

Woodchurch CofE Primary School

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

Inspection dates 31 March–1 April 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leadership is good at all levels. Energetic and determined leadership by the headteacher, shared by the governors and senior leaders, has led to significant improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. Consequently, the school is well placed to continue to improve.
- Teaching is good and much improved from the time of the previous inspection. The whole staff work together with purpose and resolve to improve the quality of education for all pupils.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children get off to a good start in the early years because it is led effectively. Good teaching ensures that children enjoy learning and achieve well.
- All groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged achieve well and make at least good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in reading.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2014, pupils reached standards in reading which were in line with the national average and below average in writing and mathematics. From where they started their education, this represented good progress for these pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and, at times, outstanding. Most pupils show positive attitudes to their learning and make a strong contribution to the life of the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents and pupils agree that this is a caring and nurturing place to learn.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well promoted. Pupils' code of conduct, summed up in their own words, 'never hurt with hands, feet or words' is fully evident. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Opportunities are missed, including for the most able, to apply skills already mastered in writing and mathematics to more challenging work and so standards are not high enough.
- The checking of pupils' progress is not as rigorous in other subjects as it is in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in every class. One observation of learning was carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors held discussions with pupils to ascertain their views of school and their learning. Inspectors also scrutinised the work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6. They observed the teaching of reading skills and talked to pupils about the books they have enjoyed and those that they are currently reading.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, staff and a representative of the local authority as well as with members of the governing body.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including: safeguarding records, the school's improvement plan, the school's data for tracking pupils' progress, reports on pupils' achievement, records of pupils' behaviour and the school's checks of the quality of teaching.
- The inspectors talked with pupils as they played at break times, and visited the dining hall at lunchtime. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around school.
- Inspectors took account of the 11 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the school's own parental survey and the views of the parents with whom they spoke. They also took account of returns to the staff questionnaire completed during the inspection.

Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Parkinson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported through the pupil premium, is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Early years provision is available full time in the Reception class.
- There is a before-school and after-school club. This setting was inspected separately and the report can be found at www.gov.uk/ofsted.
- Three teachers have left the school and three teachers have been appointed since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards further and accelerate the progress that pupils make particularly in writing and mathematics by making sure that work set is challenging enough to extend the capabilities of pupils, including of the most able.
- Ensure pupils' progress is checked as rigorously in all subjects as it is in reading, writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's determination and ambition have driven improvements since the previous inspection. He is well supported by senior leaders and the governing body. Together, they have successfully eliminated weak teaching and subsequently improved the quality of teaching. As a result of this tireless work, pupils' achievement is now good in Key Stages 1 and 2. All of this demonstrates the school's capacity to bring further improvement.
- Strong teamwork, mutual respect and a willingness to learn from each other are hallmarks of the school. 'We have faced many hurdles which we have tackled with strength and unity', and, 'I am proud to be a member of this school team', are statements which sum up the views of the staff.
- Leaders check the school's effectiveness rigorously and identify accurately appropriate priorities for improvement. Decisive actions to eliminate weak teaching have been instrumental in the rapid rise in standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The roles of all school leaders have developed considerably since the last inspection. Middle and senior leaders all have a strong impact on improving teaching and raising achievement. The good leadership of the early years means that children enter a vibrant and stimulating environment and make good progress.
- The pupil premium is used successfully. The disadvantaged pupils learn successfully because of the additional support they receive. This targeted support has enabled them to make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Every effort is made to overcome any barriers to pupils' well-being and achievement. As a result, all groups of pupils, including the most able, make good progress. The school ensures equal opportunities are promoted well.
- The school's management of teachers' performance is rigorous. Good use is made of staff expertise within the school along with carefully chosen external training to improve the quality of teaching. There is a clear link between teachers' performance and their salary progression.
- The good quality curriculum promotes pupils' interests and their love of learning effectively. Topics include historical and geographical subjects such as 'What makes the earth angry?' These are very effective in extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world as well as having to present their point of view and discuss different opinions. Furthermore, they provide interesting opportunities for pupils to apply and extend their literacy and mathematical skills in other subjects.
- The school teaches pupils about the need for tolerance and respect of difference in modern British society and tackles discrimination effectively. For instance, curriculum plans include appropriate emphasis on promoting fundamental British values such as: democracy, through the school council; the rule of law, through explaining the need for class rules; and respect and tolerance, through the school's Christian values.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and fosters good relations very effectively. This is done through subjects such as art, music, personal and social education and religious education as well as a linked programme of assemblies, visits and visitors to the school.
- Parents are kept well informed about how well their children are doing in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the school has not developed fully the checks of pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. Parents' views of the school are very positive.
- Pupils' good behaviour is supported by their positive attitudes to competitive sport and their enthusiasm for developing their physical well-being. The school uses effectively the additional primary school sport funding to provide professional coaching through successful high school links. The funding also ensures that sports opportunities are available to everyone.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are highly effective, fully meet requirements and contribute to the school's good work to keep pupils safe. Staff are well trained and are alert to any signs that might cause concern.
- The local authority has made strong contributions to the school's improvement since the previous inspection. Senior leaders now share their expertise with other schools in the neighbourhood.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's performance and share senior leaders' ambition to improve further. Since the previous inspection, as a result of training, they have been able to offer greater challenge and support to senior leaders. Together with senior leaders, they successfully live out their motto 'wonder, commitment, expectation'. Governors visit the school frequently. They know its strengths and areas for improvement. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and question senior leaders closely to ensure that good teaching is rewarded

and underperformance tackled. They understand the analysis of the school's performance information. They play their part in checking that school funding is used to achieve the best outcomes for pupils.

- Finances are managed well so that there are good levels of staffing and resources to support pupils' learning. This includes use of the pupil premium and the additional school sport and physical education funding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. At times, it is outstanding. Pupils' pride in their school is clearly evident in the way they are welcoming to visitors. One comment reflected the views of others, 'The school is like my second home!'
- The school is a harmonious community. Staff and pupils care for and relate very positively towards one another. They have successfully supported each other through times of joy and sadness. These highly supportive relationships underpin pupils' good attitudes to learning.
- Most pupils are proud of their work and give of their best. For instance, they share ideas with one another in the daily reading workshop sessions and confidently research the meaning of unfamiliar words. However, behaviour is not outstanding because, occasionally, a few pupils need reminders from staff to concentrate fully and to get on with their work.
- Pupils behave well around the school, moving sensibly within the school building. They are well-mannered and open doors for visitors and talk eagerly about how they enjoy school.
- Pupils' behaviour at breaks and lunchtime is good because of the good range of equipment available to occupy them. Furthermore, teachers often give up their breaks to run football and other sporting activities. This ensures pupils' physical development is promoted effectively.
- Pupils undertake their various responsibilities well. For example, members of the school council raise awareness with senior leaders of the areas of school pupils would like to improve, such as the playground. Older pupils also welcome opportunities to support younger pupils in their classes and at break times.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils from Reception to Year 6 learn how to be safe and how to take care of others. Security systems are well established to ensure pupils are safe. All staff are thoroughly familiar with drills and protocols.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They rightly trust teachers and support staff to help them if they have any concerns. Those who spoke to inspectors were clear that bullying is rare and is dealt with swiftly and effectively when it occurs. Pupils know about different types of bullying, including on the internet or mobile phones, and what to do if they encounter it.
- Pupils learn well how to stay safe outside school through talks given by visitors, including the police.
- The school's record keeping of any incidents and the follow-up with parents and external agencies are thorough. Leaders carefully monitor why pupils are absent from school. As a result, rates of attendance are improving and are currently close to those found nationally.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is typically good. As a result, it helps pupils to make better progress in literacy, reading and mathematics than in the past.
- Teachers have high expectations for their pupils' progress and most pupils respond with positive attitudes to learning. This is particularly evident in pupils' enthusiasm for reading.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching are evident in the work seen in pupils' books. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar throughout the school. As a result, the quality of pupils' writing is improving rapidly.
- Support staff play a key role in helping pupils and, particularly the disadvantaged, to achieve well. They are deployed well in class and when taking small groups. All adults are well trained and skilful in getting the best from their groups.
- Pupils work well cooperatively. They listen and value each other's opinions, for example, when editing their list poem in Year 5.
- Reading skills and phonics (the sounds that letters make) are taught well. Teachers provide opportunities

for pupils to practise these skills when completing comprehension and writing activities in reading workshop sessions.

- Reading, writing and mathematics skills are applied and extended effectively in other subjects. For example, pupils confidently use their writing skills to record science experiments. They use their reading skills to research historical facts for topic work.
- Improvements in the teaching of mathematics have included the appointment of a new subject leader who closely tracks pupils' progress. She has ensured the gaps evident in some pupils' learning, a result of previous weak teaching, have closed significantly.
- Targeted support from adults, including governors who have high-school teaching experience, includes sessions over the Easter break. As a result of such work, pupils make good progress in mathematics.
- Teachers use effective questioning to encourage all pupils to think harder about complex ideas and issues. This leads to debates in class and pupils' improved communication skills. However, there are times when the most able are not sufficiently stretched to apply skills already mastered in writing and mathematics to more challenging work.
- Teaching is adapted well to pupils' abilities. Pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve in their reading, writing and mathematics. This is as a result of the consistent and well-implemented marking policy.
- Parents are pleased with the progress that their children are making. Teachers in all year groups regularly take the opportunity to reinforce learning with appropriate homework.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is good. As a result of good teaching, their progress is improving rapidly. Higher standards are evident in the school's records of pupils' developing skills and their work in books.
- Children are given a good foundation for their education in the early years. Pupils' reached standards which, at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, were in line with the national average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, from where they started their education, this represented good progress for these pupils.
- Inspection findings based on observations of pupils' learning and school records show increasing proportions of pupils exceeding expected levels of skill for their age. As a result, pupils, currently in Years 2 and 6 are on track to make at least good progress and achieve the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' continuing eagerness to learn has resulted in sustained improvement since the start of this school year. The current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. While pupils' books and the work seen in lessons confirm this pattern, their progress in other subjects is not always as rigorously checked as it is in reading, writing and mathematics.
- As a result of good and improved teaching that begins in Reception, pupils' attainment in the national screening check for their understanding of letters and the sounds they make was close to the national average in 2014.
- Pupils continue to show a strong interest, in all year groups, in reading books and improving their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills. Daily reading workshop activities help them to read fluently and write imaginatively.
- Pupils' good and rapidly improving problem solving and investigative skills enable them to confidently apply skills in mathematics to aid their learning in a range of contexts.
- The most able pupils throughout the school do not consistently achieve as well as they should. This is because they do not have enough opportunities to apply skills already mastered in writing and mathematics to more challenging work.
- In 2014, the disadvantaged pupils achieved better than their non-disadvantaged classmates by two terms in reading, writing and mathematics. However, they were two terms behind other pupils nationally in mathematics and one term behind in writing. They achieved as well as other pupils nationally in reading.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils throughout the school is good and compares very favourably with that of other pupils nationally. The disadvantaged pupils, currently in the school, achieve as well as and some pupils achieve better than their classmates. This is because of the use of the additional funding to provide a high level of targeted support. This leads to highly positive attitudes to learning that have a direct impact on improving pupils' achievement.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good and current pupils are making good progress. This is a result of the quick and accurate identification of needs and

work being well tailored to match abilities and interests.

The early years provision

is good

- A team of committed and expert staff works harmoniously to the great benefit of the children in their care. This is as a result of good leadership of the early years provision. The team is in constant communication with parents. Children's work is taken home for parents to see and workshops such as in reading are held. The environment, both inside and out, is exciting and stimulating.
- The quality of teaching is good. The well-organised, reflective team constantly reviews the provision. Thorough and well-targeted planning makes good use of the setting and yet remains flexible, responding to the needs of the children.
- The teaching of phonics begins as soon as children arrive in Reception and they quickly develop a love of books. Children enter Year 1 ready to learn and well on the way to achieving the skills they need.
- Children start with skills and understanding at levels below those typical for their age, and significantly below in their personal, language and mathematical development. The staff work hard to help the children build the initial social and personal skills that then allow them to achieve well and to make good progress in their learning. Good provision ensures that children make good progress and leave Reception with knowledge, skills and understanding at levels close to those expected for their age.
- Behaviour is good. Children quickly learn to work well with each other. They learn to take turns, to share and to concentrate on their own for increasingly long periods of time. Children know that unkind words can be hurtful; they learn to follow the school code of conduct and celebrate differences in cultures and lifestyles. Consequently, they are learning and adopting British values in the early years.
- Safety is good because leaders carefully consider and regularly review procedures. Children learn to assess risks and to look after themselves and each other, particularly when playing outside, looking after the class budgie or the school hens. They swiftly develop confidence and independence and learn from the examples set by older pupils who they meet in assemblies and at lunchtime.

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	462294

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	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Cretney
Headteacher	Brian McGregor
Date of previous school inspection	11 April 2013
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