result a culture of good teaching, behaviour and achievement for all groups of pupils flourishes.
- Leaders frequently check the quality of teaching, planning and marking. Systems for managing teachers' performance are robust. Teachers' targets are based on pupils' progress and are well linked to training and to teachers' salary progression. Underperformance in teaching is tackled rigorously. This means the quality of teaching is continually improving. However, senior leaders do not systematically check how well the strategies to improve pupils' behaviour are working.
- Leaders regularly and rigorously check the progress made by all groups of pupils. Teachers are held to account for the progress of the pupils they teach. However, middle leaders are not all fully involved in checking that pupils are achieving as well as they can in their areas in all subjects. The school's plans for improvement concentrate on the right areas. They are based on an honest and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Assemblies and activities such as 'culture in a box', in which pupils collect information from a period of time to share with pupils in Uganda, extends what they know about others' lives very effectively. The school provides pupils with an excellent range of subjects, topics, visits, clubs and experiences. This helps pupils to enjoy school and to develop their creativity and imagination well. As a result pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- Parents say they are well informed about the work of the school and that staff are approachable.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
- The primary school sport funding is well managed. This ensures that pupils' participation in physical education and sport has increased and is contributing well to developing better physical well-being for pupils. The impact of the spending is checked regularly by the governors.
- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors take a close interest in the work of the school, and are well informed about its strengths and weaknesses. They have an accurate idea of the quality of teaching and understand how the school makes decisions about targets for teachers to improve their performance and about teachers' salary progression. They use pupil information well to identify areas in the school's performance that need improving. Governors make sure that the school's finances are used well, and that the pupil premium and primary sports funds are used to close any gaps in pupils' achievement. Governors carry out their statutory duties well, and make sure they meet all legal requirements about keeping pupils and staff safe. The governing body makes sure that it accesses training to keep itself up to date and to hone its skills.

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	105047
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	439522

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	480
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frank Doyle
Headteacher	Anne Maher
Date of previous school inspection	05 February 2009
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