

# Ravenscroft Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104444
<b>Local Authority</b>	Knowsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	308602
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mark Madeley

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	248
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Gill Heber
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jeanette Hegarty
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 April 2004
<b>School address</b>	Ebony Way Tower Hill Kirkby Liverpool Merseyside L33 1XT
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 477 8290
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 477 8291

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the impact of the school's management on pupils' current progress and standards in English, and on their personal development and well-being. Lessons were observed and a sample of books scrutinised to substantiate the school's view of the quality of teaching. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data and the school's records of pupils' progress. Policies and attendance were checked. The chair of governors, some staff and a sample of pupils were also interviewed. The views of the parents were canvassed via a questionnaire. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

## Description of the school

This average sized school serves an estate of mainly rented accommodation called Tower Hill. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very high. The percentage of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is almost double the national average and is particularly high in Years, 4, 5 and 6. The vast majority of these pupils have either moderate learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional or social problems. Children usually start in the Nursery class very soon after their third birthday. There are currently 49 children in the Nursery classes split between morning and afternoon sessions. A new headteacher was appointed in November 2006.

## 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. The care, guidance and support the school gives pupils, and sometimes their families, are outstanding. For example, pupils are given chances to reflect on their learning and to evaluate their progress against the learning targets that they have helped to set. The school has secure systems to safeguard pupils and fully meets current government guidelines. Relationships with parents are very strong and they speak highly of what the school has done for their children. They are fulsome in their praise of the headteacher and her staff, saying they are always ready to 'go the extra mile' for the children. Parents of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are quick to point out the high quality care that their children receive. The inspection confirms the school's view that provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good.

Children make good progress from low starting points in the Foundation Stage. Most start Year 1 with reading and writing skills, which are very weak. They make steady progress through Key Stage 1. Standards in reading and writing are well below average but have improved in the last two years. Pupils 'take off', as some parents described it, in Key Stage 2 and make very rapid progress because teaching is often of high quality. Standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average but pupils' writing skills are below average. There are wide variations between year groups because some of them have exceptionally high percentages of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These pupils achieve well against their individual targets because they are well supported by skilled teachers and teaching assistants. National Curriculum test results have improved markedly from a low point in 2005. End of year targets are becoming more challenging as senior managers and governors make greater use of the data the school has on pupils' progress.

Effective management has addressed the marking issue from the last inspection and has turned it to a strength, especially in English. Standards have risen because pupils know how to improve their work and the curriculum is much broader and so pupils' learning is more exciting. For example, pupils go on exciting visits to places of educational interest, thus increasing their awareness of the world around them. The new management team has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Senior managers know what needs improving further and have set about it in a considered way. Recent initiatives to improve pupils' English, especially their writing skills, are already having a positive impact on standards. Governance is good. The governors are fully supportive of the school and because they are usefully linked to key stages and are in a good position to gather information about its work, help them to make decisions. The new senior managers and the governing body show good capacity to help the school improve further.

The good curriculum supports pupils' academic development well. It also greatly improves their ability to work together and work for each other. Every pupil helps in small ways around the school. The work of the school council, play leaders and others with specific responsibilities is of high quality. Interesting and well taught lessons plus an extensive array of clubs, visits and visitors mean that pupils really enjoy their learning. They also take an active part in sports clubs and enjoy the food taster sessions both of which have added to their already extensive understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. Behaviour is good overall and for the vast majority behaviour is very good. In a celebration assembly, for example, pupils were attentive, quiet and well mannered throughout. Attendance is satisfactory and the school, through the excellent work of the learning mentor and senior managers, does all it can to get pupils to school.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children are often shy when they start school in the Nursery class and many lack independence and/or social skills. Well organised routines quickly help them gain the confidence to act independently and exciting practical activities develop their curiosity. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children's standards in personal, social and emotional development is in line with expectations for their age. On entry, children's language skills are especially weak with some not communicating in words at all and very few knowing any simple songs and rhymes. In the nursery discussion, rhymes and songs are promoted very well to build confidence and language skills. Reception class activities build on this good start and offer good programmes of letter sounds as well as extensive opportunities for mark making. Despite these efforts, about half the children leave the Foundation Stage with below average standards in learning letter sounds and in their reading and writing. Thus the children find it difficult to make rapid progress in their learning in Key Stage 1. Teachers make good use of the outdoor areas to give children opportunities to develop their physical skills and broaden their understanding of the world around them. The recording of children's achievements is especially strong and the information is used effectively in planning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in reading and writing in Key Stage 1.

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## 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?	2
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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Inspection of Ravenscroft Community Primary School, Liverpool, L33 1XT

I enjoyed my recent visit to your wonderful school because you made me so welcome. The school and its staff do a great deal for you, helping you learn as well as encouraging you to mature. Overall, I think that yours is a good school. You make good progress overall in learning English, mathematics and science because you are well taught by a dedicated team of staff. They make learning stimulating and challenging for you and provide you with very good feedback on your work, especially in English. Your behaviour is good overall and the vast majority of you behave very well in and out of the classroom. At lunchtime and when talking to me you showed an outstanding knowledge of how to stay fit and well, including an awareness of 'good' and 'bad' drugs. Your school council works hard for you to improve the school, and others given responsibilities carry them out very well. It is the first time I have seen a celebration assembly organised by the pupils and it showed just how good you all are.

Part of the reason you are doing well at school is that your headteacher, her staff and the governors are putting a huge effort in behind the scenes. They want you all to succeed. They know what the school is like now and want to make it even better. I have asked them to accomplish one area, which will move the school forward.

- Improve standards in reading and writing in Years 1 and 2.

You can play your part in improving your school by coming to school regularly, as most of you already do and by acting on the comments your teachers offer you when they mark your work. Once again, very many thanks for your help. I wish you well for the future.