

# Malvern Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104427
<b>Local Authority</b>	Knowsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	308597
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eileen Mulgrew HMI

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	388
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr Graham Morgan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Julie Peach
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 February 2004
<b>School address</b>	Willoughby Road Huyton Knowsley Merseyside L14 6XA
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 4778230
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 4778231

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## Introduction

The inspection of the school was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Malvern is a much larger than average primary school with the majority of pupils attending from the immediate area. Since the last inspection the number of pupils attending the school has decreased by 15%. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is about average. Almost all pupils are from White British heritage with a very low proportion of pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average whilst that with a statement of special educational need is below average. The school has received a Healthy School Award, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Activemark and Investors in People Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Malvern Primary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school is a friendly and welcoming place with clearly established routines which maintain a calm atmosphere. It is an inclusive school and welcomes pupils who may have experienced difficulties in their previous schools and succeeds in helping them to settle and enjoy their learning. Pupils are polite, well mannered and confident in talking about their happy experiences at school. The vast majority of parents have confidence in the school and support its work. Typical comments from parents include, 'My child loves going to Malvern,' and 'The teachers and all staff are great.'

During the last 12 months there have been some significant changes in leadership. Over that time the school has maintained standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 at the same level as the national average. Since 2003, standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2, and in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have been broadly average. Satisfactory progress has been made between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In both these key stages few pupils reach the higher levels. However, despite some success in raising attainment in English and mathematics, the school recognises that it could improve standards in the core subjects for all groups of pupils, especially the higher achieving pupils.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some that is good. The brisk pace and high expectations in some lessons enable pupils to make good progress. Newly introduced systems for more thoroughly checking pupils' progress and setting appropriate targets were introduced last term. This is giving the school more information about the levels at which pupils achieve but it is not always used sufficiently well to set challenging targets. Consequently, some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Regular marking of work celebrates the efforts pupils have made but it is inconsistent in explaining how work can be improved.

Good pastoral care and support underpin the strong emphasis the school places on developing the personal and emotional well-being of the pupils. As a result this aspect of the school's work is good. The 'I belong to Malvern' motto allows pupils to feel fully part of the school. Pupils enjoy school as seen in their regular attendance. They say they feel safe and secure and know who to go to if they have a problem. Behaviour is good and pupils appreciate the newly introduced 'golden rules'. The development of the outside area helps pupils develop qualities such as kindness and tolerance within moral and social issues. Pupils enjoy the satisfactory curriculum although many would like to be given more challenging work. Activities designed to support pupils' emotional understanding are particularly enjoyed, together with the more practical and lively activities in some lessons.

Satisfactory leadership and management, including governance, have led the school through a period of change. Prior to the appointment of the new headteacher the school had been led by the assistant headteacher. The new headteacher has a clear vision for the direction of the school. Together with the senior leadership team she has identified the main strengths of the school, prioritised issues for improvement and taken swift action to tackle weaknesses. As a result staff morale has risen and there is a commitment to improve performance throughout the school. Inspectors drew the school's attention to its failure to meet all the requirements relating to safeguarding. Through changes in staff positions, key appointments have already been made to strengthen the leadership team and the workforce from September. Consequently, the school's capacity to improve, currently satisfactory, is growing.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children join the school in Nursery with skills below those expected for children of their age, especially in communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development. Consequently, much emphasis is placed on developing speaking and listening skills and encouraging children to work and play together. As a result, good progress is made throughout the Foundation Stage so that by the time they enter Year 1 most children have skills similar to other children of their age in all areas of learning. Through the good arrangements for introducing children to the Nursery and into Reception, for example, informative meetings, visits and booklets, parents get to know the school. They feel reassured that their children will be looked after in a safe and stimulating atmosphere. This good partnership is developed through regular communication between staff and parents, for example, through the 'learning stories' booklet which encourages parents to write about the learning of their children. Children enjoy the range of interesting activities provided in the indoor and outdoor areas which allow them to develop independence, basic skills in literacy and numeracy as well as opportunities to follow their own curiosity. Good use is made of all information and communication technology (ICT) resources by children who show a good degree of confidence. Although the Foundation Stage manager is on secondment to the local authority she is giving regular support to staff until the new deputy headteacher takes up her post in September when she will assume responsibility for this area of the school's work.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Embed the new tracking system to more thoroughly check progress, set challenging targets and set work which more clearly matches the needs and abilities of all pupils.
- Ensure marking clearly states how pupils can improve their work.
- Rectify the current non-compliance in the area of safeguarding.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement of pupils is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. Satisfactory progress is made and pupils reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are in line with national expectations. Although there was a dip in Key Stage 1 national assessments in 2006, the school took action and results in 2007 improved: almost half of all pupils reached the higher Level 3 in mathematics.

Over their time in Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress, although this accelerates in Year 5 and Year 6. This is because teachers expect more from their pupils and the pace of learning is quicker. Standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science have remained broadly in line with the national average since the last inspection. Although performance in individual subjects has increased at varying times, the school has struggled to maintain consistent results across all subjects each year. Inspection evidence and school data indicate that standards are set to rise this year in English and mathematics.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Behaviour is good throughout the school and pupils work and play happily together. 'I love this school,' was a typical comment from pupils and, when asked, they felt there was nothing they would change. Pupils say they feel safe and well supported by teachers and other staff. As a result, they are confident to offer their views on how the school can be improved and take on responsibilities: for example, to introduce playground buddies to help other children. Pupils' good understanding of the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle is seen in their choice of healthy options at lunchtime and the enthusiastic attendance at the many and varied after school activities. Attendance is satisfactory. The introduction of the breakfast club has improved the punctuality of the very small number of pupils who found getting to school on time difficult.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils know right from wrong, show care for each other and develop good attitudes to learning. However, their knowledge and understanding of different cultures is less well developed. Elected school councillors show maturity in the organisation and management of their meetings: they feel they contribute to the development of the school, for example, in the layout of the classrooms. Other pupils talk proudly about the jobs they have in school such as play-leaders and playground representatives, and their involvement in supporting local and world wide charities. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and these, combined with good personal qualities, ensure they are effectively prepared for secondary school and beyond.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good teaching in the upper years of the school. Relationships between adults and pupils are good, resulting in pupils being ready to learn and confident when explaining their ideas. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively to enhance learning in some lessons. In the best lessons, teachers are clear, confident and enthusiastic about what they want pupils to learn. They have high expectations and work is well matched to the needs of individuals. As a result pupils enjoy lessons, have fun, make good progress and know how to move on in their learning. For example, during a Year 6 art lesson pupils quickly got down to weaving a 'Mexican Eye' after an effective demonstration by the teacher. In less effective lessons there are lengthy explanations by the teacher, expectations are not high enough and assessment information is not always used to provide different tasks to match learning needs. As a result, progress is uneven and many pupils say that their work could be more challenging. Although teaching assistants provide effective support for individual or groups of pupils, on occasions insufficient guidance is given on how to support groups of pupils, particularly during the introductory sessions of lessons.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The satisfactory curriculum enables pupils to develop good personal and social skills. Throughout the school there is an appropriate emphasis on the development of the basic skills. Since the last inspection the school has purchased new computers and ICT resources to support all areas

of the curriculum. Some staff are starting to revise curriculum plans to link subjects together using practical and first hand experiences, but it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness on pupils' achievement. The introduction of 'big writing' is improving pupils' writing skills. However, there are few chances for pupils to apply their writing and mathematical skills in purposeful tasks. Pupils work is celebrated through attractive displays and mosaics around the school. Learning is enriched through the introduction of French, a good range of after school clubs and activities such as sport, drama and choir, and visitors and visits. There are opportunities for older pupils to take part in residential visits, for example, Robinwood, which extend their experiences of outdoor pursuits.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Pastoral care of pupils is good, with staff committed to creating a harmonious environment. Although staff work hard to support the pupils' good personal development, the support and guidance for academic progress is inconsistent. Parents and carers feel welcome in the school, and they are encouraged to be involved in their children's education. Particularly welcome are the recent family curriculum workshops which allowed pupils and parents opportunity to work together. Staff put the established procedures to ensure child protection and health and safety into practice. However, appropriate safeguarding requirements are not fully in place. Good arrangements are in place to support pupils as they move from year to year so that they quickly settle in the different settings. Through a series of visits to high school pupils are well prepared for their transfer at the end of Year 6.

Pupils have targets set for English and mathematics which are reviewed and discussed with pupils and parents twice a year. However, many pupils can not recall their individual targets and do not know how well they are making progress towards them. This is due in part to the inconsistent way in which pupils' work is marked. Marking often does not make regular reference to personal targets or provide the necessary guidance so pupils know how to improve their work further.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher, together with the experienced assistant headteacher, effectively leads a team of staff committed to raising standards and achievement for all pupils. After an unsettled period the leadership team has accurately identified immediate priorities to move the school on. The appointment of new teachers and the reorganisation of existing staff have led to increased strength in teaching and this bodes well for the future. Subject leaders are beginning to have a greater understanding of their role in raising achievement across the school. Governance is satisfactory. Governors show support to the work of the school. Individual governors use their expertise to support areas for improvement. However, it is only recently that they have been robust enough in evaluating the effectiveness of the school and the impact of their decisions. The school gives satisfactory value for money.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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	3

### 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

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

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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?	No
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you very much for your friendliness and help during our visit to your school. You told us you feel safe and well-cared for in school and how much you enjoy the activities after school in sport, drama, music and art. Many of you told us about the jobs you want to do when you finally leave school. You impressed us with your understanding of healthy lifestyles. We really enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views and were impressed by your hard work and good behaviour, as well as the way you take care of each other. Your school gives you a satisfactory education and these are the things we found best about it:

- most of your parents are happy for you to go to Malvern
- most of you work as hard as you can and many of you would like harder work
- your new headteacher has some great ideas about how the school can improve
- some of your lessons are really interesting to help you make lots of progress.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to:

- help you reach higher standards in English, mathematics and science
- use the system for checking your progress in your work so you can have more challenging targets and have work at just the right level for you
- guide you about how you can improve your work.

We know you are already proud of your school and will play your part in making Malvern an even better school.