

# Mount Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104993
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	324140
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Law

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	304
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 A Hardy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Bernard Cassidy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 March 2006
<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>	Mount Pleasant Road Wallasey Merseyside CH45 5HE
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 6303329
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 6301462

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<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school and serves an area where social deprivation is average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups or at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Overall, the number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average but this varies between year groups and in some it is more than a third of pupils. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award, Activemark and the Basic Skill Quality Mark.

There is a day nursery on site which is run by a private provider and did not form part of this inspection.

## 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 where pupils enjoy learning, are proud of their achievements and make good progress. Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and learning and a curriculum that captures their interest. By the time they leave the school, they reach standards that are above average in English and science. Effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities helps them to make good progress. Good leadership creates a common sense of purpose with a focus on raising achievement.

Although most children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skill generally in line with those typical at this age, a significant number are below in the key areas of communication, language and literacy and number. They settle well in the Reception Year and their achievement is good. They continue to make good progress at Key Stage 1. Although there was a dip in 2008, pupils currently at the end of Year 2 are on course to reach above average standards. Good progress continues at Key Stage 2. The Year 6 pupils attained above average results in English in the 2008 national tests but mathematics was broadly average. The English results were better than in the previous two years. Pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 are on course to sustain this improvement and reach above average standards in both English and science but mathematics remains average.

The school is a happy place and enables pupils to acquire positive attitudes. Behaviour is good. Pupils are eager to talk about places they have visited and how they help each other, for example, as buddies in the playground. They are confident in approaching adults if they have a problem and know it will be dealt with sensitively. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe and describe how they take exercise to keep them well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils learn to tolerate difference and respect the needs of others. Attendance is average.

Teaching and learning are good and supported by positive relationships between adults and pupils. Classrooms are well organised and enhanced by attractive displays of pupils' work. Teaching challenges pupils and they are actively involved, for example, when they explain their thinking by talking to a partner. However, sometimes in mathematics pupils' problem solving and mental calculation skills are not given enough attention. Assessment, including marking, shows pupils what they need to do to improve, and because of this, next steps are planned well to match their needs. Care, guidance and support are good and pastoral systems ensure pupils' needs are understood and met. Good methods have been introduced to evaluate pupils' progress as they move through the school. Pupils are secure in knowing their personal targets. The curriculum is good and provides many opportunities that add to pupils' enjoyment.

Good leadership and management promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination by enabling everyone to feel valued and to develop well personally. Under the able leadership of the headteacher, there is a clear sense of direction and an ambition to improve provision and outcomes for pupils. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. School leaders recognise the need to raise achievement in mathematics so it better matches what is done in English and a plan is in place to support this. Performance is reviewed and evaluated well and all leaders are effective in identifying what is working and what could be improved. A development plan clearly sets out how improvements will be made but measurable outcomes to judge success are not included so there is no clear statement of what leaders expect. The governing body understands the school well and is eager to maintain improvement. Staff and

other resources are efficiently managed. Safeguarding meets current government requirements. Improvement since the last inspection and value for money are both good. The school has a good capacity to improve. Parents are supportive of the direction the school is taking and as one commented: 'The school has created a fresh, fun, modern way of learning with traditional values and a sense of community.'

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

### **Grade: 2**

Good relationships are formed in a warm and caring environment where children feel secure. This is seen in the firm commitment shown by staff to promoting children's well-being. Achievement is good and children participate in learning with obvious enjoyment. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage most children reach levels that are in line with those expected. Assessment is used well to plan learning to meet children's needs. There is an effective balance between what adults direct and what children choose for themselves. Children follow instructions well and adults carefully take the opportunity to discuss learning, extend understanding and improve skills. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development becoming increasingly confident and independent. They play exceptionally well together and take responsibility, for example, in choosing activities and when tidying away. They particularly enjoy being outdoors where they are able to learn about the natural world. Outdoor provision is well equipped and imaginatively organised. Children thoroughly enjoyed planning a magical garden entered through a 'secret' door. Good leadership and management provide a strong focus on making learning exciting. Adults plan the curriculum very well as a team to ensure progression in learning, particularly so children can develop their speaking and listening skills. Opportunities for musical development are very good. The day-to-day organisation is smooth and efficient. Good induction arrangements help children settle quickly. Parents and/or carers are actively involved in their children's learning, for example, with the 'Tea Party' at the end of the 'Ourselves' topic. One said: 'I have been delighted by how the staff have encouraged and supported my child.'

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

- Improve the teaching of problem solving and mental calculation to raise achievement in mathematics.
- Improve the school development plan by including measurable outcomes against which success can be evaluated.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress across Key Stage 1. Pupils currently at the end of Year 2 are on track to reach above average standards. They are making particularly good progress in their reading because of the effective teaching of letters and sounds. This is an improvement on last year's end of Key Stage 1 assessments that were below average in writing. Before 2008, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 had been above average. Pupils make good progress across Key Stage 2. In the 2008 end of key stage tests, standards in English were above average. These pupils reached only average standards at the end of Year 2 so their progress across the key stage was good. School assessment information and work seen by inspectors in pupils' books indicate good progress across Key Stage 2 and a continuing improvement in English. There is also evidence of gains in mathematics but standards reached

in the 2008 tests were average and the rate of learning in this subject, though often good, does not match that in English. In science, the 2008 test results were above average and across the school pupils make good progress in this subject, particularly in their ability to investigate. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good throughout the school because their needs are assessed accurately and met through good intervention programmes. Throughout the school there is effective teaching of speaking and listening. This enables pupils to make good progress in these key skills.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and appreciate the chance to learn alongside others and explore ideas. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of other cultures, contribute well to their own community and raise money for a wide range of charities. They have a link with a school in Uganda and get regular feedback on how the money they have raised has been spent. Pupils work and play well together and behaviour is good. Play leaders take their responsibilities seriously and this contributes to break-times being relaxed and purposeful. The school council enables a strong pupil voice. Their recent trip to the Houses of Parliament developed their understanding of citizenship. Pupils take pride in their school, their achievements and are concerned about others. They say they feel safe and that any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively and promptly. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe, for example when using the internet. Their understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle is good and they are able to make sensible choices, for example, eating healthy fruit and salad. The development of their workplace skills is good and contributes effectively to pupils' future economic well-being. Attendance is average and there is little persistent absence.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and this helps pupils to make good progress. Classrooms are organised consistently well throughout the school and displays of pupils' work are attractive and purposeful. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good. Lessons are well planned to meet the needs of all pupils, and are based on thorough and accurate assessment of what pupils can do and what they need to learn next. Marking is very helpful to pupils in showing them not only what they have done well but how they can improve and reach their personal targets. Pupils are provided with relevant opportunities to learn from practical activity and are able to share their ideas. They enjoy this and it helps them to develop positive attitudes, work cooperatively, plan their own learning and take responsibility. There is very effective use of the interactive whiteboards to engage pupils and capture their interest. For example, one class viewed clips of road safety campaign material and then went on to use camcorders to record their own examples. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to talk purposefully with a partner and this helps them to explain their thinking and improve their language skills. The teaching of writing is effective and is enabling pupils to develop their understanding and skills. Pupils enjoy mathematics when the learning is active, but not enough attention is given to the teaching of mental calculation and problem solving. The school is providing training for teachers to improve their skills in these areas.

## Curriculum and other activities

### Grade: 2

Pupils are provided with a good curriculum that meets statutory requirements and there are some outstanding features. It engages their interest, promotes enjoyment of learning and meets their needs well. There is a strong focus on encouraging pupils to become active learners and develop an enquiring mind. They make links between areas of learning as they explore exciting topics through first-hand experience. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, explain their thinking and use key skills in other areas of the curriculum are consistently applied. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 created excellent pastel landscapes linked to their project about the weather. French is taught throughout the school. Assessment information is used well to plan for the full range of needs. Personal, social and health education forms an integral part of the curriculum and supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils appreciate the opportunities they receive to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns with others during class discussions. They develop the self-confidence and skills to achieve their future economic well-being through group work, planning and carrying out their own investigations. A broad enrichment programme is open to pupils and includes regular visits to places of educational interest. Pupils have opportunities to develop their team building skills and outdoor pursuits from the excellent residential trips on offer from Year 4 to Year 6.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. Teachers and other adults in the school are committed to promoting learners' health and safety. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils meet government guidelines. They are regularly reviewed, and health and safety are carefully managed. There are efficient systems to ensure the good attendance of pupils. The school provides a safe and supportive environment. Any pupils at risk are identified early and effective arrangements are put in place to keep them engaged, and to ensure they are on course to reach their targets. The assessment of pupils' progress is thorough and carefully tracked as they move through the school. The information is used very well to ensure their needs are met. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is carefully monitored and provision is thoughtfully mapped out to ensure good progress. The school works well with other agencies to remove any barriers to learning. Pupils know their personal targets and the marking of their work helps them to improve and to feel motivated.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The school has made a good improvement since the last inspection, resources are well managed, and value for money is good. There is clear direction and a strong emphasis on raising achievement through improving teaching, learning and the curriculum. Self-evaluation is rigorous, comprehensive and involves all levels of leadership and governors. First-hand evidence of the quality of learning and teaching and of pupils' progress is diligently monitored. From this, school leaders have a good grasp of strengths and weaknesses and relevant improvement priorities are agreed and acted on. The impact of this effective leadership is seen in improving standards, particularly in English. The school is inclusive and

equality of opportunity is promoted well. There are robust procedures to eliminate discrimination. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion through extensive links with other schools locally and internationally, through contacts with children in Africa. The headteacher has built a strong team of leaders with a common sense of purpose and an ambition for pupils to succeed. A well-informed body of governors is committed to enabling pupils to enjoy learning and holds the school to account for the standards pupils reach. Action plans show what needs to improve and how it will be done but do not include how outcomes for pupils will be measured, so leaders' expectations are not as clearly shared as they might be. Parents are pleased with the school and speak positively about it. One summed this up by saying, 'we are fortunate to have such a dedicated team'. The capacity to improve is good and the school can demonstrate a track record of success.



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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	3
The behaviour of learners	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

<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**

We enjoyed our visit to your school and you made us feel very welcome. Thank you for contributing to the inspection by being eager to talk to us and tell us about your school.

We found that your school is providing you with a good education. You tell us that you feel safe in school. We were impressed by your good behaviour and found that you work hard in your lessons. This is helping you to make good progress in your learning.

We have asked the teachers to help you achieve better in mathematics by giving you more opportunity to solve problems and work things out in your head. We have also asked the leaders of your school to make a small improvement in the way they plan for future school projects.

The teachers and other adults take good care of you and the teaching and learning you receive are good. We thought the curriculum was good and you have some really interesting things to do, including visits to exciting places. You show an excellent understanding of the importance of exercise to keep healthy. It is good that your teachers give you chances to work cooperatively with other children and you are very sensible when you do this. It helps you to enjoy your learning and make better progress.

We were pleased to see that you know your personal targets and we thought teachers assess your work really well and give you good advice on how you can improve it. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and we know that your attendance is satisfactory. We hope you will play your part in helping to achieve the improvements. You can do this by continuing to work hard, especially at your mathematics, and by trying to reach the targets your teachers set for you.