

Woolton Primary School

Out Lane, Woolton, Liverpool Merseyside, L25 5NN

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Staff take good care of all pupils. There are strong, supportive relationships which help pupils to thrive.
- Children get off to a good, and sometimes outstanding, start in the creative and stimulating Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics, making good, and sometimes excellent, progress from their starting points.
- Teaching is typically good throughout the school and sometimes outstanding. This is leading to pupils making faster progress and their attainment is rising.
- Pupils are proud of their school, enjoy learning, behave well and feel safe.
- The headteacher, ably assisted by other senior leaders, including governors, has been highly instrumental in leading the school's successful development since its amalgamation.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The improvements made to teaching are not yet reflected in all lessons and this results in work that is not always challenging enough, particularly for the more able pupils.
- Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills in writing for different purposes or to use their mathematical skills to solve problems related to real life.
- The role of subject and middle leaders in improving pupils' progress is not yet fully developed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 30 lessons or part-lessons. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and observed teaching assistants working with small groups, scrutinised pupils' work and listened to them read. They also observed children at playtime and lunchtime.
- Discussions were held with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and representatives of the local authority. Inspectors also took account of 41 responses to a staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a wide range of documents including the school's improvement plans, data on pupils' past and current progress, minutes of governing body meetings, information on how well staff are performing and records relating to behaviour, attendance, child protection and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of 50 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Chris Maloney, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sue Hall	Additional Inspector
Kirsty Haw	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2011 following the closure of the former infant and junior schools which shared the same site. A large building and refurbishment project, which included linking the previous two schools together, was completed in September 2012.
- As a result of the amalgamation, the school is much bigger than average and serves pupils from a wide area.
- The school hosts out-of-hours childcare provision which is inspected separately.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average. The premium provides additional funding for children in local authority care, for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children from service families.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average. The proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the percentage of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information consistently to plan work that is neither too easy nor too hard for all pupils, especially the more able
 - ensuring that all lessons are taught at a brisk pace and that all pupils are actively engaged throughout the whole lesson.
- Raise attainment and accelerate progress further by:
 - ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their work and have time to respond to the advice given
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write at length and for different reasons in all subjects
 - giving pupils more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to real-life problem solving
 - increasing the opportunities for subject and middle leaders to check that their work is bringing about improvements in the progress of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter Nursery with a range of skills and knowledge typically expected for their age, although an increasing number are joining in the Reception year below this level. They make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in all areas of learning, especially in their language and personal development. They enter Year 1 with skills and abilities above those typically found for children of their age.
- Teachers and support staff have been successful in helping pupils settle into their new school and to do their best. As a result, pupils in Years 1 to 6 also achieve well. Most pupils left Year 2 in 2012 with standards significantly above those expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most pupils made good progress in Years 3, 4 and 5 last year in reading, writing and mathematics. Year 6 pupils made huge leaps in progress from their low starting points on joining the school in all subjects, reaching standards that were broadly average. However, few reached the higher levels in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' current rates of progress show good achievement being made in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups, although more-able pupils are not always making as much progress as they should.
- Pupils generally do well in reading because they receive good-quality teaching of phonics (the regular practising of linking letters and sounds) in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Although the Year 1 check on pupils' use of phonics showed attainment was below that seen nationally in 2012, this result did not reflect the good progress made by these pupils.
- Reading skills continue to be developed systematically in Key Stage 2, with pupils reading with increasing fluency and confidence as they move through the school. Pupils are keen readers and talk knowledgeably about their favourite authors.
- Pupils' writing develops well through school, especially in response to creative ideas. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to write in all subjects.
- In mathematics the regular and focused teaching of basic number work and calculation ensures that pupils are increasingly confident and secure in working out addition, subtraction and multiplication problems. However, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use these skills in tackling problems that may occur in real-life situations.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similarly good progress to other groups of pupils because their needs are identified early and met skilfully through targeted support. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding are making similarly good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Almost all teaching is at least good and some is outstanding, although there are some variations in quality and a small amount that requires improvement.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children enjoy a wide range of activities that are well planned to meet their differing needs and interests. In an outstanding lesson in Nursery, children were given lots of short, practical activities that reinforced their counting skills, recognition of numbers to 10 and use of mathematical language. The highly skilled teacher constantly challenged their thinking with probing questions in a very reassuring way which meant that all children made rapid progress.
- Teachers and support staff work very effectively together to support learning. They know their pupils well and build extremely positive and caring relationships with them that help pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- Teachers have responded enthusiastically to the whole-school focus on making teaching the best it can be.

- In the most effective lessons teachers use their good subject knowledge and assessment information well to plan enjoyable, interesting and creative activities that are taught at a brisk pace, 'stretch' pupils of all abilities and keep them fully engaged. This ensures that pupils make the best possible progress. The best teaching involves giving pupils precise information on how to improve their work and time to respond to the advice given.
- Although these features were seen in many lessons, they are not yet consistently practised in all.
- A typical pupil view is 'I like lessons most when we do fun and interesting things and we can work with partners to investigate and do hard work'.
- In an outstanding Year 6 lesson pupils were highly engaged and motivated by working in teams to investigate characters and the gadgets used by spies linked to a class story. The class teacher very skilfully used probing questioning and different versions of the story, in the form of the book, a graphic novel and a film. This encouraged pupils to take notes when explaining their ideas.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Key features of this new school are its welcoming nature and how well all pupils get on and support each other. Pupils quickly make friends and enjoy the many clubs that take place before and after school and during lunchtime, such as orchestra, photography, new technologies, enterprise and a variety of sports clubs.
- Pupils are friendly, courteous and well-mannered. They move around the school quietly and sensibly. They get on well with one another and with all the adults in an environment of mutual respect. A typical pupil view is 'Our school is safe, fun and you can be yourself'.
- Children in Nursery and Reception classes learn and play together very well, which gives them a good start to their life in school.
- Pupils are proud of their new school and speak enthusiastically about the caring staff and the help they receive. They are also keen and eager to learn. This is reflected in their improving attendance, which is close to the national average, and their good behaviour in lessons and while at play.
- Pupils say that behaviour is at its best and they learn most when they do interesting work, have opportunities to work with others and when activities really challenge them. However, when teaching is not good there are occasional lapses in attention and concentration.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are rare and teachers and support staff manage behaviour well because they sensitively apply the whole-school systems for rewards and sanctions.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of responsibilities they can take, such as being a prefect, playground buddy or member of the School Council, which has helped to make improvements to playground equipment.
- Pupils show a good understanding of the various forms that bullying may take, including cyber-bullying and bullying as a result of prejudice. They have an excellent understanding of how to challenge racism. Pupils are confident that, on the very rare occasions bullying takes place, they know who to speak to so that it is dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Pupils report they feel safe and understand how to be healthy and keep safe. Older pupils know a great deal about staying safe on the internet. Parents agree that their children feel safe.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's inspirational and outstanding leadership has been pivotal in successfully establishing this new school. She has high expectations and a determination to provide all pupils with the very best educational experiences. Staff at all levels, along with the governing body, share the headteacher's ambitions for the school.
- Senior leaders have worked together well as a team, have an accurate view of the school's

performance and have used the information gathered to plan improvements. Staff morale is very high because all feel valued and supported in their professional development. This is reflected in the responses to the staff questionnaire.

- Senior leaders have taken decisive steps in raising the quality of teaching through a whole-school approach to training and support. They rigorously check teaching and take actions to follow up on areas for improvement. Teachers welcome the opportunities they are given to improve their skills by sharing their practice and observing the best teaching in their own and in other schools.
- Teachers are held rigorously to account through the management of their performance and by holding regular meetings to check on the progress pupils are making.
- Subject and middle leaders are skilled, keen and enthusiastic and have made improvements in their areas of responsibility. However, their role is underdeveloped as they do not currently have enough opportunities to check that their work is making a difference to the achievement of pupils.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and is enriched with art, music, clubs, visits, visitors and activities such as Black History Month, special assemblies and links with school communities in Nepal and Spain.
- Rigorous checks are made on all staff and visitors so that pupils are kept safe.
- The local authority has provided extensive, good-quality support in successfully helping the school to improve all areas of its work, especially the quality of teaching, the achievement of pupils and the ways the school checks the quality of its work.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school and would recommend it to others.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has worked well in supporting and leading developments in establishing this new school. Governors clearly demonstrate high expectations and ensure all pupils have an equal chance to learn. The Chair, in particular, ensures that all governors provide a high degree of challenge in holding staff to account for the achievement of pupils through rigorous checks on how well they are performing. Governors have a secure knowledge of the strengths of the school and recognise where further improvements need to be made in teaching and pupils' progress. They have used pupil premium funding well to target additional support and check that it is having a positive impact on the achievement of the pupils it is intended for. Governors frequently visit the school and receive good-quality reports from staff, the local authority and external consultants to help them hold the school to account. They ensure that child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	136813
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	400288

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 of pupils on the school roll	569
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheila Adams
Headteacher	Jane Ngenda
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0151 428 3066
Fax number	-
Email address	jane.ngenda@wooltonprimary.com

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