

# Much Woolton Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104636
<b>Local Authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	308638
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clare Henderson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	408
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs C Chapman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr J Keogh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 May 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Watergate Lane Woolton Liverpool Merseyside L25 8QH

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 October 2008
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**Telephone number**  
**Fax number**

151 4286114  
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6, the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the quality of leadership and management in the school. Evidence was collected from the observation of lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work and records of their progress, and examination of other documentation including completed parents' questionnaires. Discussions were held with pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

Much Woolton is a larger than average school. The majority of pupils come from relatively advantaged backgrounds, as seen in the below average proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. A lower than average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language and a few are from minority ethnic groups. None of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English. Children come to the EYFS Reception class from a range of different local Nursery settings. The school operates a breakfast club. It has gained the Healthy Schools 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 in which pupils achieve well. Notable strengths are pupils' positive attitudes to learning, together with their excellent behaviour and very high levels of attendance. The majority of parents agree and speak highly of the good quality of care and support their children receive, 'from able, knowledgeable and supportive staff'. However, a significant proportion do not feel sufficiently informed about their children's progress, and would welcome further opportunities to be better informed and subsequently more involved in their children's learning.

Achievement is good. Standards reached when pupils leave Years 2 and 6 have generally been above the national average since the last inspection, consistently so in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, attainment has been more variable; standards are generally well above average in English and science while in mathematics they have been slightly above average. As a result of less consistently good attainment in mathematics, the school recently put in place initiatives to improve pupils' mathematical skills. An increased focus on problem solving and calculation skills was introduced. These are beginning to pay dividends and evidence from the inspection shows that attainment in these mathematical skills is improving.

Pupils have a good appreciation of the importance of healthy and safe lifestyle choices and understand well how to keep out of harm's way. This is seen in the enthusiastic way they take part, with staff, in the daily 'wake up and shake up' sessions or in the wide range of sporting activities available to them, both within and outside the school day. They greatly value the opportunities given to express their views as school councillors or to help one another as prefects or playground leaders. School councillors really feel they are listened to, for instance in being given the chance to report back to governors on the success of improvements initiated by pupils. Such roles are one part of the good preparation of pupils for the next stage of their education.

Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. They show good care for one another, their school and local community. They display a thorough awareness and involvement in the world in which they live. These factors contribute well to their good personal development.

The good progress pupils make is the result of good quality teaching. Major strengths include effective lesson planning, strong relationships and the good use made of information and communication technology (ICT) to extend pupils' enjoyment of learning and their knowledge and understanding of world issues. For example, recent work undertaken in 'Black history' week widened pupils' knowledge of cultural diversity while extending their respect and tolerance for others effectively. Good use of learning support assistants ensures that those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates. In spite of these strengths, checks to ensure that pupils are on track to achieve the targets set in their work are not carried out at regular enough intervals by teachers.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and promotes pupils' basic English, mathematics and ICT skills well. It is beginning to make links between subjects which help pupils apply their skills and knowledge across a range of areas of learning. However, the school would be the first to say that this is at an early stage of development. An exciting range of visitors to the school helps pupils to develop their skills and knowledge, and supports their personal development well. Chances for pupils to gain first-hand experiences through visits to places of educational interest are good. Opportunities for further stimulating work are followed up well in the classroom to promote effective learning. Extra-curricular sporting, musical and

creative activities, as well as the chance to learn Spanish, promote pupils' fitness, health and enjoyment and are very popular.

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Procedures are in place to keep pupils safe and staff work closely with outside agencies to ensure that specialist support is available when needed. The school, through the good partnerships it has established to foster pupils' well-being, provides well supported breakfast care provision. Pupils have targets which give them a clear focus for their learning. The quality of marking through the school is variable. When most effective, it clearly tells pupils what they have achieved in their work and what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management are good. Senior managers, led by the caring and hard-working headteacher and recently appointed deputy headteacher, provide an energetic lead in the drive to move the school forward. Areas for improvement have been accurately identified and prioritised. The school gathers a range of information about each pupil's performance in different subjects. However, tracking and analysis of the progress pupils make towards set targets are not carried out frequently enough by subject leaders to ensure that all pupils reach their potential. Governance is good and, as the chair of governors says, 'We do not rest on our laurels.' This is reflected in their drive for only the best for their pupils and their families. As such, the school has made good progress since the last inspection, provides good value for money and is well placed to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

'Welcoming and secure' typifies the views of parents of this good quality EYFS. Strong links with parents and pre-school providers mean that children settle quickly into school. Within this bright and lively environment, both indoors and out, exciting and imaginative activities extend children's interests, abilities and enjoyment of school creatively. As a result, from their first days, they become happy, confident learners. The curriculum is well planned and there is a good balance between activities led by teachers and those selected by children. Staff are particularly good at extending language and learning through daily sessions focusing on letters and sounds. This helps to boost children's early reading and writing skills well. The children also make good progress in developing their ideas and extending their talking and thinking skills through purposeful and encouraging teaching. Knowledge and skills on entry are within those typically expected for this age. Children make good progress in their learning and most leave the EYFS working securely within the goals expected. Leadership and management are good. With careful planning, the EYFS manager, together with the headteacher and EYFS staff, have overseen many developments which have updated and enhanced learning opportunities for all children. Parents praise staff saying they are 'gentle and considerate'. Consequently, personal development and the care and attention given to children's welfare and safety are good. Assessment is effective and continuous and includes many observations and photographs, which builds up a picture of a child's capabilities and future needs. The staff use this information successfully in daily planning and are beginning to use it further to identify and address any gaps in areas of learning.

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

- Extend opportunities for parents to be informed and subsequently more involved in their children's learning.

- Increase the frequency of tracking and analysis of pupils' progress by class teachers and subject leaders to ensure that all pupils reach their potential.

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## 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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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/or disabilities make progress	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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

Inspection of Much Woolton Catholic Primary School, Liverpool, L25 8QH

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing your comments. You say that you go to a good school and we agree with you.

You make good progress in your work and your results in the national tests in English, mathematics and science at Year 6 are generally higher than in many other schools. All of the adults take good care of you and this helps you to really enjoy school and feel safe there. You are good at carrying out your jobs, eating healthily, taking lots of exercise, attending school regularly and behaving very well. These things help you grow into healthy, caring and confident young people. Your teachers make learning interesting and exciting and provide lots of opportunities to go on trips and join after-school clubs. Everyone works together well in your school and helps you to join in with events in your local community, as well as helping you to learn more about other communities across Britain and the world. The youngest children are given a good start to school life and they learn well both in their classroom and in their outdoor area. Your headteacher, teachers and governors are good at finding ways to improve your school.

To improve your school even more, I have asked your teachers to:

- help your parents to understand better what you are learning at school and to have more opportunities to be involved in school life
- make sure regular checks are made as to how you are achieving your targets.

You can help your teachers by always doing your best. I hope that you continue to enjoy being at school and keep working hard.