

West Kirby Primary School

Anglesey Road, West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside CH48 5EQ

Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils make good progress during their time at West Kirby. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment is typically above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- School leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Staff share their determination to continue to move the school forward.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school is good overall, and teaching in key stage 2 is particularly effective. Teachers have good subject knowledge and support pupils' learning by providing clear explanations.
- The school promotes reading very effectively. There is a strong reading culture throughout the school and pupils benefit from having access to a well-stocked library. As a result, most pupils at West Kirby develop good reading skills and have highly positive attitudes towards reading.
- The school provides pupils with a broad and well-thought-out curriculum within which there are notable strengths in music and art. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Pupils are polite and friendly and get on well together in class and at break. They say that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Parents confirm that is the case, and the large majority would recommend the school to other parents.
- Children get off to a good start in early years and most achieve a good level of development by the time they leave Reception class. However, children's progress in developing skills in writing is not as strong as in the other areas of learning.
- There are inconsistencies in the effectiveness of teaching in key stage 1. Not all teachers consistently ensure that they meet the learning needs of all pupils in their class, and so work is sometimes too hard for some or too easy for others.
- In recent years, too few of the most able pupils in key stage 1 have reached the higher levels of attainment of which they are capable. Teachers' expectations of what they can achieve are not consistently high.
- In 2016, a below-average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Phonics teaching does not consistently develop pupils' knowledge and skills in an effective, systematic way.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in early years and key stage 1 to accelerate pupils' progress in writing and phonics by:
 - ensuring that activities are appropriately matched to children and pupils' learning needs so they are not too easy for some or too difficult for others
 - raising teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve
 - providing children and pupils with more regular, engaging and stimulating opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills
 - ensuring that the planning and teaching of phonics more systematically and effectively develops children and pupils' skills and knowledge.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- School leaders and governors have successfully maintained the good quality of education in the school and ensure that the school continues to move forwards. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and use this knowledge to address any relative weaknesses. The impact of their work over time can be seen in improvements made to the outdoor provision in early years and more recently to the teaching of mathematics across the school.
- Leaders have ensured that their work has the full backing of the staff, who say that they enjoy working at the school and appreciate the opportunities that they are given to further develop their skills and experience. Parents are also supportive. A view typical of parents was: 'a caring and nurturing school, where the staff work very hard to support the children'. The large majority of parents who responded to the Parent View survey would recommend the school to other parents.
- Middle leaders are providing increasingly effective leadership and are contributing well to ongoing improvements. They have a clear view of further improvements that they would like to make in their areas of responsibility and are developing their skills in improvement planning and checking on the impact of their work.
- The school provides pupils with a well-balanced and engaging curriculum that covers a range of different subjects, topics and themes. There is a particularly rich variety of experiences provided for pupils in music and art, and pupils in Years 3 and 4 were observed working with a visiting art specialist to produce some high-quality artwork using watercolours and pen and ink. Pupils have the chance to experience different modern foreign languages in their time in school, and key stage 1 pupils thoroughly enjoy learning Japanese and finding out about Japanese culture. The curriculum is further enhanced by a range of additional opportunities, including after-school clubs and trips to places of interest. The quality of the curriculum has a positive effect on pupils' personal development and on their progress across a good range of subjects.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to support the relatively small proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school. A focus of this spending has been on reading, such as reading interventions to provide additional help to pupils who need it, and developing the school library and librarian role. The success of this work is evident in the key stage 2 results in 2016, in which disadvantaged pupils' attainment was above that of other pupils nationally. Disadvantaged pupils across the school are also making typically good progress.
- Leaders ensure that other specific funding is used effectively. The primary physical education and sport funding is used to provide pupils with access to specialist sports coaching and a wide range of sporting activities. Extra-curricular sports clubs include some non-traditional sports, such as dodgeball and taekwondo, which pupils say that they enjoy. Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also well used and is having a positive impact on their learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. Teachers encourage pupils to think about other people, and pupils develop a strong awareness of others and a desire to 'make a difference'. Pupils have a good

understanding of social and moral issues, such as the impact of fair trading on farmers abroad, and actively take part in charitable work. They also develop a good appreciation of British values and older pupils were able to sensibly discuss the approaching mayoral election.

- There are suitable arrangements in place to manage teachers' performance, and leaders hold teachers to account for the performance of pupils in their class. Improvements seen in the teaching of mathematics show that teaching is improving across the school. However, it is not as consistently strong in early years and key stage 1 as it is in key stage 2.
- The local authority has provided the school with only 'light-touch' support and recognises the school's capacity to 'self-sustain' improvement. The school benefits from working with other local authority schools on areas such as assessment and moderation. School leaders have also developed effective partnerships with other external providers to secure additional support for aspects of school self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Governance of the school

- Governance, which was identified as an area for improvement at the time of the previous inspection, is now a strength of the school. The chair of governors has ensured that members of the governing body have a broad and useful range of skills and experience. Governors have a good, shared understanding of their role and are all keen to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- Governors display a clear and detailed awareness of the school's current strengths and weaknesses, and provide school leaders with a well-informed and robust level of challenge. They have a good understanding of data relating to the school's performance and ensure that any potential areas of concern, such as the lower than expected key stage 1 results in 2016, are rigorously followed up. Governing body minutes confirm that governors very effectively hold school leaders to account.
- Governors ensure that the school's procedures for staff performance management and decisions about pay progression are both fair and thorough. They have dealt effectively with difficult spending decisions, and are careful to ensure that the school's finances are effectively targeted at areas of need, such as when redeveloping the outdoor area used by children in the early years.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture across the school. Staff and governors receive regular training to ensure that their knowledge and understanding of good practice in safeguarding is up to date. Staff know exactly what to do if they are worried about a child's well-being, and the designated leader for safeguarding ensures that any concerns are rigorously followed up.
- Thorough checks are made on staff, governors and volunteers to ensure that they are suitable people to work with children, and the school maintains high-quality records of these checks. An electronic system is used to keep a clear record of people entering

and leaving the building and pupils know that visitors are given badges to show that they are allowed in school. Care is taken to ensure that the school site, which is bordered by a road and railway line, is kept safe and secure.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching across the school is good overall, and is particularly effective in key stage 2. Teachers typically have good subject knowledge which ensures that they can provide pupils with clear explanations and instructions. A key strength of the school are the positive and warm relationships between staff and pupils. These help to ensure that behaviour in lessons is good and pupils respond well to teachers' requests and directions. As a result, little learning time is wasted in lessons.
- The teaching of reading across the school is good, and leaders and staff have been successful in developing a strong reading culture throughout the school. Teachers develop pupils' reading skills effectively so that pupils become confident, discerning readers. The older, most-able readers can discuss their favourite books and authors in a mature, thoughtful manner. The school's librarian skilfully encourages pupils to read a wide range of books, and there is a good selection of reading material available to meet the needs of pupils of all ages and reading levels.
- There have been improvements in the teaching of mathematics to meet updated curriculum requirements, and mathematics teaching is effective. Teachers provide pupils with plenty of opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving activities. Pupils enjoy this type of challenge, as was seen in key stage 2 where pupils were enthusiastically trying to work out problems involving potential permutations of pairs of socks. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss and explain their reasoning when tackling problems, and as a result pupils' mathematical understanding is developing quickly.
- Teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning. They are deployed particularly well to deliver targeted programmes of support to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This enables these pupils to make good progress from their different starting points and demonstrates effective use of the school's additional funding for special educational needs.
- While the teaching of reading is a strength of the school, the effectiveness of the teaching of phonics is less strong. In 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in phonics by the end of Year 1 was below average. This is because the teaching of phonics is not accurate enough in building up pupils' knowledge and understanding of phonics in a systematic way.
- The work that teachers set for pupils is generally well matched to their learning needs. However, there are occasions when this is not the case and work is too easy for some pupils or too hard for others. Where this is the case, the pace of learning slows.
- In key stage 1, writing is not taught as effectively as reading and mathematics. Teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations of what the most able pupils can do in their written work. Pupils are not provided with enough engaging opportunities to encourage them to develop their writing skills and stamina, and this means that progress is not as swift as it could be.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- One parent's description of the school as providing 'a safe and positive environment for children to learn in' reflects the views of the large majority of parents, and accurately describes the atmosphere in the school. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and positive, and pupils support each other well, both in lessons and at breaktimes.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school, and understand how to keep themselves safe in different situations. This is because the school has ensured that pupils are taught well about the potential dangers of roads and railways, and has also provided pupils with a good awareness of how to stay safe on the internet. Pupils know not to give out personal information online, and to tell an adult of any concerns they may have.
- Pupils say that staff look after them well. They say that behaviour in their school is good, and they like the clear systems that are in place to tackle occasional instances of poor behaviour. Pupils are also aware that there are different types of bullying, including racism and cyber bullying, but say that incidents of bullying happen very infrequently and any that do occur are quickly dealt with by their teachers.
- Pupils enjoy taking on different positions of responsibility in school. Members of the school council, eco-council and fair trade team all play an active role in organising events and activities for other pupils. School council elections give pupils first-hand experience of the democratic process.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are consistently well-mannered and friendly. They happily welcome visitors to the school, and are keen to talk about the things that they like doing in school. Their conduct around school is good and they move around the building sensibly. Pupils enjoy breaktimes, making use of an excellent range of playground equipment and playing together with imagination and enthusiasm.
- Pupils across the school display positive attitudes to learning. They respond well to teachers' instructions and quickly settle down to work, making sure that learning time is not wasted. Pupils listen well to each other's views and ideas and are keen to answer teachers' questions. Older pupils collaborate impressively when faced with problems to discuss and solve.
- Attendance rates and rates of persistent absence are broadly in line with the national average and there are signs that they are improving slowly. The school has been successful in addressing higher than expected rates of persistent absence affecting some pupils, ensuring that no group's learning is adversely affected by poor attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils typically make good progress during their time at West Kirby, and by the time they leave Year 6 they are well prepared to move on to the next stage of their education.
- In 2016, an above-average proportion of pupils reached the standard expected for their age by the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The rate of pupils' progress in reading was well above the national average, while in writing and mathematics it was broadly in line with other schools.
- Pupils' performance in 2016 is typical of a pattern of good and improving outcomes by the end of Year 6. Pupils' attainment and progress over recent years in key stage 2 has been good in a range of different subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence confirmed that this is also the case for pupils currently at the school.
- There is a low proportion of disadvantaged pupils across the school, and in some year groups there is only a very small number of disadvantaged pupils. Because of these small numbers, the performance of disadvantaged pupils fluctuates between cohorts. The key stage 2 results in 2016 confirmed though that, overall, disadvantaged pupils typically make good progress in their learning from their differing starting points when compared with other pupils in the school and nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress from their different starting points. These pupils benefit from well-targeted individual and group support that helps them to learn well and regularly reach their individual targets.
- Performance in key stage 1 in 2016 was less strong, and the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard was below average in reading, writing and mathematics. This was not typical of the school's performance over time, and leaders have taken steps to address these disappointing results. There are clear signs in pupils' books, and the school's assessment information, that progress for pupils currently in Year 2 is improving, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- There are inconsistencies in outcomes for the most able pupils in school. In key stage 2 the most able pupils typically make accelerated progress so that the proportion reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is in line with or above the national average. In 2015 and 2016, however, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels at the end of key stage 1 has been below average.

Early years provision

Good

- The effectiveness of provision in early years has improved since the previous inspection. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen in recent years and is now typically above the national average. This means that children are increasingly well prepared for life in key stage 1.
- Children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age in most areas of learning, although many typically have less experience in reading and writing. They now make good overall progress in their time in early years, and

particularly strong progress in areas such as reading and personal and social development.

- Teaching in early years is good. Staff carefully track children's learning and use this information to identify individual children's learning needs. They then tailor weekly challenges to develop children's learning in those areas that were identified as needing further development.
- Behaviour in the early years is good. Relationships between adults and children are warm and positive and children play well with each other. In the well-equipped outdoor area, children enjoy activities such as following 'recipes' in the mud kitchen or using large construction materials to build bridges and walkways. They share equipment well and offer each other encouragement as they play.
- Leadership of the early years is effective. The early years leader has successfully led improvements to provision, particularly in the outdoor area, and has plans to ensure that the setting continues to move forwards.
- Staff ensure that there are plenty of opportunities for parents to get involved in their children's education. The school runs a range of meetings and parental workshops, and encourages parents to contribute to assessments through 'wow stickers'. Parents who spoke to inspectors were extremely positive about their children's experiences in early years.
- Over time, children's progress in writing has been less strong than in other areas of learning in the early years. Staff do not consistently provide children with enough stimulating and motivating opportunities to write as part of their everyday learning.
- While children typically make accelerated progress in reading, older children's progress in developing skills in phonics is less secure. This is because, as in key stage 1, there are some inconsistencies in the effectiveness of phonics teaching.

School details

Unique reference number	105023
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10024224

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Chapman
Headteacher	Kate Takashima
Telephone number	0151 625 5561
Website	www.westkirbyprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	schooloffice@westkirby-primary.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 September 2011

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- In the early years, children attend the Nursery class part time. Those who are in the Reception class attend on a full-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for achievement in Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The daily on-site breakfast and after-school clubs are run by a private provider.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school, and were joined on some visits to lessons by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in books, records of children's learning in the early years and other information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with two groups of pupils. They also talked informally with pupils around the school and in the playground.
- Inspectors considered the 89 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and talked informally with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors met a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. They also had discussions with staff in school, including the leader responsible for the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the leader for the early years and the leaders for key stage 1, data and assessment and curriculum development.
- Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority and the external consultant engaged by the school to provide school improvement support.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's reviews of its own performance, governing body meeting records and adviser reports. The inspector also examined safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Neil Dixon, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jane Austin	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Lucas	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Kelly	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017