

# Eastcroft Park School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104447
<b>Local authority</b>	Knowsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	377081
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Frank Carruthers

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	204
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Barry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julie Withey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Hollinghurst Road Tower Hill Kirkby Liverpool L33 1EB
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Frank Carruthers  
Mary Liptrot

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. They listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6 and observed teaching sessions of letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Pupils' work was inspected and observations were made of pupils' behaviour at play and lunchtimes. The inspectors held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, they observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation document, the school development plan, records of monitoring teaching and learning, and attendance and behavioural records. Inspectors analysed 67 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those returned by pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. The school meets the current floor standard. The school runs daily breakfast and after-school clubs. It has several awards, including Healthy School status, the International Schools Intermediate award, the Eco-school Silver award, the Activemark, Artsmark Silver and Fair Trade status. The school is part of the Kirkby Collaborative of schools, promoting school self-improvement.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- Eastcroft Park is a good school. Pupils thrive during their time at the school and become enthusiastic learners. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education and become well-informed youngsters. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. The overall effectiveness of the school is not outstanding because the quality of teaching is good rather than outstanding. As a result of some variation in practice pupils' learning is not always at its best.
- Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. Attainment in Year 6 has risen since the previous inspection and continues to rise. Pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs often make outstanding progress.
- Teaching is good overall and there are several elements that are outstanding, for example the quality of teachers' planning and the marking of pupils' work. The richness of the curriculum motivates pupils very well. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, learning through play means children fully enjoy lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and they report that bullying is rare. If it happens, adults deal with it effectively. Parents and carers agree that the school is a safe and secure place. Staff effectively promote the well-being of pupils, particularly those whose circumstances make them potentially more vulnerable, exceptionally well.
- The school is well led and managed. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and has been highly effective in promoting high expectations and driving up the quality of teaching. The curriculum provides outstanding experiences for pupils. A strong leadership team and governing body monitor the performance of the school well and this detailed self-evaluation has led to the rise in standards since the previous inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all the teaching in Key Stage 2 matches the best in school by maintaining a brisk pace in all parts of lessons.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Most children start in the Nursery with skills that are low for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is the result of good teaching in a stimulating environment. Some children start out with very limited experiences of how to play. Playing alongside their peers and older children in the Reception-age group, they quickly gain confidence and independence. This was evident, for example when they played at camping outdoors. They became engrossed sorting out their backpacks in the tent and getting the 'cooking' underway. Many children have very limited speech. High quality interventions by the staff in their play help them to express themselves. Attainment at the end of the Reception Year has risen since the previous inspection when it was below average. Last year most children had skill levels expected for their age, though a little lower in communication, language and literacy.

Attainment at the end of Year 2 has been below average in recent years. The quality of teaching, however, has significantly improved and attainment in the current Year 2 is average. Pupils benefit from regular, good quality lessons about letters and the sounds they make. They use these skills with increasing confidence to read unfamiliar words. They become confident writers. Boys and girls are keen to write at good length. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils wrote effective poems about colours, thinking up a wide range of appropriate images. The proportion of pupils on target to read and write at a level above the expected Level 2 has risen sharply this year. Attainment in reading is average at the end of Year 2.

Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress. Overall, all groups of pupils make good strides in their learning. Pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs often do exceptionally well. For example, last year all pupils reached at least the expected Level 4 in English. The school is successful in narrowing the attainment gap between different groups of pupils. Pupils work effectively in small groups and pairs. They voice their opinions readily in discussion. In a Year 6 lesson on prime numbers, for example, pupils explained technical terms well and suggested methods of solving problems. Pupils remain on task well and have good listening skills.

Attainment in the current Year 6 is average overall. Attainment in reading is above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and there has been a significant improvement in writing since the previous inspection so that attainment is close to matching that in reading. In mathematics, attainment has been average since the previous inspection. This year, more pupils are on target to achieve the higher Level 5 and attainment in this subject is predicted to be slightly above average. All parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire consider their children make good progress in school. This view agrees with inspection findings.

## Quality of teaching

Effective monitoring of teaching, learning and the curriculum has made a significant impact on their quality. Almost all lessons are at least good and a number of them display outstanding features. Teachers plan well for the different levels of ability in their classes and they deploy other adults very effectively to cater for the various needs of all pupils, including those who are disabled and those with special educational needs. Teachers are very imaginative in how they plan for the various subjects of the curriculum. A strong element in topic work is the way pupils have opportunities for practical work. Pupils in Year 3 enjoyed first-hand experience of air pressure, inflating balloons, and they began to use technical terms such as 'compression' confidently. Pupils in Year 5 played different musical instruments to conjure up sounds of the rainforest very imaginatively. These experiences promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

Staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. They support them through high quality marking so that pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Pupils evaluate their own and others' work constructively and understand what they need to do to achieve a particular level in English and mathematics. Staff assess the progress that pupils make regularly and use this to set targets so that pupils are on track to make at least the progress expected for their age. Pupils know their targets well.

Parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaire were unanimous in their positive view of teaching. Inspectors agree with their view but note that at times in Key Stage 2 lessons, the pace of learning dips and so the rate of progress is affected. Sometimes the teacher allows too much time to complete a simple task. Occasionally, the pupils remain all together with the teacher for too long, when time could be used more productively by allowing more-able pupils to get on with independent research. On another occasion, leaving too little time towards the end of a lesson for a final challenge reduced the impact of the teachers' plan on the pupils' learning.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is typically good and pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay safe. With regular events in school such as anti-bullying week as well as roles for pupils such as bully busters, pupils report they have few concerns about being bullied. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree and this is endorsed by evidence from the school's behaviour logs. Pupils understand that name-calling, including racist language, is wrong and the effect that terms of abuse can have on one another. Around school, pupils are courteous and they play well together at play times. In lessons, it is extremely rare for poor behaviour to affect learning. There is an effective code of conduct that includes a system of warnings, which is fully understood by pupils. A few pupils display challenging behaviour and incidents are dealt with effectively. The school supports extremely well those pupils whose circumstances make them potentially more vulnerable or who suffer stress in their lives. This is achieved through the work of the special educational needs coordinator, the learning mentor, the nurture group and relaxation exercises in the quiet room.

Opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities are excellent. These include a high profile school council, monitors, play leaders and eco-warriors. The school makes a very positive impact on pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through partnerships with schools from different communities, such as an inner city school and another in

Namibia. In addition, there are excellent links within the community, such as visits to and from a residential care home. Pupils devise their own ways of raising funds for a variety of charities locally and overseas. The school organises a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, which are very popular and lead to awards from the Children's University. More than 30 pupils graduated last year. In addition, the school runs before- and after-school clubs to provide a safe resource for children. Attendance has been in line with the national average since the previous inspection but is rising this year, being above average. Punctuality to school has improved through a concerted effort by staff to ensure the school day gets off to a good start.

## **Leadership and management**

All aspects of leadership and management are at least good. The senior leadership team monitors the work of the school very effectively. Staff training has been adjusted so that it fits with the school's key priorities of raising achievement. Senior leaders have made a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning and their experiences in school. The impact on teaching has been good, though there are still a few weaknesses of pace in lessons that remain to be addressed. The curriculum is outstanding because of the committed teamwork of all staff to develop vibrant and relevant experiences for pupils. These cater for the needs of pupils very well and widen their horizons enormously. They promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

Close analysis of performance data is a further strength of the leadership team. Work by the headteacher in particular has raised all staff's awareness to how well different groups of pupils are doing and how barriers to learning must be overcome. Consequently, the school is very successful in narrowing the gap between different groups and tackling discrimination. All elements of safeguarding pupils are good. The safe recruitment of staff and child protection procedures are robust. The governing body is very active in school and effective in its strategic role and in challenging senior staff. The school is an active contributor to the Kirkby Collaborative which promotes schools' development. It has made very good improvements over time, including raising levels of attendance, attainment and achievement, addressing key areas of weakness, such as the breadth of the curriculum, improving the quality of teaching and the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, the school is judged to have excellent capacity to sustain this level of improvement.

## 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](http://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.**



29 February 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Eastcroft Park School, Liverpool, L33 1EB**

It was a great pleasure to inspect your school. You were all extremely friendly and helpful and we 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 a good 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 how much you enjoy lessons and it is clear that you really do a lot to help others through your charity collections. 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. 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:

- make sure that all the teaching you receive is the best it possibly can be so that you always make as much progress as possible.

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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