



Blackmoor Park Infants' School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104592
Local Authority Liverpool
Inspection number 286983
Inspection dates 11–12 December 2006
Reporting inspector Arthur Markham

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	45–65 Leyfield Road
School category	Community		West Derby, Liverpool
Age range of pupils	3–7		Merseyside L12 9EY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 2288576
Number on roll (school)	310	Fax number	0151 2597096
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr P Killeen
		Headteacher	Miss Judith Salmon
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized Infant school with a Nursery. Most pupils are of White British background. The number of pupils from ethnic groups is below that in most schools, but at present a small number are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The number of pupils claiming free school meals is similar to that in most schools. The school has Healthy School and Investor in People status.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school in which pupils flourish. The pupils' happy faces as they enter school are testament to the effort that all staff put into ensuring that they thoroughly enjoy school and achieve well. The very effective leadership of the headteacher is a major factor in its success. Her hard work and determination has been instrumental in developing a very strong team approach within the staff and governors who share her clear vision for the continuous development of the school. Parents appreciate greatly the way the staff work hard to provide an outstanding level of care for their children, saying, 'It's like a family with all the staff caring for the children as if they were their own.' Pupils say they like their teachers and the way they help them to learn. They have very good attitudes to learning and work extremely hard to ensure that they meet the teachers' high expectations. Pupils become more mature as they progress through the school because close attention is given to their personal development, which is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent and they are courteous and polite. They enthusiastically carry out a range of responsibilities and their collections for a range of charities reflect their care and concern for others. They have a very good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and enjoy participating in a range of physical activities.

Pupils respond very well to the lively and stimulating teaching evident throughout the school. They enjoy the wide range of interesting activities presented to them in the well planned curriculum, which gives close attention to the basic skills, but also places a strong emphasis on other subjects. The significant emphasis given to developing pupils' self-esteem and confidence results in them taking pride in presenting their work well. Achievement throughout the school is outstanding. In the Foundation Stage children make rapid progress because provision is very good. They quickly develop good learning habits and by the time they enter Year 1 the vast majority reach the standards expected, and some exceed them. In Years 1 and 2 pupils continue to do very well. They understand what they must do to improve because they are set clear and challenging targets, which they work hard to achieve. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching enables them to reach standards that are well above average by the end of Year 2, although fewer boys than girls reach the higher levels of attainment in writing. Arrangements to identify pupils in need of extra support are good and close attention is given to ensure that they get the extra help they need so they too make very good progress.

The headteacher, deputy headteacher, committed governors and staff all work hard to improve the quality of education provided for pupils. There are excellent systems for checking that pupils are making as much progress as they could and for making arrangements to support those who need additional help. All the areas of the school work well because leadership and management are outstanding. Very effective self-evaluation systems ensure that the school knows which areas need to be improved, although the school's evaluation of itself is rather modest. Finances are well managed and the school provides excellent value for money. There has been very good

improvement since the last inspection and the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standards in writing attained by the more able boys to a similar level to that of the girls.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. On entry to the Nursery children's skills cover a wide range of ability, but overall are similar to those expected for their age. They make a very good start in the Foundation Stage because lively teaching and well organised routines quickly develop effective learning habits. As a result nearly all children reach the standards expected by the end of Reception and some exceed them. In Years 1 and 2 pupils continue to make outstanding progress because teaching is very effective, particularly in Year 2. Pupils enjoy a rich diet of challenging and stimulating activities so that they develop an enthusiasm for learning: reaching standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are exceptionally and consistently high. However, fewer boys than girls attain the higher levels in writing. Although the school has identified this and is taking action to remedy the situation, the impact is yet to be seen in assessment results. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language achieve very well because they are given very good support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Attendance is satisfactory: the vast majority of pupils attend regularly and want to learn. Pupils enjoy school immensely: as one put it, 'This is a happy school.' They say they feel safe and confident that they could go to a teacher if they felt concerned. The teachers' calm encouragement of pupils to do the right thing contributes greatly to the sense of order and safety within the school. Their behaviour is exemplary. However, the school is never complacent, as indicated by a 'Good to be Good' week, which successfully reinforced the importance of behaving well and respecting each other. Pupils' are given opportunities to express their views in school meetings and improvements have resulted, for example, in the provision of outdoor play equipment. They have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and physical exercise. They take on responsibilities enthusiastically and are actively involved in charity work, for example in a 'Shelter Box' collection for disaster victims. Their good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills prepare them very well for the next stage of their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and are the key to pupils' outstanding achievement. Teachers know their pupils well and plan work that meets the wide range of learning needs evident in all classes. Their good subject knowledge enables them to explain activities clearly and use questions skillfully to check that pupils understand what they have to do. Pupils say, 'Our teachers always help us to do our best work.' Close attention is given to developing pupils' self-esteem and confidence so that they participate in activities enthusiastically. Rigorous systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress mean that teaching is focused on ensuring that all pupils do well. Teaching assistants work in close partnership with teachers. They provide excellent support for pupils with additional learning needs and those who are at the early stages of learning English, who consequently make very good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum excels in creating opportunities for all pupils to learn and achieve well. The close attention given to enhancing pupils' basic skills prepares them well for the future. In the Foundation Stage children enjoy the exciting activities and acquire self-confidence and a strong desire to learn. Throughout the school achievement in English, mathematics and ICT is strengthened by their excellent use in other subjects. The extensive range of sporting, musical and creative activities promote pupils' all-round development and enjoyment of school, as do the many visits to museums, theatres and the learning of French. These experiences are reflected in project work on specific themes, which develop pupils' independent learning skills well. Excellent partnerships enhance pupils' experiences further. For example, the link with a local college develops pupils' awareness of the world of work and brings the curriculum to life through learning the skills of bricklaying and plastering.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents are very appreciative of the outstanding care, guidance and support given to their children. Very careful attention is paid to all health and safety issues and appropriate child protection procedures are in place. The school works very well with outside agencies to ensure that all pupils are fully supported. Assessment procedures are excellent. Pupils' progress is tracked accurately and regularly throughout the year. As a result teachers step in and offer support as appropriate and adjust planning so that the needs of pupils are well met. A particular strength is the emphasis that the school places on celebrating improvements that pupils make. This gives pupils confidence to continue to work hard. Older pupils especially know their targets in

terms of what they need to do to improve their work and they act upon this advice very well. Parents also feel they are very well informed of the progress their children are making.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management are major factors in the school's success. The headteacher's very strong leadership has successfully created a climate where everyone is constantly trying to improve the school further. She is admired and respected by staff who respond enthusiastically to the way she values their work and involves them in the management of the school. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher who makes a significant contribution to the effective leadership and management of the school and in particular the management of the curriculum. Well organised systems and procedures ensure that the school runs smoothly. Performance management is used well and is closely linked to raising the achievement of pupils. The governors are an important element of the effective team approach and fulfil their responsibilities very well. They monitor the work of the school carefully and have a very good understanding of its strengths and areas needing development. This enables them to give both strong support and effective challenge to the school. The school works closely with parents, who are very pleased with the quality of education provided for their children.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, three inspectors recently visited your school to find out how well you are learning. Thank you for being so friendly and talking to us. We very much enjoyed being in your school and listening to what you had to say. We judged Blackmoor Infants to be an outstanding school and think you are very lucky children to go there.

We particularly liked the welcoming atmosphere and the way the staff take extremely good care of you. They work hard to make learning interesting for you so that you do well. This was very clear to us because many of you told us how much you like your teachers and enjoy school. Your enjoyment of school was easy to see in your happy, smiling faces when we watched your marvellous Christmas Nativity production. We think your singing and acting was wonderful. But most of all we liked the way you behave so brilliantly in lessons and work hard for your teachers. This is the main reason that you make such excellent progress and reach high standards.

We were impressed by the way your headteacher and the staff are always working hard to make your school even better. We have asked them to help some of you to improve your writing even more by presenting you with new and varied topics that will excite and interest you.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We hope that you will continue to work hard in school and help the teachers so that Blackmoor Infants becomes an even better school.