

Ladybarn Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105423
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	367366
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Hemmings

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	413
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Emma Antrobus
Headteacher	Mrs Lisa Vyas
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors who visited 17 lessons. The inspectors observed 14 teachers and held discussions with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school policies, records of meetings of the governing body, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, 31 responses to parents' and carers' questionnaires were received and analysed.

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

- The impact of strategies put into place to accelerate progress in mathematics.
- Whether teaching and the curriculum is successfully promoting an improvement in boys' attainment, especially in writing.
- How effectively the school deals with the high number of pupils who join the school at different times of the year.
- How successfully children's communication, language and literacy development is promoted in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Ladybarn is much larger than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average, as is that of pupils from minority ethnic groups, many of whom are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The number of pupils who start or leave school other than at the normal time of the year is well above average. The school became part of a hard federation with a neighbouring primary school in April 2011. The headteacher oversees both schools and there is a joint governing body. The school has gained the Activemark, the Leading Parent Partnership award and is also an accredited Healthy School.

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

Ladybarn is an outstanding school. The exceptional leadership of the headteacher is at the heart of the school's success. She has an intuitive understanding of the needs of pupils and staff and works determinedly to ensure they are met. The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other leaders who work very effectively as a team to meet ambitious targets for school development. These targets arise from accurate self-evaluation that is based on highly developed monitoring and evaluation of school performance. This enables action planning to be exceptionally well-focused on driving improvement. Outstanding engagement with parents and carers and partnerships with other providers makes a powerful contribution to pupils' learning. The recently formed federation governing body is actively involved in influencing the direction of the school. The success of leaders in sustaining and building upon the school's outstanding performance at the last inspection shows there is outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

Children make an exceptional start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage because their individual needs are so well met. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, attain broadly average standards in English and mathematics. This represents good achievement from their skill levels on entering school, which are well below those typical for their age. In recent years, boys have not done as well as girls in writing. Leaders have taken action and the gap is closing as boys are now making better progress and their attainment is rising. Nevertheless, the school knows there is more to do to make learning more personalised by targeting the needs of individual boys rather than boys as a group. Strategies put into place to accelerate progress in mathematics have proved successful, particularly in developing pupils' quick mental recall skills.

Teaching has many strengths and there are examples of outstanding practice. At times, teachers do not use feedback effectively enough to make clear to pupils the next specific steps in their learning. The curriculum provides memorable and rich opportunities for learning, being particularly effective in promoting pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in exemplary behaviour and in pupils showing a great deal of care and consideration for others. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. The school's promotion of community cohesion plays a significant role in pupils' excellent contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils' attendance is average, which represents a significant and sustained improvement over the last three years. Parents and carers greatly appreciate the excellent attention given to all aspects of care, guidance and support.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on pupils' good achievement by:
 - targeting the needs of individual boys, as well as boys as a group, to raise attainment in writing
 - ensuring teachers always make clear to pupils their next precise steps in learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

A very large majority of pupils make at least good progress and increasing numbers are making outstanding progress. Pupils show much interest and enthusiasm in their work. They carry out their activities diligently and persevere when faced with difficulty. Pupils collaborate in an outstanding way to complete tasks. This was seen in an English lesson in Year 2, in which pupils were working in small groups to read and perform actions for poems about the sea.

Pupils speak clearly and are willing to listen to and appreciate the views of others. Pupils enjoy reading and can say why they like particular authors. They can express their ideas through a variety of writing styles, including narrative, poetry and instructional writing, across the curriculum. Although the gap is narrowing between boys and girls in writing, boys, at times, do not always show sufficient motivation. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those at an early stage of learning English, make the same good progress as other pupils because of the well-targeted support they receive. Those who join the school late are helped to settle in quickly and given extra support so their progress matches that of other pupils.

There are many opportunities for pupils to take on posts of responsibility, including being a member of the school council, pupil leadership team or playground squad. Pupils use these opportunities enthusiastically to make an exceptional contribution to school life. They also contribute very effectively to the wider community, such as during 'community week' when they work with a variety of community groups to enhance local life.

Pupils have a very good understanding of what constitutes an unsafe situation and say they feel very safe and secure in school. They are adopting healthy lifestyles in an outstanding way, knowing the need for a balanced diet and to take regular exercise. Pupils have an excellent insight, based on first-hand experience, into similarities and differences between their own and others' cultures. Pupils' good rate of progress in acquiring basic skills, their improving attendance rate and excellent collaboration skills, mean they are prepared well for their future lives.

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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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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?

Teachers manage classes well and the pace of lessons is good so that little time is lost. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and plan activities carefully to ensure they effectively challenge different ability groups. Of particular note is the way staff work diligently to ensure that the high numbers of pupils who join classes during the year, many of whom have limited previous schooling, are supported well to ensure their progress is the same as other pupils. Teachers do not always make learning personalised by making clear to individual pupils their next steps in learning. This is particularly the case in terms of developing boys' writing skills. Relationships are excellent and ensure that classrooms are very friendly and calm places in which to learn. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning and development of all pupils.

All pupils benefit from a rich and relevant curriculum that promotes outstanding outcomes. It has been adapted to be more relevant to pupils, taking into account gender and cultural differences. This has been successful in more actively engaging boys in their learning and raising their attainment. Innovative activities, such as 'super learning days', have a strong impact on pupils' motivation. These days give pupils opportunities to learn in different groups, with different adults, using a range of learning styles. The curriculum is effectively extended by well-attended extra-curricular activities and by opportunities to visit places of educational interest, such as Manchester Cathedral and Bramhall Hall. Partnership activity,

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that includes the other federation school, widens pupils' experiences and extends their skills such as those in sport, music and drama.

The school is a very welcoming, safe and caring setting in which to learn. Staff are clear of the steps to take if they have any concerns about the well-being of a pupil. Excellent targeted support for all pupils, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, enables them to make the best of opportunities provided for them. Transition arrangements are comprehensive throughout the school, which is important, taking into account the high number of pupils who join at different times of the year. Links with outside agencies are exemplary and very effectively promote the learning and well-being of pupils facing challenging circumstances. Pupils who have medical needs are looked after very effectively to ensure their well-being. Leaders have worked successfully to raise attendance and it continues to improve.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders at all levels have an ambitious view for the school and successfully inspire staff to have a common sense of purpose in taking the school forward. As a result, morale is very high. The deputy headteacher and senior leaders work very effectively as a team to ensure the smooth running of the school when the executive headteacher is attending to her duties in the other federation school. The management of staff performance and of professional development is excellent and is used very well to support pupils' learning. The governing body has benefited from the level of expertise across the two schools. Governors are fully involved in evaluating the school and have constructive relationships with staff. They are supportive of the school and discharge their statutory duties effectively.

The promotion of equality of opportunity is good, with no form of discrimination tolerated. The school has detailed information about the performance of different groups, which leaders use effectively to identify areas for improvement. This guided leaders to take action to narrow the gap between the attainment of boys and girls in writing and this is proving successful, though the school acknowledges there is more to do. There are comprehensive procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils and staff. Training of staff, particularly for child protection, is of good quality. Issues about safety are integrated into the curriculum so pupils have a strong understanding of how to stay safe. The school is highly committed to working in partnership with others and often takes a leading role in activities. Such partnerships include the federation, the extended network of schools and the 'schools sports network'. This activity has enhanced pupils' learning and development

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in ways the school could not provide on its own, in such areas as community cohesion, sports development and the creative arts.

Leaders promote community cohesion in an outstanding manner. Their actions have a very beneficial impact on cohesion within the school, the local community and beyond. The school's engagement with parents and carers is outstanding. The 'parent voice week' is a focal point of the year when parents and carers are involved in a range of consultation activities to inform school priorities. The parent support adviser makes a significant contribution in helping the school make effective relationships with hard to reach families. The school has gained the Leading Parent Partnership award in recognition of the effectiveness of its work in this area.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Inspirational teaching motivates children and, as a result, they make exceptional progress in the skills that will help them in the future. Staff have an insightful understanding of how children of this age learn and progress. As a result, they provide activities that are effective in capturing and maintaining children's interest. Strong emphasis is placed on encouraging children to make choices for themselves and this successfully develops their skills as independent learners. Social development is very effectively promoted through how the setting is organised, which enables Nursery and Reception children to learn and play together in the outdoor area throughout the day. Children show high levels of curiosity and imagination and behave exceptionally well.

Role play is used very effectively to develop children's language and communication skills. This was observed in the Nursery, in the area set up as the Ladybarn DIY store', when children were buying and selling a variety of resources. Adult intervention was highly effective in developing relevant language and encouraging children to communicate clearly

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in simple sentences. Priority is given to developing children's ability to link letters and sounds, such as through practising rhymes and songs and then being challenged to identify words that rhyme.

The rich curriculum is very effectively enhanced by opportunities to take part in educational visits to places such as Manchester Airport and the Museum of Science and Industry. The organisation and use of the outdoor area has been improved since the last inspection and very effectively promotes children's development across all the areas of learning. Outstanding leadership ensures that staff use assessment information exceptionally well to plan activities that meet the needs of individual children. Children's health, safety and well-being are very effectively promoted through robust and consistently implemented procedures. Parents and carers are kept very well informed about their children's progress, such as through the learning journals.

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

The proportion of parents and carers returning completed questionnaires was small compared to the national picture. Most were positive about the school's work and the efforts of all staff. Two comments were typical, 'All the staff are so helpful and friendly' and 'A school that not only looks after the academic side but also the pastoral.' There was no significant trend of negative views. Inspection judgements support the positive views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ladybarn 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 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 413 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	55	12	39	2	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	61	12	39	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	16	52	11	35	2	6	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	48	13	42	3	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	55	12	39	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	52	14	45	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	48	15	48	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)	14	45	14	45	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	52	11	35	1	3	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	55	11	35	0	0	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	52	10	32	1	3	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	17	55	12	39	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	48	13	42	2	6	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	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.



6 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ladybarn Primary School, Manchester, M20 4SR

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing the many interesting things you do.

The inspectors judge that your school is outstanding and that:

- you make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, attain average standards in English and mathematics
- children in Nursery and Reception have a really good start to their education
- your behaviour is exemplary and you make an excellent contribution to the life of the school and the local community
- you have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and are adopting a healthy lifestyle in an outstanding manner
- the outstanding curriculum is very effectively extended by visits to places such as Manchester Cathedral and Bramhall Hall
- staff make sure you are very safe in school and on visits
- staff and governors are working hard to help you do even better.

This is what we have asked your school to do now:

- improve boys' attainment in writing and ensure teachers always give you specific guidance about your next steps in learning.

All of you are a credit to your school and can help it improve further by continuing to try your best in your activities.

Yours sincerely

Melvyn Hemmings

Lead inspector

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