



Netherton Moss Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104856
LEA Sefton
Inspection number 277236
Inspection dates 17 May 2006 to 18 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Frank Carruthers CfBT Lead Inspector

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Swifts Lane |
| School category | Community | | Netherton |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | Bootle, Merseyside L30 3RU |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 0151 5255026 |
| Number on roll | 226 | Fax number | 0151 5255026 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr M Winstanley |
| Date of previous inspection | 3 July 2000 | Headteacher | Mrs S Scott |

| Age group | Inspection dates | Inspection number |
|-----------|------------------------------|-------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Netherton Moss Primary School is situated in an area of high social and economic disadvantage. Almost all children on roll are of White British heritage and none is learning English as an additional language. There are more boys than girls. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is just above the national average. The attainment of most children on entry to the Nursery is low, especially in communication, language and literacy. The school has achieved the Surestart Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award and the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the achievement of children, which is unsatisfactory, and to teaching and learning, which are inadequate. The school holds too favourable a view of its effectiveness, which inspectors judge to be inadequate.

There are strengths in the personal development and well-being of the children, which are good, and enrichments to the curriculum by visits, visitors and clubs. Provision and children's achievement in the Foundation Stage are good, as is the level of care the staff provide for all children. Nevertheless, there is more the school needs to do to improve teaching and learning, which are inadequate, so that children achieve better. Although improvement since the last inspection has not been good enough and the monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous, recent initiatives have been put in place to bolster children's achievement. So far these have had a good effect on the achievement of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and are beginning to have a positive impact on the achievement of others. As such, leadership and management are satisfactory and there is the capacity to bring about improvements. Teaching time is below the recommended minimum in Key Stages 1 and 2 and reduces the amount of time available, for instance, for children to write at length. The cost of educating children at the school is broadly average but given the school's weaknesses, the school does not give value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise teachers' expectations and improve the match of learning activities to challenge the needs of children so that average attaining and more able children achieve better in English and science in both key stages and mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- Improve the monitoring of teaching and learning to identify areas for improvement and act on findings.
- Review teaching time and monitor how effectively it is used.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Children's achievement overall is inadequate. However, children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start so that by the end of the Reception year they have made significant strides in their learning from low levels of attainment on entry. Attainment is below average on entry to Year 1. Achievement in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory and not enough children reach expected levels or better in reading, writing and science in Year 2 because teachers' expectations are too low. Children have been achieving better in the last two years in mathematics because of improvements to teaching, which make

learning challenging. Recent initiatives to raise teachers' expectations and promote early skills of literacy and investigative work in science, however, are not yet fully embedded to show clear improvements in performance.

In Key Stage 2, detailed assessments show that not enough children make the expected gains in learning, especially in writing, mathematics and science. The performance of girls varies considerably and in some years is too low. Last year, standards were low in Year 6 but this does not indicate a downward trend as it reflects the nature of that particular year group. Prior to results in 2005, standards were rising in Year 6. The school is on course to achieve its targets for the current age group but these are not demanding enough. Standards are below average with not enough children reaching the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science, although the latter has improved since the last inspection. Following improvements this year to the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, these pupils are now making satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being are good. The children make positive comments about their school and like being there. They say they enjoy taking part in the rich variety of clubs and activities outside of school. Most children work and play together harmoniously. However, a small but significant number still have difficulty in sustaining concentration, following instructions and cooperating with others. There have been two fixed-term exclusions this year for unacceptable behaviour.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Through their work in personal, social, health and citizenship education, children become increasingly aware of themselves, others, and the need for good relationships, attributes likely to help them in the future. They are aware of safety issues, the need for a healthy lifestyle and the importance of having a strong commitment to the community. Children welcome opportunities, such as through the school council, to have a voice in decisions that affect life in school and the wider community. For instance, they have been influential in introducing a buddy system and are planning to have a parents' shelter installed. The many after-school activities give good opportunities to develop interests and talents. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and improved in recent years although a minority of children do not attend well.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate overall, despite good teaching in the Foundation Stage and some improvements in recent terms. Teachers' expectations have been too low and the learning of the average attaining and more able children has suffered. This has led to underachievement in recent years. Lessons observed

during the inspection ranged from good to inadequate. The majority in Key Stages 1 and 2 were satisfactory but there is not enough good teaching to lift standards. Where teachers' expectations are too limited, children become bored and do not stay on task, so their learning is unsatisfactory. In these lessons, staff do not make enough use of the school's strategies to promote good behaviour. The pace of learning is too slow at times. Girls' participation in lessons also suffers when boys are allowed to dominate activities or discussion.

There are clear signs of improvement, however, in teachers' expectations. Work is beginning to be better matched to children's different needs, through grouping children by ability for English and mathematics in Years 1 to 4 and by making use of teachers' subject expertise in mathematics in Year 2 and science in Years 5 and 6. These improvements have yet to make a full impact on children's achievement. Procedures to track children's progress and set them individual targets have improved this year and staff are beginning to make effective use of the information collected. However, marking of children's work is not generally well matched to children's targets and points to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provided is satisfactory with good features, for example, the Foundation Stage, which provides a good range of stimulating learning opportunities. Satisfactory provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to make satisfactory progress throughout the school. However, curricular planning does not always indicate how the needs of the more able are to be met in lessons. This is why the curriculum is not as good as the school believes. The curriculum meets requirements, but teaching time is below the recommended minimum and reduces the amount of time available, for example, for children to write at length. The curriculum is particularly well enriched through a very good range of visits, visitors and school clubs and activities, including dance and French. These experiences stimulate enjoyment and nurture children's talents and interests effectively. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is a strong priority across the school. It gives children opportunities to work together, to reflect and to express their feelings. In particular, healthy lifestyles and personal safety are woven meaningfully into the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The provision for the care, guidance and support of children is satisfactory with some good features. Staff work well with parents and other agencies to enable vulnerable children and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make satisfactory progress. Child protection and health and safety procedures are effective and children say they feel safe in school because the staff deal swiftly and efficiently with any problems, such as bullying. Parents agree with these positive views. The children are well prepared for starting school and for making a smooth transfer into secondary

school because of good partnerships with parents and schools. There are effective systems for monitoring and rewarding children's attendance. The school liaises very well with the educational welfare officer in addressing a minority of families whose children do not attend well. Children's progress is assessed and the results shared with parents. Target setting is beginning to have an impact on achievement. However, despite the good level of care, more able and average attaining children are not given sufficient guidance and support in order to improve their work further and this is a contributing factor to their inadequate progress overall.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory overall. A strength of the headteacher's leadership is the promotion of a caring and supportive ethos for children. This is evident, for example, in steps taken to help children who transfer to the school from neighbouring schools. Links with parents and agencies are further strengths. Governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily and are very supportive. They were fully aware of the specific support given to last year's children in Year 6. They have recently become aware of the underachievement among children in Key Stage 1 but need to take a fuller role in questioning the school's performance. Monitoring of the budget is good and the current, high carry forward is planned well to cope with expected shortfalls in delegated funds.

Though the school's self-evaluation process is based on a satisfactory analysis of data about performance, it has not led to an accurate assessment of how good the school is. On several aspects, such as the children's achievement, the quality of teaching and leadership and management, the school's view is more positive than the inspection findings. Recent initiatives to tackle underachievement are positive. For example, there is now a better focus on investigative work in science and the proportion of children reaching the higher Level 5 in the subject has increased since the last inspection. Although the initiatives have not yet had a full impact on standards they indicate the leadership team has the capacity to improve the school's performance. The school development plan now focuses better on crucial aspects of achievement and standards. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning needs to be more rigorous to identify key weaknesses.

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Inspection judgements

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|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 4 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | 2 | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 4 | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | No | NA |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| How well do learners achieve? | 4 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 4 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 3 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 3 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 | NA |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 4 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 3 | NA |

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

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 4 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 3 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 4 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | NA |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe | |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy | NA |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for your help during the inspection and please pass on our thanks to all the children we met and spoke to. Mr Maloney was particularly impressed with the work the school council is doing and felt you gave a very good account of yourselves and your work in school when he spoke to you.

These are some of the good things we found in your school:

- the staff in the Nursery and Reception classes help the children to make a good start in school
- the staff take good care of you all and are helping you to understand the importance of staying fit and healthy
- there are many interesting things for you all to do, such as taking part in visits, drama productions, clubs and sports.

However, there are some very important things we want the staff to do so that the school will improve. We consider the school should be doing better than it currently is.

- Many of you are not doing as well as you might in English, mathematics and science and this needs to be improved. The staff need to make sure the work they give you is hard enough so that by the time you go on to high school, more of you are achieving high standards in your work.
- You are not always learning as well as you might in lessons. For example, girls are not taking a full part in all lessons and allow boys to answer questions too much; sometimes children misbehave when they do not have enough to keep them interested and busy; and sometimes the pace of lessons is too slow. So the staff must make sure you are all learning well in lessons. Senior members of staff must confirm this is happening by watching lessons more often, as we did.

With very best wishes for your future,