

New Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131314
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	315780
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2007
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	321
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Fillis
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Hutchings
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2003
School address	Butler Street Liverpool Merseyside L6 9EU
Telephone number	0151 2634447
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

New Park is a larger than average primary school situated in Kensington, amongst the poorest wards in England in terms of employment and social disadvantage. A much higher than average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. Many pupils have significant barriers to effective learning. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, but a larger than average number of pupils is from minority ethnic backgrounds. Very high numbers of pupils leave and join the school during each school year. Many pupils are from first generation asylum and refugee families and speak English as an additional language. The school has attained a number of awards including the Basic Skills Mark, Artsmark Silver, Activemark, national Healthy School status and the North West Inclusion Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

New Park is an outstanding school. Many pupils start school with significant barriers to achievement and exceptionally low standards. They reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6 and leave the school as confident, well rounded young people; this represents outstanding achievement. Everyone in the school plays their part in this success. Expectations are high throughout the school and pupils grow in confidence and self-belief.

The school describes itself as a place 'Where children are safe, loved and learning', a description which is embraced by the whole community. Outstanding care and support helps many pupils to overcome a variety of significant barriers to learning. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they show a high level of respect at all times for other pupils and all staff and visitors. The excellent racial harmony in the school is clearly seen in the way pupils from a variety of ethnic backgrounds work and play happily together. The curriculum caters well for the needs of all pupils and provides a good variety of experiences. This is clearly seen when pupils use their well developed speaking and listening skills to describe the interest and enjoyment they gain from school. The involvement of pupils in local community projects, including community radio and schemes to improve the environment, shows their outstanding contribution to the community. The school's efforts in teaching pupils about healthy lifestyles and enabling them to make good choices about what they eat and how to spend their time well has earned the school healthy school status.

Throughout each year the school welcomes many new pupils into different year groups. Many of these are from families who are refugees or are seeking asylum. Many speak English as an additional language and are often in the very early stages of learning English. The warm welcome they receive from other pupils and the staff helps them to settle in quickly and effectively. The skilled teaching, support and guidance they receive leads them to make rapid progress in their learning.

Teaching is good and lessons are well planned and engaging, allowing pupils to progress very well. Tasks are generally challenging and promote very successful learning. However, a small minority of tasks given to pupils are not matched accurately enough to their needs and abilities to challenge them sufficiently.

The leadership in the school is outstanding, with the headteacher providing a very clear focus on the development of the whole child, raising self-esteem and personal aspiration. Staff work together well to constantly and effectively evaluate the performance of every aspect of the school. This contributes to the trust parents have in the school doing its best for their children. The outstanding personal development of pupils and the focus on basic skills, as well as the high aspirations that pupils are given, all help to provide for pupils' future economic well-being. The headteacher has already led considerable successful developments in the school and the capacity for further improvement is outstanding. Considering the school's outstanding performance it provides excellent value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start the Foundation Stage considerably below nationally expected levels, particularly so in their personal, social and language development. Outstanding personal care and support ensures they settle quickly into school and subsequently make exceptionally good progress in

their personal development. Staff work in close partnership with parents who value these strong links and this helps children to be happy and to make good progress. The quality of teaching is good and all areas of learning are developed well, from both teacher- and child-initiated learning opportunities. The school has begun to put in place new strategies to ensure outdoor provision is fully accessible to children in Nursery and Reception classes. By the time children leave the Foundation Stage they are still working well below the national expectations for their age, particularly in writing and language development. However, their progress has been good when taking account of their very low starting points. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is outstanding and is focused effectively on raising children's achievement and enriching their learning experiences.

What the school should do to improve further

- Challenge all pupils at the appropriate levels for their ability in all lessons to ensure they make the best progress possible.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The school, conscious that standards are still not as high as they would wish, has been over-cautious in grading the achievement of its pupils. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with well below national expectations in most areas of learning, particularly in communication and writing. Pupils make at least good progress throughout the school and overall standards, by the time they leave school, are broadly average. This is reflected in the Year 6 national tests results over time which are around the national average. The 2007 results were a little weaker because an even greater proportion of pupils than usual had significant disruption to their learning. Current pupils are making stronger progress and reaching better standards. The high rate of pupils leaving and joining the school is a significant barrier to consistently raising standards. School records clearly show that those pupils who remain with the school for the whole of their primary years attain standards in line with the national averages by the end of Year 6, which is outstanding achievement from their very low starting points. Throughout the school pupils are making greater than the nationally expected rates of progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates as a result of the outstanding support they receive. Pupils with English as an additional language some of whom are at the early stages of learning English make rapid progress due to the highly inclusive nature of the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils thrive in this school. They say that 'Teachers are nice and help you with your work and help you to share'. They thoroughly enjoy school and say they feel safe, knowing who to turn to if they need help. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding and their behaviour is exemplary. They have a wide range of responsibilities in school including those of prefect, school councillor, and playground leader, which they take seriously and enjoy. They develop into caring, thoughtful mature young people and contribute significantly to making their school a happy, caring, harmonious place for all. Pupils' growing confidence was demonstrated in an assembly led by the Year 6 head girl who shared her knowledge of her culture and religious belief with the whole school. Pupils acquire excellent learning habits and become independent learners, which prepares them well for their future lives. Pupils know the

importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and have been instrumental in improving menus at lunchtime and introducing the selling of healthy snacks at playtime. This is reflected in the achievement of the healthy schools award. Pupils care very much about their own community and the wider world. Through fundraising and supporting local and national initiatives they learn to care for others less fortunate than themselves. Attendance is broadly average overall and for most pupils is above the national average; however, a small minority of poor attenders adversely affects the attendance level for the school, despite its best efforts.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of relationships in all classes is very good, encouraging all pupils to do their best. Pupils' learning behaviour is excellent with pupils listening carefully to their teachers and being fully engaged in their lessons. The good use of resources such as computers and interactive whiteboards also helps to capture pupils' interest and stimulate their learning. Very effective use is made of teaching assistants to support and help pupils access the curriculum and learn as well as they can. Teaching is typically good as lessons are well planned and assessment is used to inform future planning. Grouping pupils by ability in Key Stage 2 is effective in helping pupils to progress well in their learning. In a small number of lessons tasks did not provide enough challenge because they were not sufficiently closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils are well served by a broad, balanced, rich and diverse curriculum. It builds on prior attainment, and evidence of pupils' effective progress in mathematics, English and science can be seen in their assessment books. A wide variety of writing opportunities in different subjects helps pupils to develop and reinforce their skills. A good range of visits and visitors, including artists, poets and dancers, enriches learning. Regular themed weeks add to pupils' enjoyment of their learning and extend their knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Industry days involve the whole school and serve to inform pupils about the world of work and raise their aspirations about their future in it. Pupils who speak English as additional language or have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their individual needs catered for well. Extra-curricular activities offered to pupils across Key Stages 1 and 2 often involve exercise and cater for a variety of pupils' interests and include a residential visit for the older pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Exemplary pastoral care is evident for all groups of pupils, many of whom have very significant barriers to their learning. Pupils in need are cared for by staff who believe passionately that every child is important and is to be respected. This belief is reflected in the overwhelming support of parents for the school. A typical comment is, 'With excellent support of the learning mentor and teacher from the 'Good to be good' programme, my child was able to move back into a mainstream class where he is now achieving well.' Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are well established and health and safety risk assessments are carried out rigorously. Pupils are kept well informed of the progress they make and the helpful marking and assessment of

their work ensures that they are very clear as to what they need to do to improve. Through this outstanding pastoral support, pupils are enabled to make outstanding progress both academically and in their personal development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

As a result of the high expectations that the school has for itself, it has been too modest in its grading of leadership and management. The headteacher is well respected in the community and provides strong and inspirational leadership. Her vision for the school is shared with staff, pupils and parents with such passion and conviction that everyone feels ownership of it. A highly skilled deputy headteacher and leadership team very ably assist the headteacher. Appropriate aspects of leadership have been effectively distributed, giving staff important roles and responsibilities. School leaders set challenging targets at all levels in school and the school's system for self-evaluation includes regular and rigorous examination of all aspects of pupil development each term. This leads to pupils' outstanding progress and personal development. This is an inclusive school into which the many new pupils it receives each year are welcomed by staff and pupils alike. Resources are very well managed to ensure pupils receive the support for learning that they need, and additional resources have been obtained to provide further sports and arts facilities for the school and its community. Government requirements to safeguard learners are well met and the care provided for learners is outstanding throughout the school. Governors fulfil their role well, being passionate about providing for the development of the whole child and ensuring that pupils have well developed skills and high aspirations. The strong links established by the headteacher with parents are reflected in their overwhelmingly positive opinion of the school.

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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 ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	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

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?	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

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

I am writing on behalf of the inspectors to thank you for the special welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. Everyone was very polite and helpful in answering our questions.

We judged your school to be outstanding. You all work hard and learn very well. Your behaviour is excellent and you know that if anyone has a problem your teachers will help you to sort it out. We could tell by the things you said that everyone enjoyed coming to school. You are all part of a very healthy school where people care particularly well for each other and enjoy themselves. You make many good choices about the food you eat and have helped to change things so that everyone is offered healthy food and snacks every day.

We particularly liked the way everyone mixes so well together and the way you are so welcoming to all the new pupils that join your school every year. This is important to them and it shows that you are learning to be good citizens. We were very impressed by the way you try to help others and the sensible way you do the jobs you are given. We are sure you are proud of the many awards that you have helped the school to get, particularly the Artsmark and Activemark.

We could tell that you like your teachers and that they help you to learn well. We were very pleased that you get to go out on visits and have lots of visitors into school to help to make your learning even more interesting and fun. Your teachers help you by telling you what you have done well and what you need to do next. Your targets help you to improve your work and we found that everybody is making excellent progress. We have asked your teachers to make sure that all tasks you get are just hard enough to help you get better and better in your learning.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your headteacher and other teachers to make your school even better.