



Castleway Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105002
LEA Wirral
Inspection number 277272
Inspection dates 3 May 2006 to 4 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Jim Alexander CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Castleway North
School category	Community		Moreton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Wirral, Merseyside CH46 1RN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 677 2953
Number on roll	191	Fax number	0151 677 6953
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr S Clitheroe
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2000	Headteacher	Mr S Hughes

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Castleway is a smaller than average size primary school, serving an area of social disadvantage. Most children attending the school are of white British heritage. None is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is well above average. A high number of children enter the school after the start of the Reception Year or leave before the end of Year 6. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its children an acceptable standard of education and persons responsible for leading and managing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvements. The school does not offer value for money.

The school faced a period of disruption in 2003-04 associated with some difficult staffing issues. These contributed to, and accelerated, the already declining standards in Key Stage 2. The school's self-evaluation is inaccurate and not based on rigorous monitoring. The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate in Key Stage 2; consequently standards and achievement are significantly low by the time the children reach the end of Year 6. Although there has been some recent improvement in teaching, the pace of learning is slow and teachers' expectations of what the children can achieve are not high enough.

Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. From a starting point that is well below average, the children make good progress through to Year 2. By Year 2 standards are broadly average.

Despite recent support from the local authority, leadership and management are inadequate. The school has not fully responded to the issues raised from the last inspection, and many important aspects such as the quality of teaching and leadership have declined. Improvement in the use made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support teaching and learning has been good. Attendance has risen significantly this school year and is satisfactory, as is the quality of the care and support children receive. There are strengths in children's personal development and well-being, and children's behaviour is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Ensure the quality of teaching, pace of learning and expectations of what children in Key Stage 2 can achieve are consistently good enough to enable children to perform their best.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school and develop a rigorous system of self-evaluation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

The school considers achievement and standards to be satisfactory. Inspectors, however, judge them to be inadequate. Children enter the school with well below average skills. They make good progress in the Reception class because of the good teaching and provision. At the end of their first year in school, almost half the class have reached

levels expected for children of their age. By the time they reach Year 2, national test results for the school show that the standards achieved are broadly average and children achieve well. In Key

Stage 2 children's progress slows considerably. By the time they reach Year 6, the school's national tests' results show that, while standards in English are broadly average, standards in mathematics and science are significantly below average. All groups of children make similar progress, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the more able, and those who move from other schools.

Targets set for children's performance have been missed by a wide margin. Analysis of the school's predictions and of children's work indicates that standards in Year 6 are low, and the school's targets set for the national tests in 2006 are also likely to be missed. The school has not made enough use of the information it has about children's performance to improve this underachievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Children have good attitudes to learning and behave well. They and their parents report that they enjoy school. They find the school 'a friendly place' and older children take on responsibilities well, for instance as school councillors, play leaders and 'eco-kids'. They can point to many ways in which their voice is heard and they have raised significant amounts of money for equipment for school. Rare incidents of bullying are dealt with firmly and effectively. Children appreciate the many awards and privileges that come from behaving and working well. Levels of attendance are satisfactory and benefiting from effective procedures introduced by the home-school development officer; there has been significant improvement this year. The school's ethos supports good behaviour and the children's social and moral skills develop well. Fitness and a healthy lifestyle are emphasised through the curriculum and children know how to be safe both in and out of school. They are well involved in activities in the local community. They learn the importance of building good relationships, punctuality and attending school regularly. This, together with their good ICT skills, should help children in later life. However, they are let down by weak skills in literacy and numeracy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching and learning is considered by the school to be satisfactory. Inspectors, however, judge the provision to be inadequate overall. It has declined since the last inspection. Recently, with local authority support, there have been improvements in assessing children's progress, but these are not yet fully embedded. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is good, as a result

children learn at a good rate. In Key Stage 2, however, the pace of learning and teachers' expectations of what the children can achieve are too low, and contribute significantly to the decline in standards. Teachers' expectations of how children present their work are not high enough, and the quality of marking is poor and does not help children understand how to improve their work. Positive features of teaching are the good relationships between staff and children and the way in which teachers manage children's behaviour.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets requirements. This judgement agrees with the school's own view, reflecting a balance of some strong features and some weaknesses. For example, the curriculum in the Reception class is good. ICT has significantly improved since the last inspection, being well planned, challenging and linked well with other subjects. A strong feature is the physical education programme, which includes several after school clubs. A good range of extra-curricular activities and trips, including a residential visit, enhances the curriculum well. Satisfactory emphasis is placed on healthy living and includes drugs awareness and sex and relationships education. However, some important aspects are not as strong. With support from the local authority improvements are now under way in developing the curriculum for mathematics and science to better meet the needs of the children.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory, though they are thought by the school to be good. Children are not all involved effectively in setting their own targets for improvement. Teachers do not give children sufficient guidance on how to reach the next step in their learning. The school's pastoral provision supports children's emotional and personal development, and adult praise promotes good behaviour. Children are also encouraged to help each other, for example by acting as 'play leaders'. The individual targets for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are limited in their effectiveness because they are not shared adequately with children or parents. Vulnerable children are well cared for and the school has strong links with outside agencies. Arrangements for inducting children into the school are good - a view supported by parents. The school provides a smooth transition to secondary education. Good attention is given to health, safety and welfare, including child protection.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Inspectors do not agree with the school that leadership and management are satisfactory and judge them to be inadequate. This is because improvement since the last inspection has been insufficient; standards, achievement and the quality of teaching have declined; and systems for self-evaluation are weak. They are not rigorous enough

to ensure improvements are made. There are also weaknesses in the strategic use of assessment information and this has had a negative impact on children's progress. Teaching has not been effectively monitored and as a result is not good enough to bring about the necessary improvements in children's learning. The capacity to improve, although judged by the school to be satisfactory, is inadequate. Recently the headteacher and governors have sought additional support from the local authority but the impact of any initiatives is not consistently raising standards of children's work. Subject leadership is inadequate overall. Certain aspects of monitoring by subject leaders are not rigorous enough to ensure progress is made. Governance over time has been inadequate; for example, governors have not ensured that recommendations identified at the last inspection have been fully implemented. Recently, however, governance has improved. Governors are informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses and now perform their duties satisfactorily. They are beginning to hold the school to account for the standards reached by children.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for being so welcoming when we recently visited and talking to us in such a friendly way about Castleway School. We would like to let you know the things we thought were good about the school and those things we feel it could do better.

What we most liked about your school:

- that you behave sensibly, get on well together and enjoy school,
- that you are well looked after and helped to be fit and healthy,
- that you use ICT well to help with your learning: you obviously enjoy it!

We have asked the school to do the following things:

- for your teachers to help older children achieve better standards in English, mathematics and science,
- for teachers in Key Stage 2 to make sure lessons are lively and interesting and that they have the highest expectations for you. This will help you to do your very best,
- for those who lead and manage your school to make sure that standards improve.

Our judgement is that your school requires 'special measures' and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools agrees. This means that inspectors will continue to visit school and there will be extra assistance to help it improve.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you continue to enjoy school and carry on working hard.