

Hope Valley Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131313
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	315779
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2008
Reporting inspector	David Blackburne

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	
Headteacher	Ms E Boutflower
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
School address	Walton Breck Road Liverpool Merseyside L5 0PA
Telephone number	0151 2634038
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The school was inspected by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school roll is just above the average for primary schools nationally and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is relatively high. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and the school has three Language Units attended by pupils from across the city, who have speech and language difficulties. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. A small percentage of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at various stages of the year during Key Stage 2 (pupil mobility) is above average. The school has gained local and regional awards for Inclusion, the National Healthy Schools Award, Active Sports Mark and is a Fair Trade school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for pupils. A strength is the focus given to support pupils' personal development, helping them to overcome significant barriers to learning. Staff make sure that in times of stress or emotional upheaval they are on hand to help. Parents are confident that their children are well cared for and are particularly pleased with the way their individual needs are met. This is reflected in comments such as, 'I am very happy with the care and attention my children receive from all the staff at Hope Valley.' Children join the Nursery with levels of attainment that are very low. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress, though by the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are exceptionally low. Standards are adversely affected by the high rate of pupil mobility. Nevertheless, standards should be higher. Measures to raise standards are beginning to bring about improvement, for example, in mathematics, but the full impact of these measures is yet to be felt on pupils' writing. Pupils with additional needs make sound progress and those with speech and language difficulties, who are taught in the Language Units, make good progress.

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school and the overwhelming majority behave well. A few pupils display challenging behaviour but they are managed well by the staff and cause minimal disruption to other pupils' learning. Attendance is below average. However, it has improved since the last inspection owing to robust systems to encourage good attendance and challenging targets. Attendance is adversely affected by a minority of parents taking children on holiday during term time despite the repeated reminders from school. Pupils willingly take responsibilities around school and act as school councillors, peer mentors and buddies. The school provides high standards of care and support for pupils and this has positive outcomes. Staff are developing systems to track how well pupils are achieving, so that staff can target appropriate support for underachievers. Currently, these systems are not as effective as they should be.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons range from satisfactory to outstanding, but as yet there is too much inconsistency. The involvement of the school in the local authority (LA) Intensifying Support Programme is helping to improve the quality of teaching. Such improvement is essential if standards and overall achievement are to rise. Teaching and learning in the Language Units are consistently good. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school and is especially good in helping them to enjoy the rich history and culture of their city and those of other countries. The school is also committed to involving parents in their children's education. It has been very successful in recent years in getting families involved in topics in science and local and family history.

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff are strongly committed to raising the expectations and self-esteem of pupils through the curriculum and have been active in seeking ways to raise achievement. This work is ongoing and its impact yet to be realised. The school has made progress since the last inspection, for example in improving attendance, but there is more to be done if standards are to rise. The school's capacity to improve and its value for money are both satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Strengths of the provision include the spacious and well-resourced classroom for the Nursery children and the quality of the curriculum for Nursery and Reception children. The six areas of their learning are covered well. There are safe areas for children to enjoy physical activities both outdoors and in the adjacent hall. Although the Reception classroom is cramped, the school does well to overcome this by making good use of available space beyond the classroom. The outdoor provision lacks a covered area to shelter children in poor weather. Despite these shortcomings, children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. At the end of the Reception year, children's attainment is in line with expectations in their personal, social and emotional development and in their physical development. It is below expected levels in all other areas. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and systems to assess how well children are doing have improved since the last inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in both key stages, particularly in pupils' writing.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching so that it matches the best in the school and promotes pupils' better achievement.
- Improve the rigour with which pupils' progress is checked and tracked.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This includes the achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as well as the very few learning English as an additional language. Standards at the end of both key stages are well below average. There are no particular differences in the trend in performance of boys and girls year on year. The school has identified, however, that pupils whose attainment is just below average have not been making as much progress as their peers, for example, the more able and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has set about introducing measures to overcome this, including improvements to mathematics teaching and effective support programmes for groups of pupils. These measures are beginning to have a positive impact. Overall, standards in writing are not improving as well as in mathematics and science, despite the school having implemented a number of strategies to raise standards in this respect. The full impact of these measures is yet to be felt.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their moral and cultural development is extremely well enhanced by the school's curriculum, which teaches respect for others through concepts such as fair trade and by regularly exploring the cultures of other people. Pupils are enthusiastic and have good relationships with one another and with staff. Behaviour is good and pupils are polite and chatty. They say there have been examples of poor

behaviour at playtimes but they know 'there is always someone they can turn to' if they are concerned. Bullying is very rare and there have been no racist incidents. Pupils use the 'Think Boxes' and 'Telex' system effectively to report any concerns. Fixed-term exclusions in recent years have been few and have been effective in eliminating unacceptable behaviour. Pupils look out for one another, feel safe and live a fit and healthy lifestyle, for instance by participating in sports activities after school. Their contribution to the wider local community is good. Pupils learn how to work independently and as a team well but their basic skills of literacy and numeracy are inadequate, so the life skills they take forward to secondary school are only satisfactory overall.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There are areas of strength and some aspects to improve. All staff have good relationships with pupils. Where teaching and learning are best, teachers use questions very well, set clear objectives and teach at a good pace. Both class teachers and teaching assistants contribute very well to small-group work and individual instruction. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards in lessons. Arranging Years 5 and 6 pupils into sets according to their levels of attainment for English and mathematics provides these pupils with challenging work. This level of good practice has not yet spread to all classes. Where lessons are only satisfactory, the work is not as clearly planned to match pupils' needs and the pace of learning is not brisk enough. Recently introduced strategies for marking pupils' work now help pupils to understand better what they need to do to improve. This practice is still not consistent, however, across all classes. Parents make a satisfactory and often good contribution to their children's work, especially through projects that help their children's learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is showing improvement, thanks to the school's involvement in the LA Intensifying Support Programme. This is having a strong impact on pupils' achievement in mathematics but has been less successful so far in improving pupils' writing. The curriculum has several strengths. It contributes well to the pupils' personal development through lessons of personal, social and health education. The many themes and projects, for example Black History and a project called Coming of Age, contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school immensely. There are good opportunities for pupils to improve their reading and writing skills when they study these topics. The school offers plenty of opportunities to explore places of interest in the region and there are many visitors and specialist coaches and teachers who engage pupils' interest well. The school's partnerships with schools and agencies are many and have real benefit for pupils. French is taught and there are good opportunities to learn a musical instrument. The wide range of activities after lessons includes a nutrition club, which explores healthy diet and proudly hosted a successful buffet for parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care and support are well-established, strong features of the school. Very positive relationships between staff and pupils encourage pupils to feel safe and happy. Parents and carers have the fullest confidence in the care provided. They find staff very approachable and value the support the school provides for their children. Parents of pupils attending the Language Units find the provision 'excellent'. All aspects of health, safety, child protection and safe recruitment of staff are in place. The school pursues rigorous procedures to limit unauthorised absences. Support for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very well organised and benefits from the work of the learning mentor and the special education needs coordinator. Procedures to track pupils' personal development are good and those to track their academic progress are satisfactory. These procedures are currently being developed to identify underachieving pupils and what needs to be done to help them. They are not as yet rigorous enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

A strength of the leadership is the commitment to overcoming barriers to learning and including all pupils, whatever their circumstance and need, in the life of the school. Parents greatly value this aspect of the school's work. Senior leaders have recognised that standards are too low and requested to be involved in the LA's programme of Intensifying Support. This has led to improvements in teaching, to programmes of work and in how well staff track pupils' progress. The full impact of this work is yet to be felt. The headteacher and senior managers carry out checks on pupils' learning by scrutinising teachers' plans and pupils' work. This is helping to make practice more consistent across classes. However, evaluations of the quality of lessons do not clearly pick up points for improvement. Procedures to evaluate how well the school is performing, including analysing data about pupils' achievement, are satisfactory. In most respects, the school's view of itself matches the findings of the inspection. However, the school has overestimated the quality of teaching and learning and of leadership and management. Governors carry out their responsibilities effectively and support the school well but have not sufficiently challenged the senior staff about standards that pupils reach.

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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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

Inspection of Hope Valley Community Primary School, Liverpool, L5 0PA

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you very much for your help when we inspected your school. We enjoyed our visit very much. Now I would like to share with you what we thought about your school.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory standard of education. This means there are some things that the school does well but there are other things the staff need to do to make the school better. These are some of the things that are good.

- All the staff take good care of you and help you all to be fit, safe and healthy.
- Your behaviour is good and you are growing into sensible young people who take responsibilities seriously and want to learn.
- Staff provide you with very good opportunities for sports, visits, clubs after school and to have interesting visitors.
- The headteacher and senior staff have done lots of good things to help you to improve in your work.

These are the things that need to be improved

- Teachers need to find way of helping you to reach higher standards, particularly in writing, mathematics and science.
- Teachers need to make sure they all teach these subjects well.
- Teachers need to check more carefully how well you are getting on in English and mathematics.

As you can see, you have a big part to play in this. Work hard in lessons and do your very best to improve!