

Childwall Valley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134210
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	381631
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2012
Lead inspector	Frank Carruthers

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	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Winner
Headteacher	Kevin Basnett
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Frank Carruthers
Paul Latham

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers and two visiting specialists. Pupils' written work was inspected and pupils' behaviour was observed at play and lunchtimes. The inspectors held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and several parents and carers. The lead inspector consulted the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection but no responses were recorded. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including the school's raising attainment plan, the school development plan, records of monitoring teaching and learning, attendance and behavioural records, and minutes of meetings of the governing body. Inspectors analysed 27 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those returned by pupils.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average size for primary schools nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. Very few are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. The school meets the current floor standards. The school provides a daily breakfast club. The school has achieved several awards including the International School Award 2006 – 12, the Liverpool Inclusion Charter Mark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. It has Healthy School status and was the BECTA Best Whole School UK information and communication technology (ICT) Award winner in 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- The school provides a good education for its pupils. It has maintained this quality since the previous inspection and has good capacity for sustained improvement.
- Pupils achieve well. Children get off to an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception Years thanks to outstanding teaching and a vibrant curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make good progress and this is the result of good and at times outstanding teaching and an excellent curriculum. As a result, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the national average. Attainment is higher in reading than in writing or mathematics, though there are some comparative weaknesses in all three subjects. For example, in mathematics a few pupils are not achieving their potential to reach Level 5 in Year 6 tests.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. They receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants both in class and in small group work.
- The quality of teaching and the curriculum is enhanced by the exceptional use of modern technology, the very well-planned and rich curriculum and the highly effective use of day-to-day marking, tracking and assessment procedures. Both teaching and the curriculum have a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils report that they enjoy school very much and feel very safe. Bullying is not a concern for them and the whole school is a welcoming and harmonious environment for learning. Their behaviour is rarely less than good and often outstanding, especially in lessons. Their attendance last year was just below the average of all primary schools. Both attendance and punctuality to school have begun to show improvement in the current school year. This is because the school is monitoring both aspects more rigorously. It is also dealing more effectively with those families taking unauthorised term-time holidays and with pupils who are persistently late.

- Good leadership, management and governance are driving forward school improvement well. Outstanding elements include the monitoring of teaching and the management of the curriculum by the headteacher. High quality expertise and teamwork are strengths of the senior leadership team.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Drive up attainment further in English and mathematics by:
 - monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of additional small group work and the teaching of letters and sounds
 - developing the interest of lower-attaining boys in reading and writing
 - seeking opportunities such as special weeks and events to promote pupils' interest in reading and writing and to engage with parents and carers in supporting their children's interest in books
 - developing the use of the library in school
 - ensuring higher-attaining pupils do well in mathematics.
- Improve attendance by seeking ways to reduce absence caused by parents and carers taking unauthorised family holidays in term time.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils make good progress in lessons. They have excellent relationships with adults and respond quickly to instruction. This was evident among children in the Early Years Foundation Stage when they were having great fun working together as a team to keep a ball from falling off the edge of a large parachute. Pupils become articulate learners. They answer questions and give their opinions in discussion readily. In a Year 5 topic on Making The News, pupils displayed confident language skills as they planned role-play activities relating to the destruction of a medieval castle. Pupils work well with partners on problems. They share equipment sensibly. They take pride in their work so that workbooks are neat and handwriting tidy. Questionnaires and comments received from parents and carers indicate overwhelming satisfaction with the achievement of their children in all subjects.

Children start in the Nursery with levels of skill that are generally well below those expected for children of their age, especially in aspects of personal, social and emotional development and communication and language. They make excellent progress thanks to the high quality provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit, becoming increasingly independent in their learning. By the time they start in Key Stage 1, the majority are now working at levels expected for pupils at this stage.

All pupils achieve well as they move through the school. The great majority make or exceed the levels of progress expected of them and by the end of Year 6 attainment is in line with the national average. This has been the case in two of the last three years and is evident in the current year group. These pupils have achieved well because they entered Year 1 generally below average. However, a few pupils, often

those who join the school in Key Stage 2, fall short of expectations, for example, in mathematics. The gap between the achievement of boys and girls in writing is narrowing and is highlighted in the current school development plan as an area for further action. Pupils with special educational needs are monitored carefully to ensure they make good progress and this they do. The very few pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress in acquiring the language and take a full part in the life of the school.

By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading is average. The teaching of letters and sounds is good, although this has not always been the case in the past. As a result, some pupils in Key Stage 2 require further support. Their ability to read unfamiliar words is hampered by insecure knowledge of letters and sounds. The school has recognised this and set up small groups led by a teacher to help eliminate gaps in their knowledge. At the end of Year 6 in 2011, attainment in reading was average. It is a similar picture in the current Year 6 class. However, some lower-attaining boys display insufficient interest in reading for pleasure. The school library is not used to its full potential at this time and there have been few special events to promote interest in reading and writing in recent terms. Partnerships with parents and carers to promote their children's interest in reading are also under-developed.

Quality of teaching

All staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve and they plan rigorously to cater for the needs of all pupils. A Year 6 English lesson, focusing on writing about heroes, was exceptionally well planned with video clips and supportive ideas for sentence structure. This led to pupils making excellent choices for the vocabulary and sentences they used in their work. Teachers draw very effectively on pupils' prior knowledge and ideas in order to stimulate them to find out more. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher carefully built on pupils' existing knowledge of mathematical terms, such as 'cone' with new vocabulary, such as 'vertices'.

The school is a model of outstanding practice for its use of new technology. Interactive whiteboards, laptop computers, hand-held devices, voting pods and video cameras feature prominently in many lessons. As a result, pupils' familiarity and confidence with new technology are exceptional. Pupils now use their hand-held devices, or 'fizzbooks', at home. They regularly communicate with schools in other countries through email and webcam facilities, as part of the International Primary Curriculum. These aspects have a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They also mean the pupils are very well prepared for the secondary school curriculum.

Teachers mark pupils' work to a very high standard. In all subjects teachers make positive comments on two aspects of the pupils' work and then highlight a point for improvement or the next step in learning. This encourages pupils to reflect on their learning and know what is expected of them. Pupils say they find this very beneficial. It also encourages them to take pride in their work. Teaching assistants are generally used very well in lessons to support different groups of pupils, although occasionally opportunities are missed for them to make a strong impact.

Parents and carers express their full confidence in the quality of teaching in the school. Several were very complimentary about the work of individual teachers. This positive impression is an accurate reflection of the quality of teaching in the school.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils report that behaviour is consistently good. This was borne out by inspection observations, past records and the views of parents and carers. There are very few, if any, pupils who display challenging behaviour. There have been very few exclusions in the last three years. The school successfully promotes very good behaviour by its welcoming, orderly ethos and the rich curriculum it offers. Pupils have the opportunity for an early start at the school's breakfast club, where they can enjoy a varied healthy menu and a relaxing time playing table top and other games with friends. There are many visitors to school, for instance, the signing instructors to pupils in Year 3. There are visits out of school, for example, to the nearby wild flower centre, a rich curriculum that includes learning Spanish and, for pupils in Year 4, the chance to play the clarinet. All these mean that pupils really enjoy school.

Pupils report that bullying is extremely rare and they understand that name-calling is wrong. The school takes all appropriate measures to keep the pupils safe. As a result, pupils have a very clear understanding about personal safety and, in particular, the dangers inherent in using the internet.

Levels of attendance in the past have been adversely affected by families taking unauthorised holidays in term time. In recent terms, the school has become more rigorous in its approach to dealing with this problem and with individual persistent absentees. As a result, attendance in autumn 2011 was above average and an improvement on the same period in 2010. This is a promising outcome. In addition, senior leaders and the governing body have taken a much stronger line with latecomers this year. This has already had an excellent impact on punctuality. It means lessons at the beginning of the day start exactly on time and this has benefits for the learning of all pupils.

Leadership and management

The school's leadership team of headteacher, deputy and assistant headteacher is very strong. Their levels of expertise across several areas, including literacy, numeracy, the Early Years Foundation Stage, ICT and assessment, are very high. This means school self-evaluation is sharp. School development planning is very well focused on how well pupils are performing in basic skills and what can be done to eliminate weaknesses. The tracking of pupils' progress and target setting are well established procedures. All staff know their pupils well and what needs to be done so that they achieve their potential.

The curriculum is outstanding not only because it meets the needs of pupils to be literate and numerate, it is broad and balanced. It promotes a successful progression to secondary education and makes an excellent contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It stimulates pupils' interests exceptionally well and has a rich array of experiences for them. As a result, pupils' understanding of diversity and other cultures is good. They show empathy with others and play and

work harmoniously together. The school is effective in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination so that all pupils are valued and encouraged to perform their best.

Improvement since the last inspection has been underpinned by the excellent monitoring of teaching and high quality professional training. Increasingly since the last inspection, middle managers make a positive impact on subject development. Teachers new to the school receive good support and are encouraged to be adventurous in their teaching. The governing body has a good grasp of how well the school is doing. Very well led by the new Chair of the Governing Body, it effectively supports and challenges senior leaders. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. Staff training in child protection is regularly updated as new appointments are made. Policies are in place and regularly reviewed. Site security is of a high standard. For all these reasons, the school's leadership and management and its capacity for sustained improvement are judged to be good.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Childwall Valley Primary School, Liverpool L25 1NW

It was a great pleasure to inspect your school. You were all extremely friendly and helpful and the team enjoyed finding out from you how you are getting on. On behalf of the inspection team I would like to share with you what we found.

Your school is providing you with a good education. You reported to us that behaviour in school is rarely less than good and we agree. You know how to keep safe. The youngest children get off to an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception classes. You make good progress in school subjects and by the time you leave at the end of Year 6, most of you reach the standards expected in English and mathematics. This is because the teaching you receive is good and at times outstanding. You told us 'Lessons are fun!' School leaders and the governing body do a good job. They have put together an outstanding curriculum for you to follow, which means you understand a lot about different countries and people. There are excellent opportunities for you to use new technology in your work. We were very impressed with all you have achieved in ICT. The staff make sure you all have the best opportunities possible.

Part of my job is to identify how the school can be even better. I have asked staff to:

- help you to do even better in reading, writing and mathematics
- make sure you all attend school regularly.

You can all help by making best use of the school library to read for enjoyment and by attending school every day. Remember good attenders = good learners. Please continue to work hard and enjoy school. I send you all my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Frank Carruthers
Lead Inspector

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