

Mab Lane Junior Mixed and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131480
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	360278
Inspection dates	28 February 2011–1 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Barlow
Headteacher	Mrs June Todd
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2008
School address	Mab Lane Liverpool Merseyside L12 6QL
Telephone number	0151 2594282
Fax number	0151 2833894
Email address	mablane-ht@mablane.liverpool.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	28 February 2011–1 March 2011
Inspection number	360278

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 17 lessons taught by 13 different teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils, and they observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. Inspectors scrutinised the views of staff and pupils and analysed 30 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The rate of pupils' learning in English and mathematics.
- Whether all groups of pupils are sufficiently challenged through the teaching and learning they receive.
- The impact of the curriculum on pupils' enjoyment of school and their understanding of cultural diversity within the wider world.
- Whether leaders and managers have ensured issues from the last inspection have been tackled and that its drive to improve further is fully secure.

Information about the school

This school is above average in size compared with other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is high. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils have minority ethnic heritages. The school has gained Investors in People, Inclusion Charter Mark, Dyslexia Friendly, Basic Skills Quality Mark, International School Foundation level and Healthy School status. Inward mobility has been higher than average as a result of a number of pupils joining the school at the beginning of the summer term 2010.

The school has an on-site resourced provision for eight nursery-aged children who have specific speech and language needs. This provision serves children from across the local authority. The school runs a before-school club. This and the resourced provision were inspected as part of the school inspection.

A privately run after-school club is situated within the school building. This provision was subject to a separate inspection and a report about its quality can be found on the Ofsted website.

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. Key to its success as a calm, welcoming and vibrant community is outstanding drive and determination from its senior leaders. The clear vision and commitment they display, which is shared with all staff, ensure every pupil, whatever their need or whether they arrive during the school year, settle happily. Furthermore, their actions have been a significant factor in the development of the outstanding Early Years Foundation Stage and the good progress of all groups of pupils through the school.

Attainment, from a low start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their school and community, behaviour is good and they show an excellent understanding of what is needed to lead healthy and safe lifestyles.

The staff ensure that pupils' well-being and emotional development are given the highest priority and contribute very effectively to the outstanding care, guidance and support provided. As a result, pupils and in particular those with significant levels of special educational needs and disabilities have high self-esteem, are confident and ready to learn in lessons. Good partnerships between home and school contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school. The school has worked diligently to improve attendance since the time of the last inspection. Overall, attendance has improved and for the very large majority of pupils, attendance is at least in line with the national average. However, attendance remains too low for a very small minority of pupils and this impacts on the school's overall level of attendance. The good home-school links are still to fully impact on a few parents and carers to ensure that their children attend school every day.

Pupils are taught well and the good quality curriculum provides a creative focus which is providing pupils with some memorable experiences; it is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The majority of teaching is good and teachers use what they know about their pupils to set challenging and well planned work. This is not consistent across the school, however, and a small number of lessons are not always planned well enough to ensure that all groups of pupils are challenged to achieve higher levels of attainment.

Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate; consequently the school knows its strengths and weaknesses well. Leaders and managers demonstrate a determination to continually improve the school's performance. The governing body provides good support and challenge in equal measure, and their vigilance ensures that the safeguarding of pupils is outstanding. The school's record of consistently good improvement indicates its good capacity to develop further.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate progress in all lessons by ensuring that all teachers consistently use assessment information to plan lessons which sufficiently challenge all groups of pupils.
- Improve pupils' overall level of attendance by working more closely with a few parents and carers to emphasise the importance of their children attending school every day.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' achievement is good because they are enthusiastic to learn, behave well and work hard in lessons. They enjoy learning particularly when they have to use skills of recall, deduction and cooperation. In such lessons they work well, taking turns and listening attentively to each other's points of view. In a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils learnt at a fast rate when they were challenged to use thinking and reasoning skills to solve calculation problems. On occasions, the pace of learning slows when lessons do not sufficiently challenge all pupils to achieve the higher levels of attainment.

Discussion with pupils and scrutiny of their books show that children make outstanding progress, from a low starting point, during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Good progress continues through the school. The pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Their work with specialist support staff and teaching assistants develops their self-esteem very effectively and has a positive impact on their learning.

Behaviour is good and pupils say adults quickly sort out any problems, that they feel very safe and can go to any adult if they need help. Pupils have transformed a local derelict patch of land into a beautiful woodland garden, which is a legacy for the whole community. Such activities enable pupils to develop an excellent understanding of ecological issues such as of improving and sustaining the environment. They value the responsibilities they have to contribute to the school, such as through the school council. Such experiences enable those who attend regularly to develop good cooperation skills and prepare them well for the future. However, overall, pupils' preparation for their future is satisfactory rather than good because attendance, although improved for the large majority, remains too low for a very small minority of pupils. Meaningful assemblies accelerate pupils' understanding and reflection of right and wrong. They have good opportunities to engage with those from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds through good curriculum provision and established links with pupils within the local area and wider world.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

Pupils cooperate well with staff and generally enjoy lessons particularly when they involve practical activities. For example, work on a project to design and build a sculpture of a dragon, which is on display in the school entrance, enabled pupils to develop their artistic skills effectively whilst learning to work with others. In the few lessons where teaching and learning is satisfactory rather than good, staff miss opportunities to set tasks which sufficiently challenge all groups of pupils to achieve the higher levels of attainment, particularly in English and mathematics. Learning assistants are well deployed, and skillfully support pupils learning English or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and succeeds effectively in enabling those pupils who attend regularly to apply and practise their basic skills across a range of subjects. A good range of visits and visitors enhances pupils' learning. Out-of-class activities cover a wide range of pupils' sporting, musical and artistic interests effectively. The before-school club supports working parents and carers well with their childcare needs. The daily 'rise and shine' physical activity is well attended, and is beginning to improve pupils' attendance.

Staff are particularly skilful at managing the challenging behaviour of a minority of pupils, for instance by providing relaxation therapy sessions. They provide outstanding care and support for pupils and their families and vulnerable pupils are particularly well supported.

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

The school has striking examples of how pupils with particular needs have progressed well due to the outstanding care, guidance and support provided. The school has increasingly effective strategies to improve attendance, and the success of these is evident in the reduced number of pupils who are persistently absent. However, these strategies have yet to impact fully on those few families who do not understand that attending school every day is expected and essential.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Excellent teamwork and dedication from all staff provides the school with clear direction and an unstinting ambition to improve. Ambitious, challenging targets for the school and for pupils are based on thorough analysis of assessment information. Senior leaders carefully evaluate outcomes and draw up action plans for improvement. Good monitoring of teaching and learning by all staff provides the basis for management of teaching and professional development, resulting in good quality teaching and pupils' good progress in learning. Racism or harassment of any form is not tolerated and the ethos established in the school that every child matters promotes good equality for all. Links with parents and carers initiated by the school are good. The school grasps every opportunity through regular information meetings to respond to their views. However, even more work is necessary to raise the attendance of the very small minority of pupils who are persistently absent.

Members of the governing body, whilst being supportive of all the school does, also continually challenge school improvement. Outstanding safeguarding procedures, which are central to all the school does, contribute effectively to pupils feeling very safe and enjoying school. There are very rigorous risk assessments and regular and very appropriate training ensures that all staff and the governing body are kept fully aware of and up to date on matters relating to child protection. Partnerships that attend to pupils' pastoral needs are outstanding. Those focusing on extending pupils' academic development are good, as reflected in pupils' good progress. The quality of community cohesion is good. The school understands the local community well. Pupils' experiences and knowledge of other cultures and lifestyles both nationally and globally are good. The school is beginning to monitor the impact these have on pupils' attitudes.

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children begin school with skills that are low compared to those expected at this age and particularly low in their social and their speaking and listening skills. Outstanding provision for children in the resourced provision benefits not only the children in the unit but all children. This is because they learn to play together, using Sign Along to aid communication; this also ensures excellent equality of opportunities for all.

Excellent teaching and learning from extremely caring adults and an exciting indoor and outdoor environment ensures children make rapid progress. Children very much relish their time here. This is reflected in the sheer joy on their faces as they choose to investigate and play in the well-planned outdoor spaces or to undertake a wide range of indoor play opportunities. For instance, they happily learn to share as they investigate in the digging and construction areas whilst learning about the world of work. Indoors, they learn to solve problems, to take turns and help each other as, for instance, in the baker's shop they buy and sell items to willing customers.

Relationships with home are firmly established before the children start and ensure that children settle quickly. These continue to be fostered through, for example, daily contact with parents and carers. Learning and development are rapid and, by the time they move to Year 1, the skills of most children, especially in speaking, listening and social skills, although below those expected, represent outstanding progress. Leadership is outstanding. The manager has an in-depth knowledge of how well children progress. Ongoing observations of children at play are collected by all adults. These are highly reflective and informative and used effectively to plan children's next steps in learning.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

About one eighth of parents and carers completed the questionnaire. Of these, the majority were highly positive in their responses. They are particularly pleased with how the school helps their children to lead healthy lives and to keep safe, and they believe that teaching is good. Inspectors endorse these positive views. A few feel that the school does not meet their child's particular needs, inform them of their child's progress, deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour or that leadership and management are good. Inspectors followed up these issues and found that behaviour is managed well and particularly for those pupils with specific learning and behavioural needs, that the school is well led and that the needs of all pupils are managed well. The learning needs of each pupil are considered and reported to parents and carers termly. However, all groups of pupils are not consistently challenged in all lessons to achieve the higher levels of attainment.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mab Lane Junior Mixed and Infant 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 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 240 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	60	10	33	1	3	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	19	63	10	33	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	16	53	10	33	1	3	2	7
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	57	10	33	2	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	60	9	30	2	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	60	10	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	33	18	60	1	3	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)	10	33	17	57	1	3	2	7
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	60	10	33	1	3	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	47	10	33	2	7	3	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	37	15	50	2	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	43	11	37	5	17	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	50	12	40	2	7	1	3

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



2 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mab Lane Junior Mixed and Infant School, Liverpool, L12 6QL

Thank you for talking to us and helping us when we visited your school. The inspectors were impressed by how friendly and welcoming you are and by your good behaviour. Most parents and carers are pleased with the school and say you are happy there.

Mab Lane is a good school. It has good teaching and it is well-run. The Nursery and Reception classes give you an outstanding start to your education. You enjoy learning, work hard and are keen to try everything. You make good progress in your learning and reach the same levels that most other children achieve by the time you leave in Year 6. You really enjoy having responsibilities such as school councillors or in the garden and woodlands project. The staff provides outstanding care for each one of you and especially those who need extra help. You say you feel very safe in school and know exactly how to lead healthy lifestyles.

The school leaders want you to aim high and are always looking to make the school even better, so I have asked them to make sure that they:

- check that all lessons consistently challenge all of you to achieve the higher levels of attainment
- work more closely with your parents and carers to ensure you all come to school every day.

I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard, attend school every day and do your best to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Clare Henderson
Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.