

Church Drive Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105053
Local Authority	Wirral
Inspection number	287105
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Gordon Alston

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Molyneux
Headteacher	Mr N Long
Date of previous school inspection	28 October 2002
School address	Church Drive Port Sunlight Wirral Merseyside CH62 5EF
Telephone number	0151 6455527
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This above average sized village school serves mainly White British pupils and a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. The majority of pupils live outside the village and come from areas with social and economic disadvantage. The entitlement to free school meals is above average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. A few pupils are at the early stages of speaking English. The school has received an Activemark award and is currently on course to achieve a Healthy Schools Award. A new deputy headteacher and a Key Stage 2 leader have recently been appointed to the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Church Drive Primary School is a satisfactory, caring school which provides sound value for money. This differs from the school's belief that it is a good school. The school benefits from the strong support of parents, who comment: 'I wish my school had been as welcoming, friendly and supportive as Church Drive Primary School.' Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils clearly enjoy school because they feel safe and secure, and develop very strong relationships with each other and all staff. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The satisfactory curriculum and the school's caring ethos have a strong influence on pupils, in particular helping them to lead healthy lifestyles and make an important contribution to their local communities.

After a period of instability, the leadership of the school has been strengthened recently. Important changes are already underway and tangible gains are being made. Given the determination of the management team and the good role models that it is providing, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage, where lessons more consistently have pace and challenge and children are expected to think for themselves. As a result, they make good progress. However, this does not happen often enough throughout the rest of the school, resulting in variance in pupils' progress. In mixed age and ability classes teachers struggle to support or challenge all groups of pupils in their work, particularly when teaching assistants are absent. This hampers pupils' progress.

Children enter school with skills below expected levels, particularly in language and personal development. They get a good start in the Foundation Stage enabling them to make good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they enter Year 1 pupils' skills and understanding are at the level expected for their age. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in reading and mathematics are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in writing are below average. Although achievement is satisfactory overall, the more able pupils could do better. The school is aware of the need to raise pupils' achievement in writing and has put a number of initiatives in place which are having a positive impact. Teachers are beginning to provide clear academic guidance and challenging learning targets. However, pupils are not always clear about what their targets are or what they mean. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from good support from staff and outside agencies and make progress at a similar rate to their peers. Overall, therefore, pupils have a satisfactory preparation for their future education and beyond.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has built a positive team spirit among the staff, whose skills as leaders are improving. Governors are hardworking and give good support. They are becoming more proactive in holding the school to account. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory and it now has the capability to analyse and evaluate information. Managers are beginning to make full use of this to help raise standards and improve achievement, as in writing for example. There have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, particularly for the more able.
- Improve the proportion of teaching that is good by focusing on increasing the rate of progress made by pupils of all abilities in lessons.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to play an active role in setting and reviewing their own targets so they know what they are trying to achieve and how they can improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are close to average. In the Foundation Stage, children make good progress from a below average start, many reaching expected levels by the start of Year 1. By the end of Year 2, results in the 2006 national tests were broadly average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. Achievement is strongest in reading and mathematics: achievement in writing is much weaker, particularly for the more able pupils. It is a similar picture in Years 3 to 6, as confirmed in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2006 when standards in writing dipped. In particular, only a small proportion of pupils reached the above average levels in English. The school is rightly focusing on raising standards in writing through setting challenging targets and the careful tracking of pupils' progress. These initiatives are beginning to have an impact on achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as other pupils. The school usually meets the targets it has set.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Attendance is broadly average and pupils are punctual. Pupils respond proudly when rewarded for good behaviour, for example when having lunch at the 'table of the week'. They have a strong understanding of the need for safe play, regular exercise and healthy eating. They also appreciate how well the school helps them to keep safe through class discussions, assemblies and visits from police officers and theatre groups. Pupils say they enjoy lessons, enthusing: 'We actually get involved in doing science experiments for ourselves.' Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Pupils demonstrate good understanding of helping others, both in the local community and the wider world, delivering Harvest Festival gifts to the elderly and raising money for a range of charities. The strong focus on the teaching of basic skills helps to prepare pupils appropriately for the next phase of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning are good and in other classes satisfactory with some good features. Typically lessons are planned in detail and include clear learning objectives so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. Good relationships between teachers and pupils encourage pupils to try hard to complete their tasks successfully. The good support from classroom assistants helps pupils achieve well, particularly those with additional learning needs. However, the

effectiveness of teaching is reduced in mixed age or mixed ability classes when adult support is absent, as here the teachers struggle to support all groups of pupils effectively.

The best lessons, as in the Foundation Stage, are exciting because teachers share their enthusiasm and make tasks challenging and interesting. When teaching is satisfactory, teachers do not actively involve pupils at the start of the lesson and opportunities to develop speaking and thinking skills are missed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory enabling pupils to develop personal skills well. Lessons are planned to enable pupils to consider tolerance, respect and acceptance of people's differences. Pupils' academic achievement is supported adequately by satisfactory provision for English, mathematics and information and communication technology. However, within the curriculum pupils are given limited opportunities to extend their writing skills in all subjects. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides stimulating and interesting activities which help young children to learn well. The wide range of after-school clubs enriches curricular provision and enhances pupils' sporting, artistic and musical talents effectively. The support given by external agencies, visitors and links with the local community make a good contribution to pupils' well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory with strengths in the support for pupils' personal development. Parents are accurate in their view that the school is caring and supportive. Procedures for maintaining pupils' health and safety and for child protection meet requirements. Pupils say they feel safe and secure. Staff work closely with pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and with their parents. Good use is effectively made of the support of outside agencies in education, health and community policing. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Procedures are in place for setting targets for pupil but their use is inconsistent and so pupils are not always aware of their targets or clear about what they mean. As a result, pupils are often not sure about how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory but this is an improving picture. Two newly appointed senior managers, alongside the headteacher and other members of the management team, form an enthusiastic and committed team who share a clear vision for improvement. This vision reflects the school's motto: 'Only our best is good enough'. Leadership and management are impacting positively. The school improvement plan correctly identifies key areas for improvement. Many initiatives have been introduced to improve standards but these are too new to have had maximum impact. More rigorous assessment and target setting procedures are beginning to have a positive effect on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. As a result, for example, standards in writing are improving. The school has good support from governors, several of whom regularly visit school. The governing body as a whole acts as an effective critical friend keeping a close check on performance.

Annex A

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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Church Drive Primary School, Port Sunlight, CE62 5EF

After spending two days in your school, I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to thank you all so much for making the experience a very enjoyable one. We came to see how well your school is performing and you helped us a great deal. Your good behaviour and friendliness are a credit to you all and helped us to judge just how well you and your school are doing.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. Several of you commented on having 'good friends' and being able to 'talk to any of the adults who care for us a lot'. You are right; your school is a caring school. You have a committed headteacher who wants you to be successful at school and has your well-being at the centre of all he does. He and all the staff try to make learning interesting, helping you to achieve satisfactory standards. They work hard to make school enjoyable and exciting with the visits you go on and visitors to school. We were pleased to see how hard you work, but equally important is how well you all get on. We saw lots of pupils who have responsibilities and do them well, particularly the school council and the fund-raising projects you are involved in. We were also very pleased to see all the clubs you have. You take regular exercise and sport is important to you.

I'm sure your teachers always say, 'this is fine but you could make it even better if you.' Well this is what I am saying to your school. We have asked the headteacher and staff to help you to reach higher standards in writing, particularly those of you who could be really good at it. Providing you with more opportunities to write in all subjects would help. I would like your teachers to involve you more in discussions at the start of lessons. I think clearer individual targets for what you will learn and how you can improve would help. (I know you like the idea of having targets to work towards and reach.) I want all your teachers to really push you and challenge you in all lessons, and you can help by making sure you achieve your school motto: 'Only our best is good enough'.