

# Townfield Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131774
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	293842
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Geoffrey Yates

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	392
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Edward Behan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Katherine Lee
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 March 2001
<b>School address</b>	Townfield Lane Prenton Merseyside CH43 2LH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 6528498
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 6534854

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Townfield Primary School is larger than most primary schools and includes provision for deaf pupils from in and outside the catchment area. It serves an urban area of mostly rented properties. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The number eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. On entry into the school children's attainment is below average. The school has been accorded many awards including ones for healthy eating, ecological awareness and the outstanding development of an international dimension to the curriculum.

## 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 forward thinking school that provides a good quality education for all its pupils. From a below average start the most recent national test results show that pupils attain broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. The key reason for the school's success is that every opportunity is provided in ensuring that every child really does matter. One parent, summing up the views of many commented: 'Townfield ensures that children are valued and very much encourages a spirit of pride and belonging.'

Pupils' personal development and well-being and the care, guidance and support the school provides are excellent. Pupils are proud of their school because the teachers plan a rich curriculum, which makes learning interesting and leads to very positive attitudes and very good behaviour. Links with outside agencies, such as those to support deaf pupils, are very good, and support these pupils' good progress. A good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' basic skills, but opportunities are missed for pupils to use and develop their writing skills in subjects across the curriculum. The school's involvement in curriculum initiatives such as working with a school in Russia and working successfully to improve boys' interest in mathematics by linking the subject with physical education impact well on pupils' achievements. Excellent attention is given to keeping pupils safe and healthy; they are keen to keep fit and younger pupils, even in adverse weather, enjoy using the outdoor play facilities. Pupils take their responsibilities in school seriously and are keen to share their skills in the wider community, conserving the environment by recycling and raising funds for several charities. Pupils grow in confidence and independence and these qualities, combined with their academic skills, ensure that they are well prepared for the future.

Pupils achieve well because teaching is good. Outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that children get off to a flying start and make good progress. Most children achieve the learning goals expected at the end of Reception. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 to 6. Current standards are average. The school has improved the accuracy and use of assessment information. It is used successfully to group pupils according to their prior attainment. However, within the mathematics groups more challenge is needed to ensure that pupils apply their mental arithmetic skills quickly and accurately when asked to solve problems.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She has a clear vision for the school and successfully maintains a balance between promoting pupils' academic development and their personal development. The newly established strategic management team supports her well, but it is too early to comment on their overall effectiveness. The quality of self-evaluation is good. Processes are thorough and rigorous, but sometimes lead the school to be too modest about its performance. Governors are supportive and well informed. The school provides good value for money; it has made good improvements since the previous inspection and is well placed to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more challenging opportunities for pupils to use and develop their mental arithmetic skills in problem-solving situations.
- Ensure that pupils are provided with regular and challenging opportunities to use their writing skills in subjects across the curriculum.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievements are good overall. The school has addressed successfully differences in the performance of boys and girls and ensures that all pupils make the progress they should. Children start in the Reception class with below average skills and due to good quality teaching they make good progress, reaching what is expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1 in all areas of learning. The school has compelling evidence to show that progress continues to be good so that standards in English, mathematics and science are average by Year 6 both at the expected levels and at the higher levels. However, pupils do not always apply their mental arithmetic skills speedily and accurately. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who are at an early stage of learning to speak English, make good progress. Results at the end of Year 6 in 2006 were average as usual, but pupils could have done better. The school has stronger systems in place to prevent this happening again. As a result, current achievement is good. Assessment data shows that higher targets for next year are likely to be met. Standards in reading in Key Stage 1 are rising because the school ensures that all pupils have more opportunities to develop their early reading skills.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their satisfactory attendance. They are proud of 'their' school and confidently report that every pupil gets a say in what goes on. Their positive attitudes are reflected in lessons, where the atmosphere is purposeful and pupils are well motivated and enthusiastic. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Through links with a school in Russia, for example, and in the many opportunities to look at art and famous artists, not just from Europe, pupils develop a very good cultural understanding. The work done in projects linked to the rainforests leads to their very good awareness of environmental issues. Pupils are keen to learn sign language to help them communicate with their friends who are deaf. All pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are integrated fully into the school and feel valued. Pupils understand the need for school rules and respond well. Behaviour is very good in class and around the school. Pupils say they feel safe in school and have no concerns about seeking help from an adult if they have any worries. The school's strong focus on healthy eating and physical exercise, including a good range of sports activities, ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and fit. Pupils enjoy and are very proud to take on responsibilities within school. School council members feel privileged to have been chosen. Pupils develop a good range of basic skills which prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school is committed to improving the learning skills of all pupils and is very aware of pupils' different learning styles. Children get off to a flying start in the Reception class because of the high level of good quality support they receive from teachers and support staff. Staff are highly successful in ensuring that pupils' needs are met fully. Teaching is also good overall throughout the rest of the school. All members of staff know their pupils well and are quick to match work

to the needs of groups and individuals. The school makes good use of assessment information to organise teaching groups based on pupils' prior attainment. In some of these groups work could be differentiated more closely to match to pupils' needs. For example, in mathematics lessons pupils are sometimes not challenged sufficiently to use their mental arithmetic skills quickly and accurately. Teachers demonstrate a good understanding of the subjects they teach and of how pupils learn. Learning is structured, productive and enjoyable. In order to improve standards in reading, teachers in Key Stage 1 have worked successfully to provide more time for early reading skills to be developed. As a result, standards are improving. Assessment procedures are thorough and detailed with the information used well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well, with specialist teaching help for deaf pupils ensuring that they take a full part in lessons. As a result, these pupils learn well. Strategies for marking are of a good quality.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is a very strong feature of the curriculum. As a result, pupils enjoy school and know their ideas will be listened to. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to go on visits, including residential visits. Good attention is given to the provision for the teaching of basic skills. The school is outward looking in finding different ways of meeting pupils' needs. For example, it used successfully the resources at a local football club to make the mathematics curriculum more interesting to all pupils, but especially boys. The school has done outstanding work in ensuring that the curriculum has a truly international dimension. The links made with a school in Russia epitomise everything the school tries to do in ensuring that its pupils receive the best possible education. For example, the highly successful collaborative work done in producing an excellent book of Russian folk tales enhanced greatly pupils' understanding of Russian culture. Aspects of topic work are linked, where possible, to life outside the United Kingdom to widen pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world they live in. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to use their writing skills well in subjects across the curriculum. The good range of after-school clubs are much enjoyed by pupils. The school provides well for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good improvements have been made in the Foundation Stage to the resources, a weakness highlighted in the previous inspection. As a result, children experience an outstanding range of valuable and worthwhile learning opportunities both in the classroom and in the outside area, and make rapid progress. Good links with the community include taking part in music concerts. Links with the high school ensure that pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their education.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The very caring ethos, safe environment and excellent relationships reflect the outstanding pastoral care, guidance and support given to pupils. This is the key reason why pupils say that the school is 'a very happy and safe place to be'. Excellent support for pupils of all attainment levels is the norm, not the exception. Safeguarding procedures are highly effective and child protection and all other risk assessments are in place and working very well. Pupils say they know there is always an adult to turn to with any worries. Academic progress is regularly monitored, and this enables teachers to identify where extra support or challenge is needed. While there is evidence of inaccurate monitoring in previous years, this is not now the case.

Very clear targets for learning are set to help pupils understand what they are trying to achieve and how they can improve. Attendance is well monitored and is helping to reduce the rate of absence.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and management and has ensured that pupils experience a curriculum that has an international dimension, and which is firmly focused on the Every Child Matters agenda. Under her leadership the school has developed very good child care facilities for children below school age: these are much valued by parents. The headteacher has a very clear picture of standards and how to improve them. The school's 'Working towards our vision' development plan ensures that evaluation procedures are robust. The headteacher receives good support from a newly appointed management team. Leadership and management at all levels are continually assessed and improved. Governors have a good view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and where it needs to improve. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection, not least in the resources for pupils in the Foundation Stage: these are now of an outstanding quality.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<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>	2
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	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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

<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>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for helping me during the inspection. I would like to tell you about my findings. You will not be surprised to know that I think your school is a good one. I enjoyed watching you learn and talking to you. It was a tremendous pleasure to be shown round the Reception class by a pupil. Since the inspection I have really enjoyed reading the collection of Russian folk tales your school produced along with School 325 in St Petersburg. The list below shows some of the many things I liked about your school.

- You work hard and behave very well.
- You are keen to offer your opinions and also to listen to the views of others.
- You like your teachers and other members of staff and the way they make learning interesting.
- All the adults in school work very hard to care for you.
- You enjoy the visits you make to different places.

I have asked your teachers to look at two things to make your work even better:

- to provide you with more challenging opportunities to use your writing skills in subjects such as history and geography
- to make sure that you have plenty of opportunities to work out quickly and accurately the answers to mental arithmetic problems.