

# Lander Road Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104874
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	308691
<b>Inspection date</b>	5 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sarah Drake

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	257
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Ann Hall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Barbara Billingsley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	Lander Road Litherland Liverpool Merseyside L21 8JD
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 922 5760
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 922 1695

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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 standards achieved and pupils' progress in English; children's progress and attainment in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1; and the impact of the leadership and management on improving the school's effectiveness, with a particular focus on writing and communication skills. Evidence was gathered from: national published assessment data; the school's self-evaluation, assessment records, policies and minutes; observation of the school at work, including lessons; discussions with two governors, members of staff, parents, pupils and the school's improvement partner; and the questionnaires returned by parents. 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 school is slightly above average in size and serves an area to the south of the borough, where many families experience significant social and economic disadvantage. The overwhelming majority of pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language. Around half the pupils are eligible to receive a free school meal. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. More pupils than is usual join or leave the school part-way through their primary education. The school achieved the British Council International School Award for the second time in September 2006. It also holds the Healthy School and Artsmark Silver awards.

The school operates day-care provision, which was inspected separately in July 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Pupils, parents and staff are justifiably proud of belonging to this outstanding school. High quality leadership creates a very happy, supportive community in which pupils make great strides in both their confidence and their academic achievement. 'They seem to recognise here that children learn better when happy' and 'My daughter has had the best educational start in life' are typical of the many positive comments, made by parents and carers, about the school's work.

The achievement of pupils of all abilities is outstanding. Most children join the Nursery with very limited all-round skills, and pupils that join the school part-way through their education are also generally working at levels that are well below those expected for their age. For the past five years standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been well below average, however, the significant rise seen in 2007 has been sustained throughout the current year. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making good progress, with the older pupils now working broadly in line with the national average, although their writing skills lag behind those in reading and mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been on a rising trend since 2003. For the past two years they have been above average overall, with over 50% of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in mathematics and in science, which is well above the national average. These results have placed the school amongst the best in the country for the progress made by pupils from the end of Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2.

Throughout this period, although standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen slightly, they have remained stubbornly in line with the national average, mainly due to weaknesses in writing. Detailed analysis by the leadership team revealed that, although most pupils had developed appropriate technical skills they had very limited experiences on which to base their writing. This has led to the involvement of outside experts, extensive training and the adoption of new ways of teaching, all of which have been greeted enthusiastically by staff. The school's two-pronged approach, which combines highly structured teaching for younger pupils of the links between letters and sounds with an emphasis on creativity and enriching pupils' life experiences, is bearing fruit. Pupils' written work shows some very good progress made over the past year. Far more pupils than in the past are now working at the expected level or above, although there is still some way to go before standards in English reach the impressive heights being achieved in mathematics and science.

Alongside their academic skills, pupils' personal development flourishes during their time at the school in response to first-rate care, guidance and support. From children who have difficulty communicating at a very basic level, they blossom into engaging, mature young people who relish new experiences, are highly appreciative of all that their teachers do for them and are keen to make their own contribution to the community. Pupils put their comprehensive knowledge of how to lead a healthy lifestyle into practice through, for example, their keen involvement in extra sporting activities and older pupils' organisation of games for younger ones at lunch-times. Conducting their own risk assessments before going on enriching educational visits to, for instance, the theatre, Madrid or London, heightens pupils' awareness of how to keep safe. Staff's clarity of expectations and patience when dealing with challenging or vulnerable pupils and their determination to foster self-confidence ensure that excellent relationships and behaviour abound throughout the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They greatly enjoy school because, as they say, 'It is like a happy picture with everyone smiling.' The attendance of almost all pupils is good. However,

despite persistent efforts on the part of both school and outside agencies that are leading to improvement, the irregular attendance of a small number of pupils means that overall levels are somewhat below the national average.

High quality teaching and a rich curriculum underpin pupils' outstanding personal and academic progress. Lessons are lively and move at a smart pace with plenty of varied activities that help sustain pupils' interest. Teachers give very clear directions, encourage pupils to make good use of what they have learnt earlier and ask probing questions that really make pupils think hard. In response, pupils are eager learners who concentrate very well, take great care with their work and have a very good understanding of how to improve it. The strong emphasis placed on the development of basic skills combined with, for instance, the long-standing teaching of Spanish throughout the school and the increasingly creative approach to linking subjects, ensure that pupils' learning is highly relevant to their needs and also fun.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead the school exceptionally well. Governors are very supportive and hold the school rigorously to account. Subject leaders now play a powerful role in evaluating the impact of provision and driving forward improvements. High expectations of themselves and pupils, a strong sense of teamwork, the willingness and ability to adapt their practice and rising standards all confirm that the school has outstanding capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because staff make careful observations of their developing skills and adapt the provision well according to individuals' needs and interests. The great majority of the children who join the Nursery have significant weaknesses in their ability to communicate, concentrate or interact with others. Good arrangements help them settle into routines swiftly. Staff's cheerful and purposeful interactions with children ensure that their language skills develop well which, in turn, helps to promote their personal development, reasoning skills and learning across the curriculum. The recently improved nursery accommodation and increased resources for both rooms and the outside area enable the children to access a wide range of stimulating activities. A range of good practices has been introduced in response to staff training and observations of provision in other settings. However, changes of staffing and the very recent appointment of a leader for the Foundation Stage mean that these have yet to be firmly embedded into everyday practice. Nevertheless, although many children's skills are still below expectations by the end of Reception, their willingness to learn and the good transfer of assessment information mean that they get off to a flying start in Year 1.

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

- Raise standards in writing, so that standards in English by the end of Key Stage 2 match those consistently achieved in mathematics and science.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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



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

Thank you very much indeed for your very warm welcome and your politeness when I visited Lander Road recently. I know that many of you went out of your way to help me feel comfortable in school and I understand that you did this because you are so proud to be members of such a friendly, happy community and want to share it with others. I was delighted to see how well you all get on together, your excellent behaviour and the way that you care for and help each other.

You told me that yours is a 'brilliant, fabulous school' because you have 'loads of fun' there and the teachers are so good at helping you if you get stuck with your work or upset about other things. It was really good to hear so many of the Year 6 pupils say that, while they will miss Lander Road, they feel absolutely confident about moving to secondary school because they have been so well prepared for the next stage of their education.

I agree that yours is an outstanding school. This is because the senior leaders are always striving to improve things for you and are prepared to try lots of different ways to make things better. Teachers know your individual strengths and weaker areas very well because they carefully monitor your progress, and they use the information to make sure that you each have the right amount of challenge in your work. All staff also look after you very well so that you grow in self-belief about your own talents and want to work really hard. All this means that during your time in school you make excellent progress and by the end of Year 6 reach well above average standards in mathematics and science. You make good progress in writing but I have asked the teachers to help you to do even better with this so that standards in English are as high as in the other subjects. So your job will be to work particularly hard with your writing, not only in English lessons but in all the other subjects too.