



Kings Meadow Primary School and Early Years Education Centre

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104886
LEA Sefton
Inspection number 277246
Inspection dates 19 June 2006 to 20 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Mark Madeley CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Meadow Lane
School category	Community		Ainsdale
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Southport, Merseyside PR8 3RS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01704 578512
Number on roll	180	Fax number	01704 576266
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs P Krishnan
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs A Watson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school. It serves an area of mixed owner-occupied and rented accommodation. The pupils are virtually all of White British heritage. The school has a higher than average percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals. It also has an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has an exceptionally high number of pupils with statements of special educational need. This is because it has its own children and an additional nine who attend the local authority's resource base for children with speech and language difficulties, which is housed in the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features and in this respect the inspection agrees with the school's self-evaluation. It benefits from the inspirational leadership of the headteacher. Management has a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses because it monitors pupils' progress effectively. This has enabled the school to maintain above average standards at the end of Key Stage 2 and improve markedly its provision for information and communication technology (ICT), a key issue from the last inspection. The recently introduced system for examining pupils' progress in mathematics is more effective than that used in English and science. The school has a good capacity to improve further and provides good value for money.

The school's partnership with other schools and outside agencies is very strong and the new transition project for Year 6 pupils is outstanding. The vast majority of parents view the school positively and welcome initiatives such as Start Right, the pre-school provision for 0 to 3 year olds.

The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Pupils' standards on entry are below average but good teaching and an exciting curriculum help them make good progress. Teaching is consistently good throughout the school and this enables pupils to make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Teachers' marking is inconsistent in some subjects. The good curriculum places a strong emphasis on the learning of literacy, numeracy and computer skills.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are confident, behave very well, feel safe and are very well cared for. Most have an outstanding knowledge of how to live a healthy lifestyle and enjoy the extensive opportunities to exercise, which the school offers.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that marking in all subjects helps pupils understand how to improve their work further.
- Use the successful assessment systems developed in mathematics in other subjects, to monitor and further improve pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school judged this aspect to be satisfactory but the inspection finds it to be good. Pupils achieve well because, from a generally below average starting point, most reach above average standards by the end of Year 6.

Children join the school with a wide range of attainment but overall it is below average. Effective teaching in the Foundation Stage helps children make good progress but few begin Year 1 having reached the standard for their age in all six areas of learning. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress and by the end of Year 2 reach standards

in reading, writing and mathematics that are broadly average. The variation in achievement of groups of pupils in 2005 was due to small numbers in the year group and a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils achieve well through Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Similar high standards have been maintained for the last five years. The school consistently meets, and sometimes exceeds, its challenging targets.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported effectively in small group work by skilled, dedicated teaching assistants and specialist teachers. They make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual plans.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This is a school where the pupils develop outstanding personal qualities. They feel enabled to develop as individuals, or as one girl said, 'As a child you feel comfortable to be who you are'. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They all show a keen awareness of issues of safety and in turn feel very safe in the school. They relish the many opportunities they have to contribute to the community, both in and out of school. There is a flourishing school council that gives a 'voice' to pupils' views of the school and gets things done for them. Pupils work with considerable enthusiasm and interest. They talk about their achievements with enjoyment and delight. An outstanding strength is their commitment to leading a healthy lifestyle in response to the school's excellent guidance. By Year 6, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their lives. They show a real sense of 'can-do' when faced with a challenge. Their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good; outstanding with regard to moral and social development. Attendance is slightly below average for two reasons: unavoidable illness and some parents taking children on annual holidays during term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The inspection disagrees with the school's cautious evaluation of satisfactory. Pupils benefit from consistently good teaching across the school and they respond positively because they feel safe and well cared for. They enjoy learning because lessons are interesting and tasks suitably challenging.

Staff build confidence in pupils by involving them in their learning. Teachers' questioning encourages pupils to demonstrate and explain their methods and this helps consolidate learning. Pupils make very good use of the opportunities they have to reason things through and to work cooperatively. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff in the Foundation Stage are skilled at helping children learn through

stimulating play activities. They develop children's language skills well, especially their understanding of letter sounds and early writing skills.

Adults assess pupils frequently, both formally and informally. They use this information well to plan the next stage in pupils' learning. High quality marking, particularly in English, helps pupils understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve further. However, this is not consistent across other subjects. Assessment data is used well to identify and chart the progress of pupils who need further challenge or additional support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils and National Curriculum requirements well. Pupils' learning is enhanced by additional lessons in French, Spanish and dance, which are taught by specialist staff. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very well planned using the national guidance effectively to help children learn through play. Through the school, there is a strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills and this is enabling pupils to make good progress. Pupils get good opportunities to use their computer skills in other subjects. The new 'thinking skills' programme in Year 1 is an exciting opportunity for all pupils, especially the gifted and talented, and is due to be gradually introduced in all year groups.

Pupils are quick to take the many opportunities to exercise provided in the physical education programme. Pupils speak highly of the good range of after school clubs and visits which make learning fun.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

One pupil describes the school as, 'welcoming from the moment you walk through the door' and the inspection agrees. Some features of care and guidance are outstanding. For instance, the rigorous child protection systems and the highly innovative transition project, which provides excellent support for pupils transferring to the next school. Thorough procedures for safeguarding the pupils are in place. The pupils are confident that the school has very effective systems for resolving any 'falling-out' between pupils. There are good contacts with relevant support agencies. Parents value the well-attended 'parents as educators' courses and the curriculum information they receive, which help them support their children's learning. The school has introduced an improved system to monitor pupils' progress in mathematics and a particularly effective way for pupils to assess their own learning each week. Systems in English and science are sound but do not give the same detailed information or opportunities for self-assessment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The educational vision of the headteacher and governing body provides clear leadership for the school. It has a firm focus on raising standards and giving every pupil the opportunity to achieve their potential. The headteacher's excellent teaching sets a fine example to her colleagues. Her own energy and commitment engenders enthusiasm in all the staff. A thoughtful restructuring of roles is giving more staff an opportunity to take on responsibilities and develop their leadership skills.

Two testaments to the quality of this school are that it is now over-subscribed for September and that pupil numbers have doubled during the headteacher's tenure. The overwhelming majority of parents are highly supportive of the school and of all it does for their children. One or two parents feel that the school might have responded differently to their personal difficulties.

Self-evaluation is very good. There is a good understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' progress because the school analyses data thoroughly. Rigorous observations identify the effective and less effective features of lessons. The resulting well-targeted support leads to better and more consistent teaching. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors provide a good balance of support and challenge. They have successfully improved provision for ICT, the issue from the last inspection. Funding is used prudently and the large carry forward is allocated to projects designed to benefit the pupils.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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?	2	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	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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 for sharing your views of the school so confidently with us when we visited recently. We agree with you that you attend a good school which is well managed by your headteacher and senior staff. We found that your enjoyment of school, behaviour, keenness to learn and understanding of a healthy life style are outstanding - well done to all of you! We were also extremely impressed by your selfless work for others in school and the wider community and by the transition project which Year 6 pupils were working on. It is good to see that the school cares for each and every one of you and ensures that you are kept safe.

Your teachers are good at their job and help you to make good progress in lessons. They make lessons interesting and we think that they are really good at asking you questions and getting you to explain your answers. The Foundation Stage is a wonderful start to school for the youngest children. The staff there are very skilled at helping children learn through play activities. We also agree with you that the good range of after school clubs and visits makes learning fun.

One of the reasons why your school is so good is that the headteacher is always looking for ways to improve things for you. These are the things we have asked the school to do to make it a better place for you to learn:

- make sure that teachers' marking tells you how you can improve your work
- extend the system of assessing and monitoring your progress in mathematics to other subjects.

We thank you very much for your warm and friendly welcome and wish you and the school every future success.