



# Prenton Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103598  
**Local Authority** Wirral  
**Inspection number** 286699  
**Inspection dates** 11–12 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Brenda McIntosh

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Bramwell Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Prenton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Wirral CH43 0SR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 6082958
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	409	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 6090993
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Parnell
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sheila Cairns
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 11–12 December 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 286699
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Prenton primary school is larger than average; it was formed in September 2005 from the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools which shared the same site. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is about average and pupils come from a varied range of social and economic backgrounds. Most pupils are of White British heritage and none is at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average. A small proportion of pupils are looked after or are particularly vulnerable. There have been significant disruptions in staffing since the amalgamation in September 2005. The headteacher and deputy headteacher held similar posts in the former junior school. Building work is still on going. The school received a North West Inclusion award in 2005 and recently a Foundation Award from The British Council for the teaching of Modern Foreign Languages. The school has also gained the Green Flag Eco Award.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school because it enables pupils to achieve well. The leadership has successfully amalgamated two very different schools in a short time into one forward-looking purposeful school. A real buzz of excitement about learning is evident and despite continued building work, the school has created a vibrant learning environment where every opportunity is taken to celebrate pupils' achievements. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and see it as a caring, friendly place. They comment warmly about the headteacher and staff citing many ways in which they go beyond their normal duties to care for and help their children to do well. Most of all, they are impressed by the fact the headteacher knows each child individually and can match parent and child; quite something in a school of over 400 pupils. The headteacher leads the school very well. She ensures a very inclusive ethos in which everyone works together to provide care and education of good quality and helps pupils succeed academically and flourish personally. A strength in the leadership is the very clear vision for the school's further development and the decisive action to secure necessary improvements. For example, changes to the curriculum and how activities are planned in the Foundation Stage are resulting in some outstanding teaching and learning. This is enabling the children to make rapid gains in developing independence and in their language skills. Here, the children get off to a good start and have lots of exciting things to do. Pupils go on to make good progress throughout the school and by Year 6 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. This good level of basic skills gives them a firm foundation for their future lives. Pupils' good achievement is as a result of the good teaching and learning throughout school. Teachers have well established routines and positive approaches to capture pupils' interest. Pupils know that their ideas are valued and this gives them confidence 'to have a go'. On the whole, teachers use assessment information effectively to focus closely on pupils' learning. However, in some lessons teachers do not always make it perfectly clear what learning is expected and therefore some pupils, particularly the more able, are not challenged enough to ensure they make the best possible progress. The inclusive, caring ethos is central to pupils' good personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy learning and take a keen interest in all the school offers them. They have a high level of trust in staff and say that problems are sorted quickly if they arise. They are well mannered, polite and very well behaved. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is excellent as shown through their willingness to take on responsible roles, raise money for those less fortunate, and the mature awareness of their global responsibilities as reflected in the school's Eco Award. Pupils' progress is tracked well and timely interventions help those who need extra support or are at risk of falling behind. Pupils are set individual targets but they are not involved enough in using them to improve their work and understand how well they are doing. The curriculum is good; it is designed to give pupils a wide range of experiences and to equip them with skills and knowledge they need to help them deal with the challenges they face now and in the future. The impact of the newly introduced International Primary Curriculum is already seen in the imaginative links between subjects which add interest to learning and in the improved way

independence is promoted so that pupils use a wider range of skills within a topic. Although information and communication technology (ICT) is used often as a tool to assist teaching and learning, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use computers themselves in their day to day learning. The headteacher ably supported by the senior leadership team, has evaluated the school's performance in an accurate and self-critical manner. The school understands the needs of its pupils very well and seeks ways to improve things for them. Staff work very well together as a team and this ensures improvements are implemented successfully. There have been some good developments since the school opened in September 2005 and the school is moving forward quickly. Taking this into account, the leadership demonstrates a good capacity to improve further. The school provides good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure all lessons have a clear objective to help pupils, especially the more able, make sufficient progress in their learning.
- Make better use of pupils' individual targets to help them understand how well they are doing and improve their work.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use and develop their ICT skills in their day to day learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good because pupils make good progress in each stage of their development building well on what they have learned as they move up the school. Although children join the Foundation Stage with attainment that is broadly average overall, there are noticeable weaknesses in some aspects of language and literacy, particularly in linking sounds and letters. Since the amalgamation of the two schools, the improved provision in the Foundation Stage is leading to rapid gains in all areas of learning, particularly in the progress children make in developing independence and the acquisition of early reading and writing skills. Pupils build on this good start and continue to make good progress through Years 1 to 6. The school sets and meets its challenging targets so that by Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and vulnerable pupils also make good, and in some cases very good, progress because of the effective guidance and support they receive.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In the Foundation Stage, children learn quickly to share resources and they cooperate very well with others in their learning. The school's welcoming, inclusive ethos is instantly noticeable to visitors. Pupils are friendly, cooperative and behave very well. They are enthusiastic supporters of local charities organising their own fundraising activities to raise money

to help those who are less fortunate than they are. Pupils gain good self-confidence and belief in themselves; this is very clear in the way they take on a whole range of responsible roles and feel they make a difference to school life. The school council is well regarded and plays an important role in decision making in school and gives a real voice to pupils' views. Pupils take the opportunity to share their views in a wider forum and represent their school on various panels within the community, providing ideas for improving local facilities. Their enthusiasm for school is reflected in their above average attendance. Pupils gain a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and participate in a range of physical activities. They particularly enjoy the fun activities led by Play Leaders at playtimes. Year 6 pupils run a healthy tuck shop which is popular with other pupils. The school is continuing its process to eliminate unhealthy choices on the lunchtime menus.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. A positive atmosphere and good relationships are seen in all classes. These form a good foundation for learning and give pupils confidence to take part in discussions and try new things. Interactive white boards and other resources are used well to hold pupils' attention and engage them in their learning. Most teachers identify what pupils need to learn in lessons and share this with pupils to keep learning moving on at a good pace. Where learning objectives are not made clear, pupils, particularly the more able, do not make enough progress in the lesson. Teaching assistants have a good knowledge of the pupils they work with and their good support helps them to progress well. In the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning are often outstanding. The staff provide a wealth of exciting learning experiences both indoors and outdoors to engage and excite the children so that their learning is secured. In Year 1, activities are equally stimulating and very carefully planned to help children build effectively on their previous learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum provides a rich range of learning experiences that help pupils achieve well. First hand experiences through a very varied range of visits and visitors provide a good starting point for the topics within the International Primary Curriculum. This is adding to pupils' enjoyment of learning and enabling more opportunities for them to learn independently. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about personal safety and relationships and this helps them make informed choices about their own well-being. A good variety of well attended after school and lunchtime clubs caters well for pupils' different interests and needs. The targets for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are based securely on their individual needs; this supports their learning and helps them to make good progress. The curriculum for ICT is satisfactory but pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills across other

subjects and this slows their progress. Pupils learn to speak French and Spanish and find out about the cultures of these countries through the specialist teaching by teachers from the secondary school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good overall; the pastoral care for pupils is strong enabling them to feel secure and happy in school. Procedures are in place to support health and safety, safe recruitment of staff and checks on all adults working in school. The school is alert to child protection issues and keeps staff training regularly updated. There are strong partnerships with outside agencies to assure the welfare of vulnerable pupils and to provide advice and support for parents in times of difficulty. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they are well supported in class by skilled teaching assistants. The school identifies problems in learning and makes timely interventions. For example, the Reading Recovery programme, which helps improve pupils' reading skills, and has a positive impact on pupils' progress. Pupils' learning is tracked carefully but pupils have insufficient awareness of their individual targets or how to improve their work. There are well thought out programmes to help children settle quickly in the Foundation Stage and transfer smoothly to secondary school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Leadership, including good governance, gives high priority to the needs of pupils, staffing and the families; this is central to the good climate for learning and the inclusive nature of the school. The monitoring and evaluation of performance is rigorous and effective measures are put into place to ensure improvement in both teaching quality and standards. For example, the whole-school focus on using number lines is helping to improve pupils' problem solving skills. The headteacher's principle of making all pupils feel valued and helping them to feel good about themselves is summed up in the comments made in an assembly during the inspection, 'Look in the mirror and say to yourself. I like the way I am because I'm special.' Parents, pupils and staff are given opportunities to give their views on how well the school is doing and what it needs to do next to improve. The school has developed some excellent partnerships to enhance its provision and pupils' learning experiences.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

When we visited your school recently we were very impressed with the warm welcome you all gave us. It was a great pleasure to talk to you and spend time in your good school. We were very pleased to see your good behaviour and how you were all so polite and get on so well with each other. This is a big help to you in lessons; it is also important in making your school a happy, friendly place. The staff look after you well and work hard to make lessons interesting and help you reach good standards. We have asked the teachers to make sure that in all lessons you are clear about what you are going to learn to help you do the best you can. We can see that the older pupils are really pleased with the jobs they are given and they carry these out very sensibly and help the school run smoothly. The youngest children in Foundation 2 get on with their activities with so little fuss. It is a delight to see how well they work with each other thinking of the best ways to solve their problems. We know that some of you have targets but we would like you to use them more often to help you improve your work. You can help with this by asking your teacher if you have met your target and letting them know if you really understand what it is you have to do next. We think your curriculum is good and that teachers are planning really exciting topics for you. You have lots of opportunities to improve your writing skills but we would like to see you making more use of computers to help you with your learning in other subjects. The headteacher and staff have done a tremendous job in bringing the two schools together to form one and they are constantly seeking ways to make things even better. We wish you and the school the very best for the future.