

Gwladys Street Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104610
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	377101
Inspection dates	22–23 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Robert Pye

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	485
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	A Garner
Headteacher	Nicola Booth
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 20 lessons or part-lessons, taught by 15 teachers. They held meetings with pupils, teachers and support staff, members of the governing body and also the local authority representative. They observed the school's work and looked at school development planning, monitoring documentation recording the progress of pupils and samples of pupils' workbooks. Inspectors also analysed 85 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 43 completed by staff and 100 returned by pupils in Key Stage 2.

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

- It evaluated pupils' current attainment and progress in English and mathematics and whether it is improving quickly enough.
- It investigated how well assessment is used to support learning throughout the school.
- It explored the success of the curriculum in meeting the needs of pupils.
- It determined the effectiveness of leaders and managers in improving the quality of teaching.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are from White British heritage and there are very few who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school has appointed a new headteacher since the previous inspection. The school is a nationally accredited Healthy Schools status and also holds the Activemark. As an Eco School, it received the Bronze Award recently.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school that is improving rapidly. The relatively new headteacher's clear vision for the school's improvement is focused on driving up standards and is shared by all staff. The large majority of parents and carers are appreciative of the school's work. Comments such as, 'The staff at Gwladys Street are friendly, approachable and always ready to go the extra mile in supporting the children,' reflect their very positive views. Pupils enjoy learning and are able to demonstrate increasing self-confidence. They are well-behaved and develop a good understanding of the choices required to live safe and healthy lives. The school's productive partnerships with external agencies contribute well to the good care, guidance and support provided, including strong safeguarding procedures.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the school with skills that are below those typical for their age. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they make good progress as a result of the stimulating curriculum. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall through Key Stages 1 and 2. A decline in attainment and progress in Key Stage 2, which began just after the previous inspection, has now been halted and reversed as a result of strong leadership. Pupils who are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities and the minority who speak English as an additional language do well and make good progress.

Pupils present their written work neatly and are keen to talk about what they have learnt. They make an effective contribution to the school and the local community. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is partly due to the school's good promotion of community cohesion. Teaching is satisfactory overall and improving quickly. In the best lessons activities are varied and interesting, teaching is lively and engaging and the pace is brisk. Improved tracking procedures give a clear picture of individual pupils' progress throughout the school. Staff are making good use of these to identify pupils who need extra help but, in some lessons, assessments are not used sufficiently well to consistently provide challenge for some pupils, particularly in writing and mathematics. The curriculum meets the academic and personal needs of pupils satisfactorily and some good ideas are being trialled to include pupils in planning interesting activities. However, curriculum planning does not systematically introduce enough new interesting vocabulary across Key Stage 2, nor does it identify strategies that enable pupils to acquire the skills of

calculation that would help them solve some problems at a level that matches the expectations for their age.

The complementary skills of the new leader and managers are moving the school forward at a good rate. Self-evaluation is accurate. The school is rigorously tackling weaknesses in pupils' performance at Key Stage 2, has established effective systems for checking pupils' progress and has set high expectations for teaching that are increasingly being met. Based on all these factors, the school demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:
 - making effective use of assessment to carefully match learning tasks to the pupils' needs
 - enhancing the curriculum so that it systematically introduces pupils to new vocabulary and adds more interest to their work
 - equipping pupils with the necessary calculation skills that will better enable them to solve mathematical problems.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are eager to learn and this, together with their good behaviour, contributes to their satisfactory progress in lessons. They work well together in small groups using cooperative learning and often show good levels of enjoyment. For example, in Year 3, pupils eagerly discussed with partners their feelings about what makes them angry and what action they could take in order to prevent this.

Since the last inspection attainment at the end of Year 6 had been declining. The school has succeeded in halting this and there is evidence of sustained improvement as a result of the strategies introduced. The work in pupils' books and the school's own tracking data confirm that, currently, pupils are on course to meet their targets. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress and leave Year 6 with attainment that is broadly average. In a minority of lessons, particularly in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2, progress is variable because the work pupils are set does not always present them with sufficient challenge.

Pupils make a good contribution to school life by taking on responsibilities, such as membership of the school council. A useful contribution is made to the wider community by taking part in the Liverpool Children's Parliament. They have good understanding about the need to eat a balanced diet and take regular exercise in order to stay healthy. Most know how to stay safe and secure in school and what might constitute an unsafe situation. Pupils' average attendance and average

attainment in basic skills mean that they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of education and for their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	3
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	
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
Taking into account:	3
Pupils' attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers manage classrooms well, so that pupils are engaged in their work and little time is lost. Teachers' explanations are helpful to pupils and they make good use of cooperative learning. In a Year 6 literacy lesson the teacher skilfully adapted the range of role play to enable pupils to work productively together. In the best lessons new learning is acquired quickly and teachers are clear about what pupils are expected to know. Pupils are satisfactorily informed about their progress and how to improve through marking and by talking to adults. However, in some lessons, teachers do not make the best use of assessment to consistently set challenging work that matches the abilities of all pupils, especially in writing and mathematics. Teaching assistants work effectively and are soundly deployed to support pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The satisfactory curriculum is successful in promoting pupils' life skills and their knowledge of the world. There is a good variety of enrichment activities, including using visitors, visits and an extensive range of after-school clubs. The school is aware that activities that foster the development of writing through enhancing their range of vocabulary are somewhat underdeveloped. In mathematics the Key Stage 2 curriculum has yet to identify and use clear expectations for teaching calculations in order to improve pupils' ability to solve problems.

This is a caring school that offers good-quality guidance and support. This enables pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to participate in all aspects of school life, such as after-school clubs. Pupils are proactively involved in supporting their classmates and younger pupils. Induction and transition procedures are regarded highly by pupils and parents and carers alike. The school has many robust procedures to ensure that attendance reaches at least average levels. Effective

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

partnerships with parents, carers and outside agencies ensure that those in Year 6 are fully prepared for entry into secondary education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders are fully committed to the continuous improvement and development of provision. They identify the school's strengths and areas for development accurately. Leaders have successfully managed a previous decline in the quality of teaching to effectively amend the dip in attainment that existed across Key Stage 2. Although currently satisfactory overall, the quality of teaching is improving rapidly as a result of leaders' effective monitoring and evaluation of lessons and of pupils' work, and their provision of appropriate training and advice. Staff share leaders' ambitions and have worked hard to improve many aspects of the school. Parents and carers have a high level of confidence in the school's leaders. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is currently undergoing restructuring and makes a satisfactory contribution to shaping the direction of the school.

The school promotes partnerships with parents and carers effectively and in a variety of ways. For example, it provides workshops designed to improve learning at home and makes good use of the community room for the 'Parent and Tots' group. The school has forged productive partnerships with a range of external institutions that make a good contribution to pupils' learning and well-being, especially for pupils identified as being potentially vulnerable due to their circumstances. For example, the community police regularly visit school to raise pupils' awareness of personal safety. Procedures to safeguard pupils are good and can be seen in practice across all areas of the school. Appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and visitors and training in safeguarding and child protection procedures are of good quality. Risk assessments and policies reflect the school's drive to give children a secure environment. The promotion of community cohesion is good because pupils at the school form strong partnerships with children from contrasting areas.

This is an inclusive school that works effectively to promote equal opportunity and to tackle discrimination by, for example, rigorously evaluating and monitoring the performance of all pupils. This is apparent in the effective support for different groups of pupils, such as the additional interventions for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

These are the grades for the 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	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children generally enter the Nursery class with skills below what is typical for their age. Good induction procedures enable them to settle down quickly into their new surroundings and they make good progress in all areas of learning. They continue to achieve well in the Reception class and are able to communicate their interests and what they are doing to their teachers and teaching assistants. Children’s behaviour is good. They display high levels of concentration, engage in meaningful play with their peers and with the adults who work with them and follow instructions willingly. They know how to stay healthy and safe and are not afraid to take responsibility within the setting.

Good teaching ensures that there is a good match between learning activities indoors and in the outdoor area. Children have many opportunities to make their own choices and there is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. For example, the children enjoyed the ‘bear hunt’ and also the water play linked to water travelling along tubes. Teachers are now placing more emphasis on allowing children to extend their own line of enquiry through investigations using the recently developed outdoor provision. Relationships between staff and children are exemplary. The provision is led and managed well. There is a coordinated approach to planning. Assessment is clear and accurate and there are regular review meetings which enable staff to monitor children’s progress closely and modify activities when necessary. Parents and carers are involved through their children’s ‘learning journals’ and they speak positively about the impact of the setting on their children’s confidence.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The inspection questionnaire response rate, at around 20%, is below the average found in primary schools. Almost all parents and carers who returned the questionnaire expressed the view that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps them safe. In addition, a very large majority is entirely happy with their children's experiences at the school. Speaking for many, one parent commented, 'Teachers are helpful, supportive and always there to listen.' A small minority is of the opinion that the school does not take their suggestions and concerns into account. Inspectors considered that aspect but found that the school makes much effort to listen to and act upon the views of parents and carers. A small proportion of parents and carers was concerned that the school was not led and managed effectively. Inspectors looked at the methods used by the school's leadership and found that the school has effective procedures to support school improvement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gwladys Street Primary and Nursery 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 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 485 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	75	19	22	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	66	78	15	18	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	57	67	22	26	3	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	61	27	32	4	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	66	24	28	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	73	19	22	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	62	29	34	1	1	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)	47	55	29	34	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	66	24	28	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	55	28	33	0	0	5	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	56	26	31	5	6	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	53	62	25	29	5	6	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	61	72	21	25	2	2	1	1

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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.



24 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gwladys Street Primary and Nursery School, Liverpool L4 5RW

Thank you all for your warm welcome when the inspection team visited your school recently. You were very polite and kind to us. We are particularly grateful to those of you who came to talk with some of us during Tuesday lunchtime. We enjoyed your good behaviour and the way you supported each other confidently in class.

Gwladys Street is a satisfactory school. You are making satisfactory progress in your lessons and most of you enjoy learning. By the time you leave school at the end of Year 6, your attainment is broadly average. The adults who work with you care for and look after you well. You are not afraid to give visitors advice on how to keep safe and live healthy lifestyles. You make a good contribution to the wider community, which is helped by good behaviour and your understanding of other cultures.

Your headteacher and all the other staff are very proud of you and they are always looking for ways to make the school better. We would like to help them with this, so we have asked your teachers to help you make even faster progress by making sure that at all times your work matches your abilities, particularly in writing and mathematics. We have also asked the teachers to make sure you have opportunities to learn many more interesting words so that your sentences become much more exciting. In addition, we have asked your teachers to give you clear and direct methods for solving number problems in mathematics.

Thank you again for your kindness to us. Please keep working hard and looking after each other. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robert Pye
Lead inspector

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