

# Leasowe Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105055
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	308755
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Aitken

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	136
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs K Hutchinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr R Flaherty
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 January 2005
<b>School address</b>	Oxley Avenue Leasowe Wirral Merseyside CH46 1RU
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 6381126
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 3469307

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The vast majority of pupils in this school live in the surrounding housing estates. Three quarters of the pupils, a very high proportion, are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The vast majority of pupils are White British. In January 2007 the school became part of a local authority (LA) Intensive Support Programme, (ISP), to raise standards. The school holds the Activemark Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. A decline in the school roll has been halted and the school population is now stable. The very attractive new building has put a spring into the steps of pupils and staff alike.

Children's skills on entry to the Reception class are well below those typical for their age. However, they make good progress due to the good quality of provision. The achievement of pupils over the course of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is satisfactory but there is some variation in rates of progress between years, with progress being strongest in Year 6. Pupils in both key stages do best in reading. They enjoy reading stories and their skills in this subject are very effectively developed by the teachers and through catch-up reading programmes. Pupils do not do as well in writing. The school's efforts to raise pupils' standards in this skill have had only modest success.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It contributes strongly to pupils' good personal development and to their sense of well-being and security. Pupils' good awareness of healthy lifestyles is reflected in the school's Activemark award. Pupils keep fit and active and say this helps you 'develop your muscles and keep your brain healthy'. They take pride in their sparkling new building and their well equipped playgrounds and look after them very well. The curriculum is enriched by opportunities for learning beyond the school day that include team sports and music tuition in stringed instruments. These activities foster enjoyment and good relationships amongst pupils. However, opportunities are missed for reinforcing pupils' writing skills in subjects other than English.

While there is some good teaching, the overall quality is satisfactory. An unfailing strength is the high quality of the relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers manage pupils exceptionally well and promote positive attitudes to learning. However, planning does not ensure that work is matched to the individual needs of pupils and much marking offers little guidance as to how pupils can improve their work. Pastoral care and welfare arrangements to meet the diverse needs of pupils are good. The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress and identifying pupils who would benefit from extra support are satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Measures to safeguard pupils meet government requirements. Leaders have maintained the good quality of pastoral care, highlighted at the previous inspection, and improved pupils' personal development, including behaviour. Overall, improvement has been satisfactory. There are some promising signs of improving standards, although these are not yet consistent across the curriculum. Presently, the headteacher and representatives from the LA monitor all aspects of the school's work. However, curriculum leaders do not have clearly defined responsibility for keeping a close overview of standards and pupils' progress in their subjects. This slows down the work being undertaken to improve standards. Partnerships with other organisations are good and the school makes satisfactory use of its resources. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve and provides satisfactory value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

From low starting points, children make good progress in all areas of their learning in the Reception class. By the time they join Year 1 their skills have improved considerably but are

below those expected for their age. Children make especially good progress in the development of their personal skills. Excellent relationships between children and adults underpin children's sense of security and self-worth. Teaching is skilled in ensuring high standards of behaviour, good relationships between the children and enjoyment of learning. Children are actively encouraged to exercise choices and to take responsibility for their learning. Children respond well to these good opportunities and the high quality of classroom resources supports their learning well. Staff work very effectively with children on focused activities to develop letter, word recognition and numeracy skills. However, some opportunities are missed to promote children's oral skills in role play activities. Overall, the curriculum is good, despite some inconsistency in the use of the outdoor provision. Staff are very alert to the pastoral needs of the children and look after them well. Satisfactory use is made of assessment to support children's learning. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well.

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

- Raise standards, especially in writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching, especially planning and marking, to ensure that pupils' progress is at least good throughout the school.
- Clearly define the responsibility of curriculum leaders to monitor standards and progress in their subjects closely and enable them to do this in order to increase their impact on standards.

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 their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement overall is satisfactory. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, build satisfactorily on their earlier learning as they progress through the school, although the rate of progress pupils make from year to year contains some variation. Results at the end of Year 2 were well below average in 2007 with particular weakness in writing. Standards in the current Year 2 remain well below average in writing but there are clear indications of modest improvement. Standards at the end of Year 6 have varied considerably in recent years but improved to below average in 2007. Standards currently in Year 6 are broadly average. This represents satisfactory achievement for this small, relatively able year group during Key Stage 2.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils behave well, take responsibility for their actions and look out for each other's needs. They are well aware of how to stay safe in school and of the dangers of straying too close to rivers and train tracks in the local area. School is a harmonious place where pupils feel very secure and enjoy their learning. Attendance has improved this year to a satisfactory level. Pupils are keen to take advantage of the increasing opportunities to contribute usefully to the life of the school. The school council has been successful in raising money for charities. Other pupils have taken part in singing performances for the wider community. Pupils value the availability of peer mediators to support them, if troubled. Pupils' achievement in the basic skills sets them up satisfactorily for later life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Staff manage pupils very skilfully and attend to pupils' pastoral needs in the classroom very well. Pupils are quick to comply with any requests, settle quickly to their work and are eager to please their teachers by working hard. Pupils nearly always listen well and this encourages pupils to express their ideas and develop their self-confidence in front of the class. In the best lessons, work is adapted to meet the needs of all the pupils. Teaching assistants are very effectively used and the learning of pupils is closely directed to enable them to make the best use of pair-work routines. In a minority of lessons, planning is insufficiently based on what is known about pupils' individual learning needs and the match of work is less effective or challenging than it should be. Assessment contains some good elements, for example, in providing clear written feedback for focused writing activities. However, opportunities are missed to use both oral assessment and marking consistently well to speed up the pace of pupils' learning.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils satisfactorily. The requirements of the ISP ensure a heavy focus on the development of pupils' literacy skills, in particular, and on numeracy. This programme is having a satisfactory impact on raising standards overall. Some of the impact of the new initiatives for improving writing has been reduced because they have not yet been integrated across the other subjects in the curriculum. A number of strategies to promote pupils' personal development are used well. Despite its small size, the school manages to operate a varied enrichment programme which reinforces pupils' enjoyment of school. It enables them to develop not only their sporting and musical talents, but supports their learning well, for example, through information and communication technology.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Systems to ensure pupils' welfare, and health and safety are good. The quality of relationships between adults and pupils is excellent. Unstinting efforts of the staff, including the special educational needs coordinator, in researching and implementing new measures to promote pupils' personal development are fundamental to pupils' well-being in school. Pupils feel confident that they can approach any of the staff if they are worried. They say that the staff know and care for them well. The school liaises effectively with outside agencies to meet pupils' needs. Systems for promoting regular attendance are satisfactory. The school's relatively new tracking system is effective in identifying pupils from individual year groups who would benefit from extra support. However, teachers are not using this information consistently in lesson planning.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Participation in the ISP has enabled senior leaders, and the headteacher in particular, to gain a clear understanding of the key priorities for improving standards. Actions taken have had some impact in raising standards in English, but further work remains to be done to ensure that this is sustainable, especially in writing, and to ensure greater consistency in pupils' progress. Lesson observations undertaken by the headteacher are perceptive and detailed. The accurate evaluations of the quality of pupils' learning carried out by representatives of the LA also highlight the areas for improvement in teaching that are needed. The monitoring and evaluation roles of the curriculum team leaders are currently underdeveloped, and this reduces their ability to account for, and rigorously review, standards in their subjects. Governors support the work of the school effectively and are developing their role as 'critical friends'.

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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?	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?	2
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?	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**

I am writing to thank you for your help when I inspected your school recently, and to tell you about my inspection findings. I enjoyed meeting you. I noticed how proud you were of your nice new school and how pleased you were to come to the front of assembly to be praised and get your awards. Your enjoyment of school and your good behaviour was there for all to see at the end of term disco.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. The children in Reception get off to a good start but they still have some learning to catch up on when they join Year 1. You make satisfactory progress as you move up through the school, but usually by the time you leave school your standards are below those reached by most other 11-year-olds. In the last two years the Year 6 pupils have started to make better progress in their learning. The progress you make is better in some years than in others, so I have asked the headteacher to make sure teaching is good in all years. I have also asked that teachers' lesson planning and the marking of your books are improved so that you all make the best possible progress. You enjoy your reading and make good progress in this skill. You have made some improvements recently in your writing, but there is much more to do here. I have asked the staff to concentrate smartly on raising your writing skills.

You think very highly of the staff. You get on very well with them and this helps you feel happy and settled in school. The staff are very patient with you and look after you well. Because of this you develop your personal skills well and are a credit to yourself and your families. You enjoy your lessons and the extra activities the school puts on to add more interest to your learning. The school leaders are always looking for new ways to make you feel more confident and help you develop new skills. A good example of this is the teaching provided for Year 4 pupils on the violin and cello. I have asked the headteacher to make sure that all teachers in charge of a subject keep a very close eye on what all of you do and achieve in their subject.

You can help by attending school even more regularly and by trying your hardest in your writing activities.