

Summerhill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104882
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	355650
Inspection dates	20–21 April 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Rowland

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Stanper
Headteacher	Ms Laura Nelson, Ms Vivienne Ainsworth-Brown
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 10 lessons and observed the work of eight teachers. They evaluated the school's work, and looked at relevant policies, the school's development plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's monitoring records and analyses of pupils' attainment and progress. The 73 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were also analysed.

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

- How well the school ensures that all pupils, particularly the more able, achieve their full potential.
- The degree to which teaching is planned to meet the needs of all pupils.
- How well teachers use assessment data to plan for progress and learning.
- The degree to which leaders and managers at all levels are actively engaged in evaluating the school's effectiveness and planning for progress.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in developing children's language skills.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils currently known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and none are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is close to the national average. The school has been awarded Healthy School status and the Activemark. It is a Dyslexia Friendly School. The headteacher is currently on a one year sabbatical and an acting headteacher is leading the school.

There is a privately run nursery operating on the same site and this is subject to separate inspection arrangements.

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

Summerhill is a good school. The care and support of all pupils is outstanding and the school works in a very close and effective partnership with parents and carers. Pupils appreciate that they are known as individuals and support the school's caring ethos. Consequently, their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils have an excellent appreciation of how to stay fit and healthy. They say they feel safe and this view is supported by parents and carers. Attainment is improving steadily and is above the national average. The school knows itself well and its self-evaluation is accurate and robust. The strong focus on ensuring consistently good teaching and on using assessment information more effectively has led to an improving trend in learning and progress. The school has successfully tackled the issues raised at the time of the last inspection. This, along with the steadily improving outcomes, demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well prepared for the move into Key Stage 1. Teaching throughout the school is good and there are some very strong features. Teachers question pupils so that they are challenged to think and to explain their ideas. The use of data to assess pupils' progress is a developing strength. In a few lessons, teachers do not make the purpose of the lesson sufficiently clear at the outset and do not sufficiently encourage independent work. The support provided in class by the school's teaching assistants is very strong and this means that different groups of pupils have an equal chance to succeed. Pupils value their school and express strong loyalty to it. Many positive comments were made by them during the inspection. As one pupil put it, 'I can't think of anything I would change about this school.'

Parents and carers also expressed very positive views about the school. One wrote, 'The teachers are caring, supportive and regularly go the extra mile. The support staff are a delight with the children.' Another commented, 'Parents are treated as partners in their child's education.' Others commented on the support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the rate of progress and hence the standards of attainment by:
 - ensuring that the intended outcomes of lessons are made consistently clear to pupils so that they can check on what they have learned, how well they have done and what they need to do to improve
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy the many engaging and interesting activities provided for them. This means that all pupils, including the more-able, make good progress and achieve standards which are above average. In one very successful science lesson, for example, Year 4 pupils were engrossed in spotting insects and small animals in the school's nature garden. They could then discuss with understanding the habitats in which these creatures thrive.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are generally below those expected for their age. They make good progress and leave Year 6 with attainment which is above the national average. The school's thorough tracking system shows an accelerating trend in the rates of progress in recent years and many pupils are exceeding the targets set for them. The school is aware that historically boys have not done as well as girls in writing and is successfully tackling this issue. Current tracking information shows that this gap in performance is rapidly narrowing. The pattern of improving achievement is due to the school's success in ensuring greater consistency in the quality of teaching. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is very effective and consequently these pupils also make good progress.

The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are attentive in class and are polite and considerate to others. They are routinely willing to help others who, for example, are younger, have difficulties with learning or simply settling into school. Many pupils have responsibilities in school, such as play leaders or as members of the school council. They demonstrate a sense of pride, wanting to make sure that the school can function properly. Pupils have an exceptionally strong awareness of healthy lifestyles. This is evident in the very high level of participation in sport and other forms of physical exercise and in the confidence with which pupils can explain why it is important to eat the right foods. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is evident from their awareness of the needs of others and from their knowledge of the need to care for the wider environment. Attendance has improved steadily over recent years and is now above the average for primary schools. Throughout their school life pupils have numerous opportunities to develop workplace skills. Mini-enterprise activities, such as managing Christmas Fair stalls and 'Fruit to Suit' are good examples of this.

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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	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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?

Teaching is good. Lessons are planned carefully to make sure that pupils remain engaged and make good progress. Teachers' questioning is skilfully managed to challenge pupils to think harder and deeper about the purpose of the lesson. In one very effective English lesson, for example, pupils were continually challenged to explain whether they thought that the benefits of modern technology outweighed its harmful effects. The school's tracking system is increasingly allowing teachers to identify areas where more attention is needed and to plan to meet the needs of individual pupils more precisely. Occasionally, teachers do not give pupils enough time to work independently.

Lessons are planned carefully to support learning, although in a small number of lessons the intended outcomes of learning, and the ways in which pupils can assess their success in reaching these outcomes, are not sufficiently clear. As a consequence, pupils may not be clear about how well they have done and how they need to improve. Occasionally, insufficient time is given to check on understanding so that misconceptions can be dealt with. Marking is generally supportive and helpful and gives pupils a clear understanding of the next steps in their learning.

The school's curriculum provides a solid foundation of basic skills, including information and communication technology (ICT). All pupils learn Spanish. The 'Connected Curriculum' enables pupils to see the links between different subjects and to experience a wide variety of interesting activities. These include the Christmas design and technology week, and the

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Summerhill friendship week. Enrichment activities are broad and varied. In partnership with other local schools there is a strong focus on eco-awareness.

The care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. This is partly due to the large number of support staff who look after the needs of individual pupils very well. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are assessed carefully and an individual programme of support put in place. This aspect of provision is further strengthened through a number of effective links with external agencies, such as the social services department, the school nurse and the educational welfare officers. The school's drive to involve parents and carers in the drive to improve attendance has been highly effective.

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?

The headteacher, who is currently taking a one year sabbatical, is widely respected within the school and the local community. An acting headteacher is managing and leading the school this year with great success. This arrangement has been very effective and has allowed the school to continue to develop well. The strengths of leadership and management are apparent in the improving outcomes. As a result of a restructuring of management responsibilities, the leadership skills of many staff have been enhanced. The team, led by the acting headteacher and by senior managers, has a clear sense of purpose and direction and an unremitting determination to continue to improve outcomes and provision. Teaching is monitored and evaluated thoroughly and action is taken to disseminate good practice.

The school demonstrates a good awareness of its strengths and what needs to be done to improve further. Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, take an active role in this process. Members of the governing body are experienced and highly committed. They know the school well and are not afraid to question and challenge when needed.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. Many parents and carers are actively involved in the life of the school and participate in workshops which support their child's learning. Communications with parents and carers are thorough and employ a variety of media, including the school's excellent website. The school gathers the views of parents and carers through regular surveys and questionnaires. Partnerships with other schools in the Maghull area are strong and this helps the school to deliver good outcomes. The shared work to promote understanding of the environment is particularly noteworthy. Discrimination of any type has no place at Summerhill and the school successfully ensures that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed. The safeguarding of pupils is good. The

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systems the school has to care for and protect pupils are robust, and this includes an appropriate focus on the suitability of staff and on the appointment of new staff. The school works well as a community and has numerous effective strategies to promote community cohesion. For example, The 'Canal Big Clean Up' has been undertaken with a number of local schools and community groups.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	1
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	2
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 generally enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are below those expected for their age. They make good progress particularly in their language and social skills and enter the Reception class with skills which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Children make choices from a wide variety of activities and work independently. They develop a positive attitude to their learning and work and play in harmony.

Staff are deployed intelligently to support children's learning and observations and assessments are used to plan for the next steps in learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage team are constantly seeking to improve the quality of the learning environment for all its children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The outdoor area has improved markedly since the time of the last inspection. There is an appropriate mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities, which are closely matched to each child's level of development and ability. Links with parents and carers are particularly strong. These are initiated through a well-planned induction procedure, and regular meetings and workshops are held throughout the Reception Year.

The Reception class teacher manages and leads an enthusiastic team who work well together with a shared sense of purpose to ensure that all children have the best possible opportunity to learn and develop. Planning and self-evaluation processes are developing to

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support actions for improvement. Links with external bodies and individuals, such as the speech therapy service and occupational therapists are well developed and help to deliver good outcomes. As in the main body of the school, procedures to ensure the safeguarding of children are well thought out and effective.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

About 28% of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. This is a below average rate of response for primary schools. A very large majority of the responses were positive with many supportive comments. All the respondents felt that their child enjoyed school. A very small minority of respondents felt that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors considered the way that the school dealt with unacceptable behaviour through discussions, including with pupils, observations in and around the school and by examining records of incidents. During the inspection no evidence was found to suggest that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Summerhill 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 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 198 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	70	22	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	75	17	23	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	45	62	23	32	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	56	31	42	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	51	70	21	29	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	63	25	34	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	56	28	38	4	5	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)	37	51	27	37	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	63	26	36	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	51	23	32	6	8	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	48	31	42	4	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	63	22	30	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	70	21	29	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	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.



26 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Summerhill Primary School, Liverpool, L31 3DT

Thank you for making us so welcome during our recent visit to Summerhill. We were particularly grateful to those of you who agreed to meet us during your lunch break. Thank you also to those of you who completed the questionnaire. All your comments were very helpful.

Summerhill is a good school. There are some outstanding features and the staff work very hard to make it even better. Your behaviour is excellent and you look after each other extremely well. We also felt that you had a very well developed understanding of how to remain fit and healthy. We were very impressed by how closely the school works with your parents and carers and by how well it supports and looks after you.

You make good progress in school and your teachers provide you with good lessons. We saw that you benefited from a very interesting variety of activities and that your teachers were always trying to ask you challenging questions to make you think. The teaching assistants do a very good job helping you to learn. However, we thought that there are some things that would help you learn more. We felt that sometimes the learning objectives given to you at the beginning of lessons could be clearer to help you know exactly what the lesson will be about. We also noticed that at times you could have more opportunities to work in pairs and small groups and become more independent in your learning.

You explained how proud you are of your school. Please try to help your teachers by always behaving as well as you did during the inspection, by always trying your very best and by helping each other. Once again, thank you for your kindness and help.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Rowland

Lead inspector

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