

# Northway Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104879
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	355648
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 September 2010–1 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Denise Shields

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>	316
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Devina Halsall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Ros Gill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Dodds Lane Maghull, Liverpool Merseyside L31 9AA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons or part lessons and these included the observation of 13 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of documentation, including pupils' past and present work, assessment and tracking information, monitoring and evaluation records, and additional evidence of the support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Inspectors also looked at whether the school meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. A representative sample of questionnaires returned by pupils and staff and 172 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were scrutinised.

- Whether the attainment of all pupils in writing is rising quickly enough.
- The extent to which the more-able pupils are challenged in Years 3 to 6.
- The impact of revisions to the curriculum on improving all pupils' engagement, learning and progress.
- The effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation by subject leaders to drive improvement.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average size primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. A lower than average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. An above average proportion of pupils does not start their education at Northway, but joins the school in Key Stage 2. Although the proportion of pupils who are assessed as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, a much higher than average proportion have a statement of special educational needs. The school houses a designated provision for pupils with specific learning difficulties (totalling 12 places), serving all areas across Sefton.

The school has achieved Healthy Schools status, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Activemark and Artsmark awards.

**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: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that pupils feel extremely safe and have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. Their behaviour is outstanding and pupils are very keen to help and support each other. This has a positive effect on their enjoyment of learning and achievement. A typical view reported by the overwhelming majority of pupils is, 'This is a very friendly school. Adults always listen and take very good care of us.' Pupils who join the school partway through the school year say they settle quickly and make many new friends. The positive views of their parents and carers confirm this.

Leaders and managers are effective. There is a clear, shared vision for the future. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate and, as a consequence, the correct priorities for improvement are identified and carefully pursued. The impact of actions taken to tackle key priorities is robustly evaluated. This has a positive impact on outcomes for all groups of pupils. Pupils' progress is tracked rigorously and the information shared widely so there is a clear understanding of how well pupils are doing. This is a key factor that enables leaders to identify and quickly tackle any potential underachievement. Areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. As a result the school demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Children get a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Indoors, the three cheerful learning areas are well resourced, but in the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor area, the range of resources is uninspiring and the area is underused. This restricts the opportunities children have to choose to extend their skills and knowledge outside.

Teaching is good. A number of outstanding lessons were observed during the inspection. Taking account of pupils' varying starting points at school, their progress and enjoyment of learning is good. Achievement is good. By the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly above average in English, mathematics and science. Attainment in reading is a strength because reading skills are taught well. Pupils' writing skills are not as strong because they do not have enough opportunities to write in subjects other than English. Pupils in the designated provision often make outstanding progress and achieve very well in relation to their abilities, and sometimes complex needs. This is because their curriculum is tailored precisely to meet their needs and they learn alongside their peers.

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

- Raise standards in writing by ensuring that:

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- pupils have plenty of exciting opportunities to increase their eagerness to write in all subjects
- teachers plan tasks that provide a greater depth of challenge for the more-able pupils
- pupils have more chances to improve their speaking skills
- learning targets for writing are closely matched to pupils' abilities and sufficient time is given for pupils to achieve them before they are changed.
- Make greater use of the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor area by ensuring that:
  - it is used continuously each day
  - a wider range of resources are available so that children can choose activities for themselves in all areas of learning.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Overwhelmingly, pupils say they enjoy learning and that their lessons are fun. Nearly all are well motivated and show good levels of concentration. The majority of pupils work enthusiastically with a partner or in groups and this is helping them to become confident and mature learners. Unanimously they say they learn a lot in lessons and they are not afraid to ask for help if they need it. All pupils, even the very youngest, are keen to help and support each other. This has a positive impact on their achievement and enjoyment of learning.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' learning and progress are good because of the good teaching they receive. Attainment varies from year to year. Taking account of children's average start points on entry to the Nursery class, the numbers who join the school in Key Stage 2, and the range of pupils' differing needs, some of which are complex, their achievement is good. By the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly above average, this includes the proportion of pupils who attain the higher level. Attainment in writing is not as strong. This is because pupils do not have enough opportunities to practice and improve their speaking and writing skills. For the most part, the more-able pupils are given writing tasks that are more difficult than their peers. However, these do not always have sufficient depth and challenge to enable pupils to attain the higher level. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and enjoy learning because of the sensitive guidance they receive from the teaching assistants. Pupils in the designated provision often make outstanding progress, especially in their literacy skills, because they receive additional support that is extremely well matched to their needs.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils willingly take on a good range of responsibilities and older pupils often act as ambassadors for the school. Pupils state confidently that their views are listened to and acted upon and that they are able to contribute to the school's improvement. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and this has a positive impact on their learning and progress. To build knowledge and understanding across communities pupils have good links with schools both nationally and internationally, where pupils have different social backgrounds, beliefs and traditions.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Relationships are very strong in all classes and pupils are not afraid to ask for help if they should need it. Almost all lessons are lively and praise is used well to build pupils' confidence and esteem. In the very best lessons, teachers enthuse pupils through the use of very well chosen resources and tasks and the end of the lesson is used very well to check what pupils have learnt. In almost all lessons the use of information and communication technology and skilful questioning engages pupils' interest and extends their knowledge and skills. Sometimes good opportunities are provided for pupils to talk in pairs; this successfully promotes speaking and listening. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long and sometimes tasks lack clarity and so pupils do not fully understand what is expected of them. For the most part teachers' planning makes effective use of good quality assessment information to ensure that the needs and abilities of all groups of pupils are met. But occasionally, work for the more-able pupils is not sufficiently demanding in writing. In all classes marking is helpful and provides constructive comments to help pupils improve. However, pupils are less certain how their learning targets, especially in writing, help them, because they are not always precisely matched to their ability and are changed too frequently.

The revised curriculum is carefully adjusted to meet the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Modifications have had a positive impact on boosting pupils' basic skills, although improvements are less marked in writing because

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pupils have too few opportunities to practise their skills in lessons. Some pupils make huge gains in their learning due to the good range of well targeted 'catch-up' and support programmes, for example, those to accelerate pupils' engagement and progress in reading and mathematics. Very good provision is made for the personal, social, emotional and health education of pupils. The very wide range of activities beyond lessons is greatly enjoyed by pupils.

Pupils benefit from exceptionally high quality care, guidance and support. There is extremely effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities resulting in their increased motivation and greater access to the curriculum. Adults know pupils extremely well. Without exception, pupils say there is an adult to turn to for help if they are sad or troubled. Arrangements to help children settle into the Nursery class and for pupils to move from year group to year group and then on to secondary school are good.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has a very clear oversight of the school and provides astute leadership. She is supported well in her efforts by the effective team of senior and middle leaders. The very high return of questionnaires from staff indicates they feel that they are valued members of the school community. All staff work together successfully to secure improvement. A clear, robust system to monitor and evaluate the work of the school is well established. It is used effectively by senior and middle leaders to drive improvement and ensure that targets set are achieved. The knowledgeable and effective governing body holds the school to account. They are fully involved in shaping the future direction of the school, are not afraid to ask challenging questions and monitor the quality of provision well. The school complies with statutory requirements for safeguarding, health and safety, and child protection. Safeguarding arrangements are planned well and permeate all aspects of school life. They are particularly well integrated into the curriculum and so pupils have an excellent awareness of how to keep themselves safe.

Good arrangements promote equal opportunity and help the school to tackle any discrimination. A notable strength is the full inclusion of those pupils in the designated provision in lessons and in all aspects of school life. They often succeed at Northway when they have experienced difficulties at other schools. The numerous very positive views expressed by parents and carers, pupils and staff confirm this. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. There is effective liaison with the local community and

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national and international schools. Good relationships are established with parents and carers and they are fully involved in their children's learning and the life of the school.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Good links with parents and carers ensure children settle quickly to school routines. As a result of good teaching and learning, children make good progress. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children are working above the expected levels for their age. Children behave very well and play happily together. Relationships are very strong and children are eager to join in the activities and enjoy learning. Indoors, planned activities have a good balance between those children can choose for themselves and those led by an adult. Just occasionally, tasks are too formal and do not always capture children's interest. The range of resources in the outdoor area is narrow. Children in the three classes do not have the opportunity to use the outdoor area continuously throughout the day. This inhibits their opportunity to make choices for themselves and become more independent. Children are safe and extremely well cared for and all welfare procedures are in place. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Since the previous inspection, good improvements have been made and there are suitable plans to develop the phase further. Regular and accurate assessments of children's achievements are made and carefully recorded. But arrangements are not consistent across the three classes and this sometimes reduces the effectiveness of planning the next steps in children's learning.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Inspectors received questionnaire responses from just over half of parents and carers. This return is above average. Almost all of these parents and carers indicate a positive view about all aspects of the school's work. Inspection findings support these positive views. A few parents and carers consider the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour and does not take their suggestions and concerns into account. Inspectors observed behaviour in classes and around the school, held discussions with pupils and staff and looked at the school's behavioural records. They found the school has effective procedures for managing pupils' behaviour and for seeking and acting upon parents and carers views.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Northway Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 172 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 316 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	119	69	50	29	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	136	79	35	20	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	97	56	71	41	2	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	105	61	63	37	2	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	119	69	51	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	113	66	56	33	1	1	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	108	63	60	35	3	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	100	58	64	37	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	112	65	57	33	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	82	48	73	42	7	4	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	89	52	68	40	6	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	110	64	60	35	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	118	69	53	31	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



Dear Pupils

I am writing to thank you for the warm and friendly welcome you gave the inspection team when we came to inspect your school. Northway is a good school and some aspects are outstanding. These are some of the things we found out.

- You told us that adults take excellent care of you and help you learn about healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. We agree.
- Your behaviour is excellent, even when the weather is very wet and windy.
- You all try hard with your work and make good progress, especially in reading, mathematics and science. Your progress is not as strong in writing and we have asked your teachers to give you lots of exciting chances to practise your writing skills and to help you improve your speaking skills too.
- Nearly all of you told us that staff teach you well and lessons are fun and you enjoy learning. We agree.
- You told us your writing learning targets are not always helpful and we agree. We have asked your teachers to ensure these help you to improve and to give you all time to achieve them before a new one is given.
- The children in the three Nursery and Reception classes have lots of exciting equipment to choose from inside. There is not as much to choose from outside and so we have asked your school to provide more equipment and to use the outside area all the time.
- The headteacher and all other staff work closely with the governing body to carefully plan what needs to be improved.

I know you are all proud of your school, so please keep working hard and always try your very best at all times.

Yours sincerely

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