

Liscard Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104994
Local Authority	Wirral
Inspection number	355678
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Declan McCauley

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	651
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sir Malcolm Thornton
Headteacher	Mrs Rosemary Littler
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 24 teachers in 45 lessons. They held meetings with three representatives of the governing body, staff, parents and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work closely and looked at the school's documentation relating to safeguarding, its improvement plans, reports on its work, governing body minutes and records of pupils' progress. Inspectors considered questionnaires from 208 parents and carers, as well as those from pupils and staff.

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

- How successfully the school has raised attainment, particularly in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of the school in ensuring that boys and girls achieve as well as each other.
- How well the curriculum is matched to the needs of specific groups of pupils such as girls in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- How successfully leaders and managers are working to make the school into a cohesive community.

Information about the school

The school is more than twice as large as an average-sized primary school. Most pupils come from a White British background. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. The school site is shared with a children's centre which is subject to a separate inspection. The school has gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools status, Eco Mark, Activemark, Artsmark Gold, Investors in People, Basic Skills, Intermediate International Award and the Financial Management Standard in Schools.

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. Pupils are very enthusiastic learners. Pupils, staff and members of the governing body have a tremendous sense of pride in their school. Leadership of the school is inspirational and innovative. The headteacher, members of the governing body and all staff share a vision of providing the highest quality of education for all pupils. School provides outstanding value for money as pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn and progress well. The highly inclusive ethos ensures equality of opportunity and the tackling of discrimination are given the highest of priorities. Very rigorous and robust self-evaluation at all levels of leadership has resulted in an impressive record of improvement from satisfactory to outstanding since the last inspection. This excellent track record demonstrates an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

Outstanding teaching, an exceptional curriculum and first-class care, guidance and support combine to give pupils outstanding outcomes. There are occasions, however, when some pupils are not challenged enough. Pupils benefit from an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. From starting points to the Early Years Foundation Stage that are lower than typical for their age, pupils leave Year 6 with average attainment. By the end of Year 6 attainment in English and mathematics is close to the national average. This represents good achievement. There remains a legacy of some underachievement in Key Stage 2, although this is diminishing as the rapid progress occurring across the school impacts on attainment. Pupils display excellent knowledge of how to lead safe and healthy lives. The exemplary behaviour of pupils plays a pivotal role in enabling them to make high-quality contributions to the school, local and wider communities. The combination of these key skills with pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that pupils are provided with an excellent foundation for their future.

Safeguarding arrangements are good. The school, very successfully, engages parents and carers in pupils' learning and school life. The high quality of partnership work with a wide range of organisations enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Attendance has improved greatly and is now high. The school provides outstanding value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain the current rapid progress in English and mathematics and raise attainment by ensuring that in all classes, assessment is used effectively to ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

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Pupils' excellent behaviour ensures they can make the most of the exciting opportunities on offer. Pupils are very responsive to high-quality experiences in lessons, enabling them to make good progress. Inspectors observed pupils in Year 5 participating very enthusiastically in drama activities based on monsters in order to inspire them to use verbs which conveyed a sense of power and strength. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are so well supported in their learning that they make at least the same good amount of progress as all other pupils. Their attainment exceeds that of similar pupils nationally. School has taken innovative steps which have effectively narrowed the attainment and progress gap between boys and girls.

Attainment at Year 6 is broadly average. Robust data held by the school indicates that progress across the school is improving rapidly. The pupils in Year 6 are well on track to reach challenging targets in English and mathematics that exceed national expectations for their age. Progress in Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is high.

Parents, carers and pupils agree that pupils are very well prepared for the future. Pupils achieve well and enjoy school immensely. They are proud to be part of Liscard Primary. Pupils demonstrate their excellent contribution to the wider community through their focus on improving road safety locally. All pupils, even those who are very young, speak knowledgeably about what makes a healthy snack. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is given particular prominence in school resulting in thoughtful, reflective and very well informed pupils. Many pupils contributed to a discussion in a lesson about how people can be discriminated against and how they would respond to 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	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	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

Outstanding teaching ensures that most pupils make rapid progress in lessons. Teaching assistants are deployed exceptionally well to meet pupils' individual and group needs. They work very closely with teachers to ensure that lessons enable all pupils to progress. Teachers, routinely, use assessment very effectively to provide challenge for all pupils; sometimes, this can be a little inconsistent in specific year groups. The majority of learning moves at a good pace because of the high expectations teachers have of all pupils. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very effectively; it is an integral feature of the overwhelming majority of lessons. There are many opportunities for pupils to engage in evaluating each other's work through strategies such as 'talk to your partner'. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and offer good guidance to pupils about how to improve their work. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils made so much progress in labelling parts of marigolds and other flowers that the teacher began to speak to them about a higher level of activity which was planned for the future.

The curriculum is matched very well to the needs of all pupils. Much work has been done successfully by staff to develop a curriculum which inspires boys in writing and motivates girls in mathematics. This work has been a crucial element in bringing about improvement in attainment. The curriculum is very innovative and exceptionally creative. It adds to the pupils' high levels of enjoyment. Lessons are planned to enable all pupils to develop their writing skills through different subjects. Pupils have opportunities to participate in a wide

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range of memorable experiences. One parent spoke about how inspired their child was about animation following her involvement in an extra-curricular film-making club. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in activities after school which enrich the curriculum well.

The day-to-day care for pupils is outstanding. All adults pay very close attention to pupils' pastoral care, guidance and support. Pupils say they feel very safe in school at all times and parents and carers confirm this. All pupils who require extra support because of their own particular needs are very well supported. Staff liaise very closely with many outside agencies to ensure that the needs of pupils who are potentially vulnerable due to their circumstances are fully met. Induction to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage and transition to the secondary school are handled with great care and many parents and carers commented on how effective these procedures are. The school has worked very hard to improve pupils' attendance; it has dramatically reduced the number of pupils who were persistently absent.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Those responsible for leadership strive continually to ensure the best possible education and life chances for all pupils. The headteacher is an inspirational leader who has formed a caring and very effective learning community. She is supported very well by a strong senior leadership team which has brought about substantial and rapid improvements. Staff and members of the governing body value the headteacher greatly and recognise how she has been instrumental in creating this highly valued school. There is a shared determination that only the best is good enough for the pupils. Any outcomes which are slightly less than the anticipated best are analysed systematically to ensure that a more successful approach is adopted to maximise improvement. Administrative, lunchtime and other support staff are conscientious in ensuring the smooth running of the school. Staff comment on their pride in working at Liscard and the high quality of their professional skills' development and training.

The impact of the governing body on the school is outstanding. The chair and committee leaders work with all governors to provide exceptionally rigorous challenge and support to the school. Together, they have a very secure knowledge of the key priorities. The school adopts all recommended good practice with regard to safeguarding. All policies and processes are in place to ensure pupils' safety. All leaders have the highest commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination and do so very well. Most pupils are able to achieve their best irrespective of ability, background or need. The

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school's contribution to community cohesion is good. Pupils have a good understanding of the local and international communities. Leaders are currently focused on developing opportunities for pupils to increase their understanding of the national community in which they live. The school has been very successful in engaging with parents and carers through the website and regular newsletters. These result in highly positive relationships between home and school. Partnership work is an important feature of school life and a key strength of the school. Close collaboration with other schools and organisations enables staff and pupils to learn from others and to share their skills in many ways that are beneficial.

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	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Parents and carers comment very favourably on how well children develop in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are very eager to participate in a very well planned range of development opportunities created by staff. Children make exceptional progress. They co-operate and play together well, demonstrating exceptionally well-developed personal and social skills. They spoke to inspectors about the problems which 'Baby Bear', who was missing from the 'Three Bears' Cottage', may be experiencing. Healthy lifestyles are very effectively promoted. A bright and stimulating environment supports the development of young children effectively. Assessment is used exceptionally well to provide staff with a wealth of knowledge about children's abilities and to inform future planning for their needs. Data are used thoroughly to plan for the future. The very effectively planned activities are designed to meet the needs of all children fully. There are ample opportunities provided for adult-led and child-initiated activities. The children select their own development activities sensibly. Children are courteous and polite to each other. Those responsible for leading the Early Years, Foundation Stage are very knowledgeable about what is required. They

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make plans and bring about improvements through a well-thought-out approach, with the needs of the children taking precedence. The experiences of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are of the highest possible standard, resulting in outstanding progress for all.

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 a third of parents and carers registered at the school returned the inspection questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of these parents and carers was extremely positive about the school and its work. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly appreciative of the school and its leadership. Typically, they comment, 'This is a wonderful school.' Also, many wrote additional comments. Some spoke very appreciatively about staff and the support they received from school. One of the comments made was 'I cannot praise this school enough. Every member of staff I have ever come across is helpful and friendly. My children have gone from strength to strength in this school.' This comment was typical of the responses. The inspection team endorsed the positive views of parents and carers. A few parents and carers had concerns about their children not making sufficient progress at school. Inspection evidence did not confirm the negative views expressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Liscard 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 208 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 651 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	145	70	62	30	0	0	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	164	79	44	21	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	143	69	60	29	5	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	138	66	62	30	8	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	153	74	50	24	3	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	144	69	57	27	4	2	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	134	64	67	32	4	2	1	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)	135	65	66	32	3	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	133	64	67	32	5	2	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	125	60	77	37	3	1	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	119	57	81	39	4	2	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	141	68	57	27	7	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	151	73	50	24	6	3	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



12 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Liscard Primary School, Wallasey, CH45 7NQ

It was a delight to meet you all during the recent inspection. Thank you for being so welcoming to the inspectors. We enjoyed talking with you and finding out about your school. We are very grateful to all pupils who completed questionnaires; these provided us with a lot of information. We are delighted to tell you that you go to an outstanding school which is very caring, friendly and welcoming.

These are the main things that we found out about your school:

- many of you do very well in lessons which are fun and exciting
- children in the Early years Foundation stage make exceptional progress
- you enjoy attending school
- you feel exceptionally safe in school
- all adults care for you very well
- school leaders work very successfully to improve your school
- the quality of teaching is outstanding
- you have a tremendous sense of pride in your school.

To make your school even better, we have asked school leaders to improve the levels you reach in English and mathematics by making sure assessment is used by all staff to meet the needs of all of you. We hope that you will continue to work hard in lessons in the future so that you can do very well when you leave school.

Yours sincerely

Declan McCauley

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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