



Halsnead Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104426
Local Authority Knowsley
Inspection number 286939
Inspection dates 27–28 February 2007
Reporting inspector Anna Dawson

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

The inspection of the day care was carried out under Children Act 1989: Part XA (as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000) and, where (funded) nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Pennywood Drive
School category	Community		Whiston, Prescot
Age range of pupils	3–11		Merseyside L35 3TT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 4778130
Number on roll (school)	448	Fax number	0151 4778131
Number on roll (day care)	24		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr T Sutton
		Headteacher	Mr C.J. Rowling
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2001		
Date of previous day care inspection	1 March 2005		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	27–28 February 2007	286939

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school is set within an area of some social and economic disadvantage. There is a fully subscribed Nursery class, providing part-time education. Most pupils enter Nursery with poor attainment in language and social skills. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as a first language. The school is a nationally recognised training school, working with local universities to train trainee teachers. The school has achieved the Investors in People award.

The school provides out-of-school day care for up to 24 children aged five to eight. It does this through a breakfast club, reopened in 2006, and a longstanding 'Kids Club' opened in 1994. This provision was inspected as part of a pilot project for Single Inspection Events.

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 provides good value for money. The school is at the heart of the community. Links with the parents, the community and neighbouring schools are outstanding. Learning opportunities provided by the school benefit parents, for example, in the development of their basic skills. Parents value the care and education given to their children. This is reflected in comments saying the children 'have lots of fun and make good progress' and pupils 'build their confidence and self-esteem'.

Given their starting points, children get a flying start in Nursery where practice and provision are excellent. In Reception, children achieve well and as a result, the overall quality of provision and standards are good in the Foundation Stage. Subsequently, pupils achieve well throughout school because of the good quality of teaching. The basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics as well as personal, social and health education are promoted well. However, a small minority of the average-attaining and higher-attaining pupils could do better in writing and mathematics. Where this is the case, the quality and use made of the assessments of pupils' work, although satisfactory, is not sufficiently refined to provide a consistently good challenge to work.

Furthermore, pupils do not always know how to improve. By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they get good support, particularly from the teaching assistants.

The staff take good care of the pupils and build their confidence and self-esteem. The enthusiasm and excitement of the pupils in learning show that they enjoy school greatly.

The effective curriculum meets pupils' needs, and is enriched with interesting opportunities for pupils to follow their interests. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to community events, for instance through the

work of the school council and through their involvement in the local pupils' parliament. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads the school exceptionally

well to provide a safe and caring environment where pupils enjoy learning and achieve well. Teamwork is strong within a well developed management structure. Senior staff and subject leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. While they identify effectively the school's strengths and areas for improvement, the monitoring of teaching and learning is not as effective as it might be in raising standards further. The governing body

is kept well informed and supports the school well. The inspectors agree with the school's effective self-evaluation and recognise its good capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality and use of assessment to raise the achievement in writing and mathematics of the small minority of average and more able pupils who do not achieve as well as they could, and ensure that all pupils know how to improve their work.
- Develop the quality of monitoring of teaching and learning with a sharper focus for improving pupils' achievement and raising standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most children enter Nursery with poor social and language skills. The teaching is excellent and the environment is rich and stimulating, so children flourish and make rapid progress, particularly in communication, language and social skills. In Reception, progress is good, and by the time they are ready to enter Year 1 the majority of children are working towards the expected learning goals and a small minority achieve them. A good pace of learning is sustained throughout Years 1 and 2 and pupils do well in attaining broadly average standards overall in writing and mathematics with strength in reading by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, considering, pupils' starting points, overall achievement is good. Good quality individual support is given to pupils who find learning difficult, and they achieve well. Progress is a little slower for some average and more able pupils, who could do better in writing and mathematics. This is reflected in the standards attained during the last few years. By the end of Year 6, overall, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. The present Year 6 is on track to achieve the challenging targets set. Examples of high quality work were observed in information and communication technology (ICT).

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good with some outstanding features. Behaviour, both in lessons and

elsewhere in school, is excellent. Pupils are polite and courteous. They know how to stay safe. For instance, they report that there is no bullying in school but they are well aware of what to do should any problem arise. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and show great enthusiasm in lessons. They have a good understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle and make healthy choices at lunchtime, aiming for 'five portions of fruit and vegetables a day'. Pupils readily take on responsibility and know that every job, however small, makes a contribution to the school community. Pupils participate in many community events such as art displays in the local shopping centre. Older pupils act as helpers, and play leaders take good care of younger children at playtimes. The exceptionally active school council has been involved in carrying out surveys, drawing up school rules and installing a friendship bench in the playground. Pupils make good progress in their basic skills and work well cooperatively. These skills prepare them well for their next school and for later life. The learning mentor is successfully improving the pupils' average attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning throughout the school are good and at times outstanding. In the Foundation Stage, teachers are extremely skilful in promoting pupils' personal, social and language development, which gives them a good start to learning. There are exceptionally good relationships between staff and pupils. As a result, pupils feel secure, enjoy their lessons and are keen to work hard and do their best. Classroom management is excellent and promotes exemplary behaviour. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They make good use of the interactive whiteboards and provide interesting and exciting learning experiences. The outstanding lessons especially hold pupils' attention and promote effective learning. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory overall. In a small number of classes, the assessments of pupils' progress are not used consistently well to plan challenging work to enable some average and more able pupils to reach higher levels of attainment. This is particularly the case in writing and mathematics. Teaching assistants are deployed well and give effective help and support to vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enabling them to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school is committed to a good quality curriculum that meets the individual needs and interests of the pupils. There is good provision for the development of basic skills in reading, writing, mathematics and pupils' personal and social development. ICT is used well in all subjects and some high quality work was seen. For example, some of the Year 6 pupils are skilled at producing animated presentations. However, there are not enough opportunities for some of the more able pupils to develop their writing and mathematical investigation skills. The wide range of visits and visitors to school

support pupils' personal development well. This is particularly strong in the Foundation Stage where children enjoy exciting activities and acquire self-confidence and a strong curiosity to learn. Extra-curricular sporting and creative activities are very popular and promote pupils' fitness, health and enjoyment. Pupils with special gifts or talents are extended through additional activities, for instance in music and sport.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is good provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils. Pastoral support is excellent. The staff are very caring and skilled at building the confidence and self-esteem of their pupils. The staff work extremely well together to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and help them make good progress. Procedures to promote child protection, the safe recruitment of staff and health and safety are in place. The school has excellent links with external agencies to meet pupils' needs. There are very strong links with parents, who value the school highly. For example, when children start in Nursery, parents are made to feel welcome and to feel that they are partners in their children's education. Academic guidance and support is less well developed. In some classes pupils are aware of their targets in English, mathematics and science but this is inconsistent so that not all pupils fully understand what they need to do in order to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and other key staff work extremely well together within well structured management teams. The clear vision for a community school is characterised by a caring ethos. The pastoral leadership of the headteacher is excellent. Both pupils and parents are encouraged to succeed by developing their skills and self-confidence. This is encapsulated in the school mission statement of 'Strive to Achieve.' The enthusiastic subject leaders for English, mathematics, science and ICT have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. This informs the school and class targets that are set for improvement. Although pupils have class and sometimes group targets to work towards in English and mathematics, these are not consistently matched to individual needs. Consequently, the procedures for monitoring of teaching and learning, although adequate, are not sharply enough focused in ensuring that teaching is challenging every pupil to make consistently good progress. As a result, some of the average and more able pupils are not achieving as well as they could. Self-evaluation of the school's provision and effectiveness is accurate and shared between the staff, pupils, governors and parents. The governors are supportive and well informed and able to hold the school to account.

Effectiveness of registered day care

Grade: 4

Daily routines are well ordered and organised so that children feel safe and happy. Children know what is expected of them and help with basic tasks, especially during the breakfast club. They behave outstandingly well, play happily together and enjoy good relationships with each other, as well as with the staff. There is a range of things to do and many children of all ages respond positively to activities, though some are not motivated by these. Some children opt out of some of the more active indoor games activities, reflecting limited choice and enjoyment. Some class-based activities are of a low order and they neither challenge children nor contribute well to their achievement. Children are developing their understanding of how to stay healthy because staff promote appropriate snacks and drinks. The great majority of parents and carers are appreciative of the care given to their children. While day-to-day management of day care is generally satisfactory, strategic management is inadequate. There is no overview of all aspects of day care by the registered person. Mandatory policies and procedures are not all in place. Parents and carers are not kept fully informed, and the recruitment, induction and training of staff are not well documented. Not all of the recommendations arising from the last inspection have been put in place.

Since the last inspection in March 2005 there have been no complaints about the registered day care that required Ofsted or the school to take action. Therefore, the day care continued to meet the national standards. The school is required to keep a record of complaints about the registered day care made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints about the registered day care other than those made to Ofsted.

Recommendations or actions to improve the registered day care

- Ensure that Ofsted is informed of all changes in staff.
- Ensure that all staff have the requisite qualifications.
- Ensure that the procedure for dealing with complaints is set out in line with mandatory requirements.

Inspection judgements

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

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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

The effectiveness of the registered day care

The quality and standards of the registered day care	4
How effective is the day care in helping children to be healthy?	3
How effective is the day care in protecting children and helping them to stay safe?	3
How effective is the day care in helping children to achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
How effective is the day care in helping children to make a positive contribution?	4
How effectively is the day care organised?	3
Does the day care meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides?	No
Has the day care improved since the last inspection?	No
Does the day care require enforcement action?	Yes
Does the day care require a notice to improve?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, inspectors visited your school recently to find out if it is giving you the education you should receive. First of all, thank you very much for welcoming us enthusiastically. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and finding out about all the things you like doing.

I am pleased to say that you go to a good school, which has some strengths as well as some things to improve. Here are things we felt were particularly good.

- Your school is a happy place where you really enjoy your lessons and taking part in school activities.
- Your school has good leadership and management and you benefit from good teaching.
- You work hard and most of you achieve well in English, mathematics and science.
- Your school cares for you extremely well and you become confident learners.

We have asked your teachers to plan more opportunities, for those of you who learn quickly, to develop your skills in writing and mathematics and to make sure you understand how to improve your work.

We have also asked that teachers keep a good check on how well you are doing in lessons so they can plan challenging work to help you make even better progress.

You can help by continuing to enjoy your lessons and always doing your best, especially in writing and mathematics.