



# Overchurch Junior School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 105056  
**LEA** Wirral  
**Inspection number** 277283  
**Inspection dates** 7 February 2006 to 8 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Michael McIlroy HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Moreton Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Upton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11		Wirral, Merseyside CH49 4NS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 6774150
<b>Number on roll</b>	395	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 5220518
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Dr P Elliot
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr G Sumner

<b>Age group</b> 7 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 February 2006 - 8 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277283
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Overchurch Junior School is situated in Upton, a suburb on the Wirral. The school is larger than average. About a quarter of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above average. Very few pupils are of minority ethnic origin or have English as a second language. Four pupils have a statement of special educational need. The school has a few pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of pupils join the school from the neighbouring infant school. On entry, the skills and knowledge of pupils are above average. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Overchurch Junior School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has a number of good features.

Pupils enter the school with standards in learning that are above average. By Year 6, standards achieved remain just above average. This is because the progress pupils make in the school is satisfactory. In the past, the school enjoyed a sustained period of higher levels of pupil achievement, under the leadership of the current headteacher. Since his secondment to another post in 2003/04, the school has lost some momentum and pupils' progress has slowed.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. He has begun to remedy the weaknesses and under his leadership the school is well placed to move forward again. Middle management is satisfactory but some aspects of subject leadership are underdeveloped. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are not rigorous enough. The use of outcomes from these in planning for improvement requires development. Governance of the school is satisfactory.

The personal development of pupils is good and the school promotes this well. Pupils are well behaved and willing to learn. Attendance is good and learners enjoy their education. The care and support that pupils receive are also good.

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of learners. Teaching is satisfactory overall but assessment is not used effectively enough to ensure that work is matched to the different abilities of learners. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and most other pupils make satisfactory progress. Some more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

The school provides satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of good teaching.
- Make monitoring and evaluation more robust and use the outcomes more effectively in strategic planning.
- Make more effective use of assessment information to inform lesson planning and improve the challenge presented to all pupils, particularly the more able.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement by pupils is satisfactory. They enter the school with levels of attainment in learning that are above average for children of their age. By the time they leave the school, their level of attainment is still above average overall. This represents satisfactory progress.

At the time of the last inspection, the progress made by pupils in their learning was very good. In recent years, however, this has slowed. Over the last three years it was broadly satisfactory. In the 2005 national tests, the achievement of pupils improved in science but dipped in mathematics. In English, fewer of the more able pupils gained the higher Level 5 due to weaknesses in writing. Consequently, the school did not meet all of its targets in 2005.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. More able pupils do not make as much progress as they could, particularly in English. This is because some of their work is not matched to their abilities and because the pace of learning in some lessons is not fast enough.

The school is aware of these weaknesses and is beginning to remedy them.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. They enjoy being at school as shown by their above average attendance and participation in extra-curricular activities. Pupils cooperate well with each other and adults, and most work hard. Behaviour is good in lessons and around school. Attitudes to learning are positive, although occasionally chatter spoils the concentration of others. Pupils willingly accept responsibility and are cheerful, polite and helpful. The school council provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of citizenship. Pupils are pleased that their views are acted upon; for example, their requests that the toilets be improved and for a quiet area on the playground have been met.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Lessons in personal and social education help pupils to reflect on issues and develop a sense of right and wrong. Their self-esteem is developed through their involvement in enrichment activities and the celebration of their achievements in assemblies. They gain a knowledge and understanding of world religions and different cultures through lessons. Close attention is given to the development of basic skills and pupils learn to work well independently and collaboratively. These factors are valuable in securing their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school judges teaching to be good but inspectors found it to be satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teaching was lively, interesting and learning proceeded at a good pace. Teachers had high expectations of behaviour, the most able pupils were stretched and learning was enriched by a variety of exciting activities. In one good

science lesson, for example, pupils enthusiastically played an exciting revision quiz prior

to their main learning activity.

Weaknesses in the satisfactory teaching included slow pace, activities that did not hold

pupils' attention, and a lack of challenge for more able pupils. Work was not always well

matched to the ability of pupils.

When lessons were not stimulating or well structured enough, the rate of learning was slower, but the good personal development of pupils meant that almost all pupils were well behaved. Skilled teaching assistants ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities learn well. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not used effectively enough to identify underachievement and improve the pupils' progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and meets statutory requirements. It meets the needs of most groups of pupils well, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, it does not always meet the needs of the more able pupils. Close attention is paid to developing the basic skills in literacy and numeracy. A good start has been made to the linking of subjects in a cross-curricular manner in order to make learning more relevant. An emphasis on the arts on special curriculum days and themed weeks extend the creative opportunities presented to pupils. The impact of these is visible in the outstanding artwork on display. Good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich learning. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from a residential visit, which boosts their academic and social development well. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is available, including sports, recorders, chess and choir. The school has its own orchestra. Careful attention is given to developing awareness of the need to exercise regularly, to stay healthy, and to avoid the temptations and risks that they may face as they get older.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are well cared for and there are good procedures for health and safety. Consequently, pupils feel safe in school, trust staff and know where to turn for help. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in activities. They have clear individual educational plans, and parents and outside agencies are fully consulted. Procedures for tracking the progress of pupils and analysing what they need to do next are inconsistent. There are pockets of good practice which need to be shared throughout the school. Academic targets for more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenging.

The great majority of parents are supportive of the school and most consider that their children are extremely well cared for. Child protection procedures are in place. Staff praise pupils for their positive attitudes to work, for their politeness and the care and consideration they show to others. In this way, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education and later life. Year 6 pupils are adequately prepared for secondary education. They visit local high schools for lessons. Specialist teachers from these schools visit to give taster lessons in subjects ranging from design technology to physical education.

The school encourages pupils to embrace healthy lifestyles. There are healthy options offered at lunchtime. On Tuesdays, the Parent Council sells toast at playtime and on 'Fruity Fridays' pupils can purchase fruit.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school judges the quality of leadership and management to be good. Inspectors found it to be satisfactory.

The headteacher has led the school successfully for many years. He has successfully fostered the good personal development of pupils which has created the basis for good

learning. Since his temporary secondment, however, the school has lost some momentum. While standards overall remain above national averages, they have declined from their previously high level. This is because the rate of progress made by

the pupils has slowed.

The school's self-evaluation is sound. The headteacher has a good understanding of the strengths of the school and of where it needs to improve. He has identified key weaknesses and begun to remedy them. His good track record over many years and some improvements since the last inspection, such as the introduction of procedures to

track pupils' progress, demonstrate that the school under his leadership has the capacity to improve.

Subject leaders and other postholders provide satisfactory leadership and management in their areas of responsibility. They monitor planning and have an understanding of the

strengths and weaknesses in their areas. Some aspects of subject leadership, however, are underdeveloped. There is a lack of consistency in the application of whole-school

policies. The monitoring and evaluation of subjects are not sufficiently rigorous to enable

issues that affect pupils' progress to be identified at an early stage and tackled effectively. The school is inclusive. Parents and pupils are consulted about developments. Positive suggestions, such as the creation of a chess club, have been adopted.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher. They are

informed about the work of the school but do not always provide enough challenge to its

leadership. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 for being so polite and helpful when we inspected your school recently. I am writing to let you know some of the things we saw during our visit.

Some of the best things we saw at your school were:

- your behaviour is good and you are polite and kind to each other and to visitors
- you are well looked after by your teachers and other adults
- you enjoy your school and know how to live healthily and stay safe
- the wide range of sports and clubs that you can participate in
- your art and display work - much of this is outstanding.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to make your school even better. We would like the school to:

- carry out more visits to classes to see that all of you are learning well and to see how things can be made even better for you
- check that the work you receive is hard enough for you
- make your lessons more interesting for you by speeding up the activities you do and by adding greater variety to what you do in class.

Once again, many thanks for your help and politeness when we visited your school.