



Woodslee Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105007
Local Authority Wirral
Inspection number 287090
Inspection date 11 January 2007
Reporting inspector Paul Bamber

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Croft Avenue
School category	Community		Bromborough, Wirral
Age range of pupils	3–11		Merseyside CH62 2BP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 3341406
Number on roll (school)	314	Fax number	0151 3341406
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr James Dunne
		Headteacher	Mrs Evans
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2001		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
3–11	11 January 2007	287090

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Pupils who attend this larger than average school come from a wide range of backgrounds. A slightly smaller than average proportion of pupils in the main school has learning difficulties and/or disabilities but there is an attached unit catering for pupils with social and/or communication difficulties. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and the vast majority are of White British heritage. The school has Investors in People status and the Activemark. The headteacher has been in post since September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'Our children enjoy school life very much. Their lessons are varied and interesting, conducted in a very happy environment.' This typical comment from parents sums up the major strength of this good school. It is a school that ensures effective teaching which promotes above average standards and good achievement. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work rate and their conduct and, as a result, pupils are committed and behave extremely well. The high quality relationships evident in classrooms and around the school contribute significantly to the very positive ethos that prevails. Pupils' personal and social development is good because the school places a high priority on developing their positive attitudes and good health. Pupils enjoy school because they are provided with a good curriculum with many interesting activities both in and out of the classroom. These include visits and visitors, which considerably enhance their learning and personal development. However, as the school acknowledges, provision for the gifted and talented pupils is limited and lacks formal systems and external support.

Children progress well in the Foundation Stage. Despite recent improvements in provision, children's progress in the Nursery class is satisfactory rather than good because their activities sometimes lack sufficient focus and adults fail to challenge the more able children to take a more active part in their learning. This prevails throughout the school, with pupils not habitually involved in assessing how well they are progressing or in developing the skills to critically analyse their own or other pupils' work. The school recognises that this weakness extends to the school council which only very recently has been fully representative of all year groups and which still has no officers who run their own affairs or manage a budget.

The quality of care and support provided for pupils is good and is greatly appreciated by parents and carers, several of whom commented positively about how well their children, especially the more vulnerable, are supported to achieve well. This is especially so for pupils assigned to the unit, the parents of whom report how well they are integrated into mainstream classes and how much they have improved. Other pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants and a dedicated teacher. At other times, teaching assistants are not always fully utilised in lessons, often not being usefully employed during the introduction to lessons.

The good leadership and management by senior leaders and managers considerably influence the school's effective provision, standards and achievement through the rigorous management of performance and accurate self-evaluation. Improvements in pupils' security, in the performance of teachers and pupils and in the effectiveness of middle managers have all resulted from the well focused actions of the headteacher, her able deputy headteacher and governors. They are fully aware what needs to improve to make the school even better and are taking well planned action to achieve this. The school's good record of improvement since the previous inspection and its perceptive view of what needs to improve place it in a good position to improve further. The school offers good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the quality of provision in Nursery.
- Involve pupils more in their own learning and assessment and give them a more potent role in decision making.
- Ensure that teaching assistants are fully utilised throughout the whole of the lessons.
- Improve the arrangements to support pupils with special gifts or talents.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards throughout the school. Children enter the Foundation Stage with broadly expected standards and make good progress overall. By the time they enter Year 1, many exceed national expectations. In the Nursery class, sensitive induction enables children to settle quickly so that their personal and emotional development is very good. However, a lack of rigorous planning and insufficient focus on encouraging children to work out things for themselves mean that their overall progress, especially that of the more able, is only satisfactory. Expectations are higher and planning more focused in the Reception classes and, as a result, children progress well.

In Years 1 and 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently above or well above average and all pupils achieve well. The same picture emerges in Years 3 to 6, with standards and achievement that are good. The school has consistently met or exceeded the targets it sets in the Year 6 national tests in English and mathematics, although results in science were lower than expected in 2006. The school has analysed why this happened and has put into place strategies to ensure that this is not repeated. The good support provided for pupils with a statement of special educational need and others with less complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

A considerable strength in this aspect is the excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes of the pupils. They are very polite, friendly and confident, demonstrating a mature awareness of the benefits of healthy eating and regular exercise. Pupils greatly enjoy school, attend regularly and strive to gain the rewards the school provides for good work, sensible behaviour and lots of effort. They know that there are moral dilemmas concerned with the environment and fair trading and they have responsible and compassionate attitudes to the local and wider community. Pupils are currently under-used in contributing to decision making in the school and in developing their ability to use criteria to make critical judgement about their own or others' work. Pupils feel safe and secure and value the high quality care provided for them.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and contributes well to the good achievements of pupils. There are some relative weaknesses in the Nursery class but, overall, children are well served in the Foundation Stage because of rigorous planning, well focused activities and accurate assessment. Teaching throughout the rest of the school is consistently good. Pupils learn well because they cooperate and learn from each other, are attentive and respond quickly to instructions. Teaching has good pace and probing questions ensure that pupils of all abilities move on in their learning. The very warm relationships evident in classrooms mean that pupils are confident in admitting difficulties. As a result, the less able pupils are quickly reassured and supported effectively to catch up. Teaching assistants provide much of this valuable support but their time is not always managed effectively, especially during the introduction to lessons. Although there is some effective practice in involving pupils in assessing their own work and that of other pupils, this is not a consistent feature of their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils well and satisfies statutory requirements. Pupils' basic skills in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) are well promoted. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those from the unit, are well catered for, as are the needs of more able pupils. Effective support and appropriate arrangements for pupils ensure that nearly all pupils of different abilities achieve well. Although there is recognition within the school of the needs of gifted or talented pupils, and some of these needs are met, there is no formal system to register these needs or to forge partnerships with outside agencies to support them.

A wide range of out-of-class activities attracts many pupils and provides them with valuable sporting and aesthetic experiences. These contribute well to their good personal, social and cultural development. Opportunities to learn a musical instrument and to participate in the school choir and dramatic productions also contribute well to the obvious enjoyment pupils derive from school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are very well cared for. Parents of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, especially those in the unit, are fulsome in their praise. A typical comment is: 'Throughout his schooling so far we have had no end of help and support from his teachers and I cannot emphasise enough how brilliant they have been.' Appropriate

procedures are in place to protect and safeguard pupils, and regular risk assessments ensure that any potential hazards are identified.

Effective links with outside agencies mean that the needs of vulnerable pupils are well catered for and close partnerships with feeder schools enhance transfer. Systems to track pupils' academic progress are effective. However, it is only recently that classroom teachers have been given a key role in this process and that pupils' progress has been evaluated during the school year rather than retrospectively. It is too early to judge the impact of this on raising achievement even further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The new headteacher has astutely identified relative weaknesses in the school's provision and has already taken action to improve aspects of teaching and to enhance systems to ensure pupils' good progress. Ways in which the curriculum and middle management should improve have been identified. Rigorous checking on the quality of lessons, of pupils' work and teachers' planning has focused staff on the need to further improve practice and on the need for a more consistent approach to aspects such as the marking of work and subject leadership. Although middle managers carry out their roles conscientiously and with enthusiasm, too few focus sufficiently on ways in which their actions will specifically improve pupils' achievements. The school's close links with a range of partners contribute significantly to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, to their prowess in sport and to their increasingly mature sense of citizenship.

Leaders and managers at every level, including the governors, provide a very good role model for pupils. This augments the inclusive ethos that prevails. Governors carry out their duties well, ably led by a highly involved chairman. Good financial control ensures that resources are made available to enhance provision where necessary. Recent improvements to security and to resources for ICT are potent examples of this.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

Thank you for making me so welcome during the day I spent in your school. I very much enjoyed my visit. Your school is providing you with a good education and I would like to list what I thought was good about it.

What is good about your school.

- Your excellent behaviour, obvious enjoyment of school and how well you get on together.
- Your friendly teachers who help you to learn well, especially in mathematics and English.
- The many interesting things you can do outside lessons and how well visits and visitors help you with your learning.
- How well you are looked after at school and the way in which those of you who belong to the unit make good progress.
- That the people who run the school are very clear about what needs to be done to make the school even better.

For the school to do even better the next steps are:

- to make sure that the children in the Nursery classes have a good start to their learning
- to involve you more in understanding how well you and your classmates are getting on with your work and how to improve
- to help the staff who work with you make the best use of the time they spend in classes
- to make sure that those of you who have a special gift or talent have the best possible opportunities to develop it.

Thank you for helping me with the inspection of your school. I hope that you continue to really enjoy school and carry on doing very well with your work.