

Lisburne School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106170
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	377364
Inspection dates	21–22 May 2012
Lead inspector	Linda Clare

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	65
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Pritchard
Headteacher	Samantha Benson
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Linda Clare
Maureen Coleman

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Fourteen lessons, assembly, and parts of two further sessions were observed. Six teachers, a higher level teaching assistant and one teaching assistant were seen. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, governors, school staff, medical staff and the school's link advisor. The school's work was observed and the inspector looked at a wide range of documentation including data on pupils' progress, teachers' planning, curriculum documents, pupil progress files and the school's self-evaluation. Questionnaires were scrutinised from 41 parents and carers and the inspector also read responses from the students and the school staff.

Information about the school

Lisburne School provides for pupils with a range of complex needs including moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders. The pupils are mainly from Greater Manchester and the surrounding area. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. At the time of the inspection there were 65 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British origin. There is a small number of looked-after pupils. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. The headteacher is the substantive deputy head and has been acting since Christmas 2011. The school has achieved the Leading Parent Partnership Award, ICT Quality Mark, Inclusion Quality Mark, Healthy Schools Award and has Bronze Eco-school status.

The school is co-located with a primary mainstream school and shares the same site with a mainstream nursery provision.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key Findings

- This is an outstanding school where the most complex of pupil needs are met very successfully through imaginative teaching, high expectations and meticulous attention to pupils’ needs, interests and wishes. Accurately described as a ‘jewel’ of a school by one of its partners, Lisburne enjoys the confidence and full support of its staff, pupils, parents and carers, all of whom are very proud of its achievements and to be part of its family.
- Achievement is outstanding. Sensitive and well planned induction provides a strong and effective start to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Achievement is at least good and children make good progress in a well adapted, secure environment. They make outstanding progress in their communication skills. These strengths are sustained as pupils move through school. Overall progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is outstanding. It is strongest in Key Stage 2. This success is closely monitored, although the logging of observations which record the finer steps of progress made by pupils with the most complex needs is not yet regularly in place in all classes.
- Teaching is outstanding. Highly-competent, enthusiastic staff provide lively and stimulating learning experiences that maximise pupil potential. The development of communication skills permeates all activities very effectively and lessons have a strong focus on decision-making, personal skills and individual choice.
- Behaviour contributes outstandingly well to pupil learning and is exemplary overall. Pupils reflect on their actions and learn to manage their own behaviour very effectively. Pupils develop strong attitudes to learning as they improve their social skills, take turns and respect each other’s opinions very well.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The acting head teacher leads the school decisively and drives forward improvement with the very successful and innovative development of curriculum working groups. As a result, the management of both teaching and school performance is outstanding. The

curriculum provides excellent breadth and supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well in a highly-cohesive learning community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the practice of logging observations to record the finer steps of progress made by pupils with the most complex needs to include all classes.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers are unanimous in their high opinion and steadfast support. Typical of their responses are 'absolutely fantastic school' which 'helped my child achieve goals we never thought he could reach'. They value the school's role as 'a complete support network' offering wider family support. Learning in lessons is most effective and pupils are keen to say how much they love to come to school, make good friends and enjoy their activities. Their laughter and enthusiasm for their learning is infectious as are their extraordinarily positive attitudes. Pupils settle quickly to their work. Their targets show high levels of challenge and most pupils are very aware of their individual goals.

Pupils enter the school with low and often exceptionally low attainment as a result of their complex learning needs when compared to pupils of similar age nationally. Excellent relationships with staff help build pupils' trust and belief in themselves as learners. As a result, pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress which provides a firm foundation for future learning. Progress in Key Stage 1 is at least good and accelerates in Key Stage 2. Progress is outstanding overall because pupils build on their earlier skills and make further gains in confidence and self-esteem. Pupils make good and outstanding progress in their reading, and although by the end of Year 2 it is still below national average, the gaps from their starting points have closed significantly. The greater progress pupils make in Key Stage 2 results in a significant number achieving broadly average national levels in reading by the end of Year 6.

Pupils' communication skills develop exceptionally well. Those who are able to verbalise their thoughts become articulate, personable and thoughtful young people eager to make their own views and opinions heard. Those unable to verbalise learn to make their wishes and feelings known very effectively through the use of picture exchange systems and signing, responding happily and demonstrating good listening, looking and sitting skills. All pupils participate in lessons to the best of their ability, engage with one another positively and relish opportunities to demonstrate their growing independence skills.

Progress is equally outstanding for all groups of pupils including those with additional needs, pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and those who are looked-after. This is due to very effective monitoring of pupils as individuals, timely and

exacting interventions and an excellent range of quality external support. These combine to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged in any way on his or her path to learning.

Quality of teaching

All teaching observed was at least good and the majority was outstanding. This matches the school's own view of its teaching, and parents and carers unanimously agree. Enjoyment, curiosity and fascination in learning are very effectively promoted and underpinned by practical activities. For example, in one session to promote 'Fitness Fortnight', hand-eye co-ordination was reinforced very strongly as younger pupils experienced juggling, diabolo-spinning and feather-balancing activities. With older pupils, a picture of 10 members of a synchronised swimming team in decahedron formation generated much animated discussion on multi-sided figures.

Planning is thorough and comprehensive. Information communication technology (ICT) promotes competency in keyboard skills and pupils use a wide range of assistive technology with increasing confidence. Support staff are integral to the running and efficiency of all lessons. Their experience and excellent understanding of pupil needs are strengths of the school. Questioning is used skilfully and challenges pupils to think and formulate clear explanations. Teachers provide high-quality indoor and outdoor learning experiences for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their 'Learning Journey' booklets record very detailed development and care profiles, and comprehensive individual targets cover all areas of learning.

Thorough assessment is pivotal to the progress pupils make. Planning is very effectively informed by regular reviews of pupils' work and targets. On-going activity observation and incremental gains secured in each lesson, particularly valuable for those with more complex needs, are discussed by staff teams at the end of lessons. Written logs have been trialled in two groups but are not yet in all classes. Nevertheless, data analysis is incisive and tracking systems very effectively identify those who may need a boost to their learning and provide for rapid intervention where required. Marking is used consistently well. Peer marking and self-evaluation through a range of media reinforce learning and ensure pupils' contribution to lessons.

The school places a high priority on developing the skills and enjoyment of reading. Reading is taught systematically through a highly-structured and very effective whole school approach. This is exceptionally well supported by individual sessions which hone their reading skills with specially trained staff. Parents and carers appreciate this specific aspect of the school's work greatly. As one noted 'my son is happy and settled and can now finally READ. Wonderful.'

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The co-operation and collaborative spirit seen in classrooms is a tribute to pupils' determination to succeed. Applause is not uncommon. Cheering on pupil achievement reinforces success very effectively and is heard frequently across the school.

Pupils say they feel very safe in school because teachers look after them so well and resolve difficulties if any arise. They are insistent that there is almost no bullying. The anti-bullying wall illustrates their good knowledge of different kinds of bullying very clearly. Pupils know right from wrong and have good understanding of how to keep safe, learnt in their social and emotional literacy lessons. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly confident of the high standard of behaviour in the school and lessons. The school hall at the end of the day typifies behaviour. Pupils, excited to be going home, wait sensibly in their bus lines holding their school bags that contain diaries so that they can share their successes and activities when they get home.

The school council is justifiably very proud of its role and pupils take buddy responsibilities seriously. Their admirable respect for others was demonstrated clearly by two pupil guides who reminded each other and the inspector to keep quiet when passing teaching groups as 'learning is taking place'. The excellent behaviour observed in school is typical. Records of incidents are extremely rare, reports indicate consistently outstanding behaviour and there have been no exclusions. Attendance compares favourably against other schools meeting similar needs locally and nationally.

Good links with co-located schools include the popular Forest School outdoor learning programme. A small number of pupils each year moves to mainstream education and well established partnerships enable inclusive placements to flourish.

Leadership and management

The acting headteacher has very successfully provided new impetus to drive school improvement and has extended ownership of school development more directly to staff. As a result, morale is high and the school ethos is one of purposeful working and great vitality. Staff know pupils well and the school is a caring community. Efficient school systems lead to high-quality team work and shared goals. Although the new logging system is not yet fully implemented the school makes excellent use of data to track and support pupil progress. The management of teaching is outstanding. Performance management and professional training ensure consistency in learning and behavioural approaches linked very effectively to improvement planning. Accurate self-review provides leaders and governors with in-depth analysis compared against local and national data. Governance is good. Governors actively involve themselves in school and have excellent understanding of pupil needs. The school has maintained its previously outstanding levels and is still moving strongly forward. Performance is managed very effectively ensuring that capacity to improve is outstanding.

The curriculum is outstanding. Literacy and numeracy are particular strengths and the new style curriculum is embedding very successfully. Highly-relevant developmental programmes underpin outstanding communication gains made by all pupils. Daily after-school clubs and holiday play schemes very effectively extend opportunities for learning. Drama sessions, themed creative weeks and a wide variety of planned trips and visits enhance pupils' cultural understanding very well.

Leaders and governors promote equality and tackle discrimination very effectively. Barriers to learning for each pupil are overcome. The school has extremely effective

and close working partnerships with an extensive range of external agencies, therapists, community, social care and support groups.

Risks are assessed carefully and safeguarding procedures meet current guidelines. Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Home visits and informative courses are signposted through the school's very effective family liaison officer. The well organised parent group invites guest speakers to talk about identified issues. These two partnerships contribute exceptionally well to pupils' overall learning and progress.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



23 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lisburne School, Stockport, SK2 5LB

I am writing to say how much my colleague and I enjoyed our visit to your school recently. You were so helpful and polite and we were very impressed with your excellent behaviour. This is what we found:

- Lisburne is an outstanding school. You think so and so do your parents and carers. We do too. Everybody there does their very best to make every lesson exciting and fun for you so that you can learn a lot.
- We were pleased to see how happy you were and how well you said that you got on with each other. It was easy to see why your parents and carers think you like school. We REALLY enjoyed the circusology and thought you all did very well to keep balancing the feathers!
- You make huge progress in your work. Your teachers are very good at giving you tasks that will make you improve and sometimes are just a bit harder - to make you think more.
- Your behaviour is outstanding. You work hard in lessons, you are friendly and work well together. We were very impressed that you are all learning to sign so that everyone in school can join in conversations. Well done!
- Your school is outstanding because your headteacher knows what you need to do and makes sure that all the teachers have got what they need to help you. She is excellent at managing all of the jobs that have to be done in school and can see what needs to be done to make it even better in the future. We have suggested one area to improve and that is for teachers to monitor even more closely how well you are doing.

You can help your teachers by coming to school regularly and letting them know straight away if you find that work is too easy or too hard for you.

It was lovely to meet you all. Best wishes for the future,

Yours sincerely,

Linda Clare
Lead Inspector

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