

# Longford Park School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106392
<b>Local Authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	355943
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alastair Younger

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	39
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr Eddie Kelson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Beverley Owens
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	74 Cromwell Road Stretford Manchester M32 8QJ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. Five lessons were observed, each taught by a different teacher. Meetings were held with senior staff, a governor and a small group of parents and carers. Informal discussions were held with several pupils over the course of the inspection. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at the work in pupils' books. Documentation relating to the safeguarding of pupils was scrutinised as was that relating to the progress of pupils and plans for school improvement. The inspector analysed the 11 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, along with others from staff and pupils.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Whether pupils make sufficiently rapid and sustained progress to compensate for their low attainment.
- Variations in the quality of teaching reported by the school.
- How well the curriculum is adapted to meet the differing needs of long- and short-stay pupils.
- Whether there are features in the promotion of partnerships that could be held up as an example for other schools to emulate.

## Information about the school

The school provides specialist support for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. In addition to full-time provision for pupils with a statement of special educational needs it also provides for pupils who are at risk of exclusion from their mainstream schools. These pupils remain on the role of their mainstream schools but are also registered to Longford Park School. In most instances these are short-stay pupils. The school also provides an outreach service whereby its staff work in primary schools across the borough offering support for pupils displaying challenging behaviours.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free schools meals is higher than the national average. Most have involvement with other support agencies such as social services and mental health organisations. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Boys greatly outnumber girls.

Although the school is not designated to do so, it occasionally becomes necessary to admit children of Reception age. These children remain on the role of their mainstream schools and attend for only short periods on a part-time basis, which never exceeds two days per week. There have been four such children over the past two years. There are currently two but neither was due to attend over the course of the inspection.

The school has very recently gained the new Enhanced Healthy Schools Award.

**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?**

**1**

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

**1**

## Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Good improvement since the last inspection has been driven by an exceptional headteacher with significant contributions from other senior leaders and an outstanding governing body. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. This greatly facilitates the identification of areas that can be improved still further. Areas for improvement identified by the last inspection have been addressed successfully. There is a strong commitment to high-quality staff development. This is greatly appreciated by staff and has resulted in a high degree of stability in staffing, and soaring morale. These factors all point to the school's outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the ways in which the school is helping their children. Staff work tirelessly to keep parents and carers informed about their children's progress and to help them to contribute to this. Partnerships with a multitude of schools and agencies are exceptionally effective in promoting the learning and well-being of pupils and contribute greatly to the excellence of the care guidance and support provided for them. This has the effect of ensuring that pupils feel safe and happy and are outstandingly well safeguarded. They make good progress and achieve well.

The curriculum is outstanding. It provides a vibrant mix of activities, precisely tailored to the needs and interests of pupils. Teaching is good. It is occasionally outstanding. Any that is less than good is rare but this does occasionally occur when pupils are not fully challenged to learn because teaching focuses more on checking what pupils know than on promoting new learning. Provision for the children of Reception age is good and, as a result, their behaviour and social and emotional development improves quickly so that they are successfully re-integrated back into full-time mainstream school in a short time.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The impact of this is evident in pupils' exceptionally good behaviour, the degree of social harmony found in the school and pupils' rapidly expanding understanding of how their actions impact on other people's lives. They bring happiness to others, for instance through public performances by the school brass band. Activities in school contribute exceptionally well to pupils' awareness of the importance of leading healthy lifestyles.

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

- Improve teaching by
  - - making sure that the priority in all lessons is the promotion of new learning, rather than consolidation or reinforcement
  - - consistently using assessment information to ensure the right level of challenge in lessons.

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## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Attainment on entry is nearly always low. This applies to long- and short-stay pupils alike. From this starting point, good teaching helps pupils to make rapid progress, achieve well and enjoy their learning. Even though attainment remains low it improves quickly during their stay. In lessons, pupils behave exceptionally well and are encouraged to work with as much independence as possible. Many do so: by listening attentively to instructions and trying their hardest to work with as little help as possible. This was observed in an outstanding topic lesson, half of the class worked hard and with a palpable sense of enjoyment with minimal support from staff. This allowed those staff to give added attention to other pupils to help them to make similar progress. The large majority of pupils make particularly good progress in reading and mathematics. Over a half also makes good progress in writing, often from much lower starting points. Progress is slower when teachers pay more attention to checking what pupils already know rather than promoting new learning. The incidence of this is rare. All groups of pupils make similar progress. For children of Reception age the most important outcome is in their personal, social and emotional development, which ensures a rapid return to mainstream school; this is achieved with a good degree of success.

Attendance is broadly average. Last year, the persistent absence of a tiny minority of pupils drove figures down but this term over a third of all pupils have 100% attendance and well over a half are exceeding the national average. With this rapidly improving picture of attendance and the good progress that pupils are making, they are being increasingly well prepared for future well-being.

After-school and weekend sports clubs are much enjoyed and well attended. Parents and carers point to instances whereby their children have become increasingly enthusiastic about taking part in out-of-school sporting activities at weekends and in the holidays, as a result of having their interest kindled in school. Pupils are proud of their school and contribute well to its excellent ethos. Pupils participate enthusiastically in charity work and fund-raising, much to the benefit of the broader community.

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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>	4
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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</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?

Teaching is nearly always at least good. It is frequently outstanding. Pupils feel they are well taught. Parents and carers agree. The quality of teaching is such that pupils are keen to get into lessons, secure in the knowledge that once there they will be presented with activities that interest them, which are enjoyable and which are matched closely to their respective abilities. Work is set at a level that challenges pupils without out-facing them. Teachers are able to do this because they accurately assess the progress pupils make and recognise when pupils have gained a firm grasp of what they are learning. Teachers combine good subject knowledge with a perceptive understanding of the needs of individuals. Pupils are aware that their teachers are trying to help them and that their demands are reasonable. This contributes to the effectiveness of excellent behaviour management in classrooms. Skilled support staff show a good awareness of where their help is needed and are deployed well by teachers to enable them to make a full contribution to learning every bit as much as the management of behaviour. On the rare occasions when teaching is less than good it is because assessment information is not used to help inject more challenge into lessons.

The curriculum provides pupils with many memorable experiences. Of particular importance is the way in which the wealth of enrichment activities is carefully woven into the more formal curriculum to further promote learning, enjoyment and well-being. In nearly every lesson observed, pupils were using their experiences of enrichment activities

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to add relevance to their learning. In a topic lesson, for instance, they were comparing their visits to two different parks; in a music lesson, another group were recalling their experience of a visit by a brass ensemble the previous day. Timetables are carefully adapted to meet the differing needs of pupils, care being taken, for instance, to adapt lessons for short-stay pupils in recognition of their likely return to mainstream education.

Provision to promote personal and social development is outstanding. Pupils who as the most vulnerable due to their circumstances receive excellent additional support in nurturing groups which strongly support their emotional well-being alongside their learning. The provision for reception-age pupils is good. On the rare occasions that they are admitted they are taught an appropriate curriculum in a suitable environment which promotes learning through play and discovery. The rarity of referral has contributed to some underdevelopment and resourcing of an otherwise suitable outdoor area.

Support is exceptionally well targeted. This support often precedes admission because members of the highly effective intervention team have usually been working with pupils in their mainstream schools. This means that, upon referral, staff already have a comprehensive understanding of individual needs, and programmes are in place to ensure a flying start. The school works to outstanding effect with parents and carers to help them contribute as much as they can to their children's education and well-being. Excellent communication with other agencies and professionals helps eliminate duplication of support whilst avoiding the possibility of omission. Excellent monitoring and analysis of behaviour and attendance and the development of a carefully balanced system of reward and sanction have contributed greatly to improvements.

*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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have worked highly effectively to ensure that a stable and high-performing staff has been developed. The outstanding governing body has contributed enormously to this situation and has played a significant role in the production and promotion of a highly-perceptive plan for the school's future development. The quality of professional development is extremely high as the morale of staff, who show a strong sense of ambition to play their part in making pupils' lives better, for instance, by ensuring that all pupils share an outstanding degree of equality of opportunity.

There is a strong, shared desire to ensure that teaching is never less than good. In the main this situation has been arrived at but there are still pockets awaiting improvement. After each monitoring visit to a classroom, teachers are given good advice as to how they can improve their teaching.

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The appointment of a Parent Support Advisor has proved highly effective. Following the appointment at the beginning of the year, parental involvement in reviews and social events has doubled, from 30% to 60%. Parents and carers are frequently invited into school to learn alongside their children, a recent instance being when parents, carers and pupils joined together to cook a meal. A text-messaging service developed by the school has furthered the effectiveness of home-school communication.

The school is totally committed to working with others to secure successful outcomes. There is no sense of isolation and leaders and managers have an acute awareness of the role the school plays in the broader field of education within the borough. Last year, staff from the school led a borough-wide curriculum innovation initiative involving all its mainstream primary schools. The school's highly-successful outreach service has been pivotal. One of its main roles is to intervene early to prevent the need for admission in the first place, another is to ensure that when pupils are returned to mainstream school their transition is fully supported. One statistic bears testament to the team's effectiveness: last year no pupil was permanently excluded from a Trafford primary school. The previous year the figure was eight.

The school operates as a strongly-cohesive community, where relationships are very good and people work tirelessly to help each other. In the broader community, the outreach teams help to bring a coordinated approach to helping pupils to overcome their difficulties without having to be withdrawn from their primary schools, and thus be educated in their own communities.

Safeguarding procedures are outstanding. Staff are exceptionally vigilant and very experienced in recognising the signs that a pupil may not be thriving. They are particularly well trained and qualified in relation to child protection. A much higher proportion of pupils than is usually found have child protection plans and the school plays a major role in contributing to these plans in collaboration with the key agencies involved.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>



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## **Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire are wholeheartedly supportive of the work of the school. They feel their children are being well taught and making good progress. Whilst a very large majority of parents feel that communication is good and that they are kept well informed about their children's progress, there are still some who would like even more contact.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Longford Park 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 inspector received 11 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 39 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	5	45	6	55	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	8	73	3	27	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	8	73	2	18	1	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	5	45	5	45	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	9	82	1	9	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	82	1	9	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	7	64	3	27	0	0	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)	7	64	3	27	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	82	1	9	1	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	73	3	27	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	64	2	18	1	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	82	1	9	1	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	73	3	27	0	0	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.**



29 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Longford Park School, Stretford M32 8QJ**

It was a delight to visit your outstanding school the other day. Thank you for making me feel welcome and thank you for spending a little time talking to me about your school.

There are so many excellent things about your school that it is hard to know where to start. Most important though is the fact that you enjoy school and feel safe. You are achieving well and your behaviour is outstanding. It was heartening to see how much you enjoy sport and are keen to live healthily. Your timetables are full of fabulous opportunities for you to learn and develop outside of the classroom as well as in them. You obviously enjoy everything on offer, especially, I noticed, your music. Not every school has a brass band.

Your school is outstandingly well led and managed and every precaution is taken to make sure you are well cared for, supported and guided.

I think that teaching could become even better if all teachers, rather than just most of them, made sure that you were fully challenged in all lessons rather than being given work that some of you know how to do already. You can help the adults to do this by letting them know when the work you have been given is too easy.

Yours sincerely

Alastair Younger

Lead inspector

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