



# Pleasant Street Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 104569  
**Local Authority** Liverpool  
**Inspection number** 286980  
**Inspection dates** 9–10 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Frank Carruthers

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Pleasant Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Liverpool
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Merseyside L3 5TS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 7093802
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	198	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 7071145
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr P Fillis
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M Cunningham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 January 2003		

<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 9–10 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 286980
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Approximately two thirds of pupils in this inner city school are from minority ethnic groups and one fifth of these are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very high and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is twice the average for primary schools nationally. The school is resourced to take up to 20 pupils with speech and language difficulties from schools across the city. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than starting in the Reception class or leaving in Year 6 is well above average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has good features. Children start in school with attainment that is well below average. More than half of the children in the current Nursery class are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Good provision in the Foundation Stage means the children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes, though standards are below average at the end of the Reception year. All groups of pupils achieve at least satisfactorily from Years 1 to 6 but standards at the end of Year 6 remain below average in English, mathematics and science. This is because many of the pupils with learning difficulties or who are learning English as an additional language do not reach the expected Level 4, even though they make good progress towards achieving their individual targets. In addition, some pupils arrive in school during Key Stage 2 with little English. Others are affected by disruption in their family life. These factors sometimes act as barriers to learning and lower the overall test results that the school achieves. It is the good quality of teaching and learning that overcomes these barriers and leads to all the different groups of pupils achieving at least satisfactorily or better. However, the curriculum that teachers plan does not fully support the needs of those pupils who are just below average in Year 2. In Key Stage 2, these pupils do not make the good progress necessary to reach the expected Level 4 at the end of Year 6. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and relationships among pupils of different ethnic backgrounds are positive. A few pupils display challenging behaviour and they are managed well through the good levels of pastoral care and the strong links the school has with outside agencies. Levels of attendance are below average but the great majority of pupils attend regularly and punctually. There is a minority of pupils whose attendance is unsatisfactory and not enough has been done to make a real impact on this.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory with good features. The school has come through a time of significant change in the last three years. As a result, several new initiatives to manage the school, for instance, the establishment of a new leadership team, are recent and not yet fully effective. The headteacher has good leadership skills and receives strong support from the deputy headteacher and staff. The governing body carries out its responsibilities satisfactorily, is well led by the chairperson and has developed good systems in recent times to evaluate how well the school and the governors themselves are doing. The degree of improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, as is the school's evaluation of itself, which reflects most of the findings of this inspection. The school gives satisfactory value for money and has good capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the performance of pupils, especially those who are just below average in Key Stage 2, giving them the extra support they need to reach at least average standards at the end of Year 6.

- Devise effective strategies to promote the better attendance and punctuality of a minority of pupils.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. By the end of the Reception year, though a few have reached most of the early learning goals expected of children at this stage of their education, the majority are still working towards them. Pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language do well, thriving in the language-rich experiences and good quality teaching they receive.

Achievement is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Standards in Year 2 are, in most years, below average. New pupils join the school at various times and some have little English. Few of these reach the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2. The same is the case with pupils who attend the language unit. Nevertheless, these different groups of pupils progress well from low starting points. Most pupils in the language unit, for instance, return to mainstream schools within three years.

In Key Stage 2, progress continues to be at least satisfactory and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language achieve well. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below average. Whilst no group of pupils is underachieving, too few of the pupils who are just below average in Year 2 do well enough to reach the expected Level 4 in Year 6. This is an important aspect for improvement. Most of these pupils are boys. There is no evidence of specific ethnic groups not doing well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils consider that school is fun. 'It is a happy, friendly place', they say, because the staff help them and make lessons interesting. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They form good relationships with each other and adults and collaborate well. Pupils of different gender, ethnicity, ability and those at the early stages of learning English, work and play well together. Pupils have a good sense of how to live healthily and, in general, they act safely. The opportunities they have to contribute to the school community, such as through the school council and playground pals, are good and the pupils take an active part. However, owing to the location of the school, opportunities to take a greater part in the wider community are limited. Behaviour is good because staff adopt a consistent approach and are highly skilled at anticipating problems and dealing with the challenging behaviour of a minority of pupils. The school operates in an orderly manner and the great majority of pupils comply readily with staff guidance. Attendance levels and punctuality are below average when compared with schools nationally. Although the great majority of pupils attend punctually and regularly, a minority do not.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good quality teaching, based on the secure foundation of respectful relationships, enables pupils to make at least satisfactory progress. This is one of two aspects of the school's work where inspectors' views are at variance with the school's view, which judges teaching and learning as satisfactory. Inspectors consider that pupils would not be achieving as well as they are if teaching were not of good quality because there are many challenges in the profile of the pupil population which teachers meet successfully. In relation to provision in the Foundation Stage, which the school considers satisfactory, inspectors judge it good because teaching helps the pupils to achieve well.

Teachers' strong subject knowledge, awareness of pupils' different needs and sensitive questioning are strengths of the teaching. Lessons move at a good pace and well-managed pupils and stimulating classrooms lead to enthusiastic learners, although many pupils are dependent on adult input to keep them focused. Teachers and classroom assistants form good teams to support pupils' learning. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and accurately, generally using the information well to plan suitable work for those of different abilities. However, the usefulness of their written comments varies when marking pupils' work, providing inconsistent guidance for pupils on how to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall and, through it, the pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in a logical manner. Good provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that pupils progress well in all areas of learning, establishing a good base on which to build. The curriculum is enriched through the provision of French lessons for all pupils in Key Stage 2, as well as information and communication technology and music taught by visiting specialists. Pupils have good opportunities to visit museums and other places of educational interest. Visitors and out-of-school activities also contribute to pupils' enjoyment and support their learning well. Everyone has the opportunity to become involved in these activities. There is good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those with English as an additional language and higher attaining pupils. However, in Key Stage 2, insufficient attention has been given to helping pupils who achieve just below the expected levels.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Measures to promote social and racial harmony and positive behaviour are good. Staff are successful in ensuring that pupils feel safe in school and in the playground at playtimes, where poor behaviour or bullying is not tolerated. Measures to promote

the health, safety and protection of pupils, as well as procedures to ensure the safe recruitment of staff, are all in place. There are effective links with outside agencies to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and these are particularly useful for pupils from vulnerable backgrounds and those displaying challenging behaviour. The school's systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality are good but some strategies to encourage a minority of poor attenders are not effective enough. This is an area for improvement. Good systems to assess the pupils' progress and track their development mean the staff know their pupils well.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Effective leadership by the headteacher has brought the school through a time of significant change since the last inspection. Most of the current staff have been at the school for fewer than three years and a promising leadership structure has been established to manage the school. This is in its infancy and is not yet fully effective. Good support from specialists in the local authority and the local network of schools is helping the school to improve in important aspects of its work. For instance, the school is now involved in an intensive programme of support to help meet its challenging targets and the needs of its unusual pupil profile, which includes those with diverse and complex needs.

School self-evaluation is satisfactory because the monitoring of provision and the analysis of the pupils' performance by senior staff are improving and becoming effective in helping the school to identify key areas for improvement. Teamwork and a shared vision of what the school needs to do to perform well are building strong foundations for the future, giving the school good capacity to improve. The support of the governing body is satisfactory. It is beginning to challenge the senior leaders of the school more effectively. There is good support from the great majority of parents who responded to the inspectors' questionnaire and several of them commented on how supportive the school is when their children are experiencing difficulties. As one parent commented: 'Our son is of dual nationality and bilingual. We were anxious to place him in Pleasant Street because of its cultural diversity. A big thank you to them for accommodating us.'

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

Thank you very much for your help when we inspected your school. Please pass on our thanks to the other children we met and spoke to. We enjoyed our visit very much. Now we want to share with you what we thought about your school.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory standard of education. This means there are some things that the school does well and there are some things the staff need to do to make the school better.

These are some of the things that are good in your school:

- the staff take good care of you and help you all to be fit, safe and healthy
- those of you who are learning English as a new language and those of you who find reading, writing and mathematics hard are doing well
- the Nursery and Reception class staff give the children a good start in school
- your behaviour is good and you all mix well together
- the staff in the language unit are giving their pupils all they need to do well and make the big step and return to their own schools.

We have asked the staff to do all they can to:

- help you to do better in English, mathematics and science, especially those of you who are just not quite making enough progress to reach the level expected of pupils in Year 6 (Level 4)
- encourage those of you who do not attend regularly or on time to attend as well as the rest of you do.

As you can see, you have got to play a big part in this, so make sure you attend every day and keep working hard!