

Greenbank Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133332
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	316089
Inspection dates	19–20 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Steve Rigby

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	430
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lynn Collin
Headteacher	Ms Deborah Mendey
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Greenbank Road Liverpool L18 1HG
Telephone number	0151 5225740
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Greenbank is a large, new, purpose built school, which was opened in September 2003, following the amalgamation of an infant and junior school. It is a multicultural school with many children from African and Asian heritages. It serves an area of significant economic and social disadvantage with a well above average percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Some 38% of children enter the school learning English as an additional language. Just over a quarter of pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The school holds a range of national awards such as Artsmark (Gold), Healthy Schools, Eco status, Activemark, and German Centre of Excellence.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Greenbank is a good and rapidly improving school where children enjoy their learning. The clear vision of the headteacher and staff promotes an inclusive school and this permeates throughout with all pupils warmly welcomed. Pupils comment, for instance, 'There are a lot of people from around the world here and that makes it an exciting place to learn.'

The school is particularly successful in working in partnership with a range of services from within its community. One parent spoke for many when she said, 'I value the approach the school adopts and it enriches my child's understanding of other cultures, the arts and our community.' Children enter the Nursery with skills which are well below the expectations for their age, particularly in language and in personal, social and emotional development. A range of good teaching and personal support from a dedicated staff ensures that children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and achieve well, making good progress and working towards the expected early learning goals.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have made steady progress and are attaining standards that are above the national average in reading and mathematics. However, the number of pupils reaching Level 3, particularly in writing is below average. Pupils' achievement is closely monitored. This is particularly true for those pupils with learning difficulties and those new to learning English who respond positively to the additional small group support they receive.

Pupils' progress accelerates in Key Stage 2 and they achieve well to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. However, writing remains an area of weakness and only a small percentage of pupils reach National Curriculum Level 5 in English overall.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils behave well in lessons and showed a good level of respect for each other and for adults. Many take up responsibilities in school such as buddies or school councillors developing skills of working together that will benefit them later in life. They have a good understanding of what a good and healthy lifestyle means and the positive relationship between diet and exercise.

The school celebrates its cultural diversity in a variety of ways. The celebration of a range of Christian, Jewish and Muslim festivals, looking at differences in customs and clothing as well as international food evenings all of which help develop pupils' awareness of the multicultural society in which they live.

Teaching and learning overall are good, although lessons vary from satisfactory to outstanding. Lessons are well planned and are delivered at a good pace. Pupils are fully involved and keen to contribute. They show good relationships with their teachers and are well supported by a range of classroom support assistants.

The curriculum is good. It offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils to participate. These include a school choir, the learning of German as a modern foreign language. The school has also received nationally recognised awards in areas of art, physical education and ecological work.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements. The school's most vulnerable children are well supported by a range of external agencies. The school has improved the effectiveness of its assessment systems. This has had a positive effect on learning, allowing a closer matching of work to individual pupil's needs. This has increased the rate of progress of all groups of pupils.

However, the quality of assessment is inconsistent and does not always involve pupils in understanding the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management are good. The improvement in standards can be attributed to the strong leadership of the headteacher and the support of the senior management team. This has resulted in improved and more consistent teaching and learning taking place. The governing body are knowledgeable and take a keen interest in all that the school does. The school is well organised and has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the EYFS is good. It is well managed and benefits from a committed and caring staff. In EYFS, good teaching and effective use of the teaching assistants help children to make good progress in their learning from a well below expected starting point on entry. Children enter the Nursery from a range of pre-school settings with many having skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age. A significant number of children speak little or no English on entry to the EYFS. The children have a positive attitude to learning and enjoy the activities in which they are engaged. Good care is taken of the children and their welfare is a priority. They respond well to the caring attitude of the staff and quickly follow adult requests. Indoor and outdoor provision is good and easily accessed. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to provide well planned activities and provide strong pastoral support to all children. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated learning. The early years' profiles are beginning to have a positive impact on children's progress. All groups of children make good progress especially in language and social skills. Most are working towards the expected learning goals for children of this age by the time they enter Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in literacy, particularly in writing for the most able.
- To improve the use of teachers' assessment to ensure that pupils understand their next steps in learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From below average starting points on entry to Key Stage 1, pupils continue to build upon their good start and make steady progress. Where there is good teaching and good classroom support, this impacts positively on pupils' learning. The most recent figures show general improvements in reading, writing and mathematics, although writing remains an area for further development.

Pupils' progress accelerates throughout Key Stage 2 and pupils achieve well to attain broadly average standards overall. There have been significant recent improvements in the number of pupils achieving Level 4 and 5 in mathematics and science from last year. Although the majority of pupils work securely in English at Level 4, fewer reach Level 5. This current picture reflects the improved quality of teaching and learning now taking place throughout the school.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the close match of work to their needs and the quality of support from a range of teaching assistants and other specialist staff. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the effective support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is outstanding. Most pupils behave and play well together and show a good understanding of how to make healthy lifestyle choices and stay safe.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils expressed a good understanding of their local community and spoke enthusiastically of the range of visitors who came to school such as the local pharmacist, vet and fire service. They also showed an appreciation of the work undertaken by the school in the wider United Kingdom and global communities. This included their environmental studies, participation in fundraising such as Comic Relief, assemblies on human rights issues and the residential visits to Germany for older pupils. The effective personal, social and health education programme helps pupils to become increasingly aware of themselves, of others and of the need for good relationships. They are taught to take part in many initiatives such as the Liverpool Capital of Culture projects in music, drama and art. There are visits to the Liverpool Philharmonic and the school choir performs in a range of local venues.

Pupils welcome opportunities to help their classmates by becoming playground buddies or prefects and behaviour is good. An effective school council plays an active part in decisions that affect their life in school and also in the wider community. For example, they have introduced improvements to playground equipment and run stalls at the school Christmas and Summer Fayres. The school has worked successfully to improve attendance which is now broadly average. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their schooling because they have a positive attitude to learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and is occasionally outstanding. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and attitudes. Particular strengths of teaching throughout the school are the good quality relationships which impact positively on pupils' good personal development and their outstanding enjoyment of learning.

Where teaching is good or better, pupils are highly motivated and are actively engaged in stimulating practical activities. Teaching assistants work well with teachers to provide a high level of effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and for those new to English. In less effective lessons, assessment information is not always used effectively enough to provide different tasks to match learning needs. This sometimes results in uneven progress and more able pupils, in particular, do not always achieve as well as they should.

The school has a very well developed system for monitoring pupils' progress. Pupils' work is regularly assessed but the quality of marking and target-setting is inconsistent.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school is mindful of pupils' needs and places a strong emphasis on developing skills in literacy, numeracy and science. Curriculum resources are good and well used.

The school recognises that some of the strategies they have recently implemented are beginning to lead to improvements but also that further work is needed to plan links between the basic skills pupils learn and other subjects across the curriculum.

Education for health and safety are good and pupils have a secure understanding of how to make good life choices. The curriculum is enhanced through specialist teaching in the games element of physical education. It is also enriched with a good range of additional activities such as music, modern languages and dance, which pupils thoroughly enjoy.

Pupils experience a range of educational visits and visitors throughout the year and the residential visits for pupils in Key Stage 2 make a significant contribution to their cultural, personal and social development.

The school provides a good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or difficulties and those learning English as an additional language resulting in their needs being fully met.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory overall. All required checks and systems are in place to safeguard the pupils' health and well-being. The school provides a warm, caring atmosphere, which ensures that all pupils feel safe and confident in the support they are given. Relationships with the parents are developed through the parent evenings, support meetings with governors and an open door policy. Small group work is used to good effect for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language, which enables them to effectively access the curriculum.

All pupils are given good advice and marking is supportive, although guidance to pupils through marking and target-setting is not consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils, including those identified as gifted and talented are aware of the next steps they need to take to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership. There is clarity of vision, from effective self-evaluation that is conveyed to a range of interested parties, including parents and governors who work closely with the school promoting the school's improvement programme. The most recent inspection evidence shows that the school has made significant improvements in the levels of pupils' attainment and rates of pupils' progress. This is largely due to the introduction of a comprehensive training programme for all staff, which has raised the quality, and consistency of the teaching and learning. The creation of small management teams has also created a greater ownership of the school's decision-making processes.

The majority of parents are happy with the school and feel that it is approachable and that it listens to their views. Although, a small minority of parents were not sympathetic of the rigorous measures the school has in place to deal with unacceptable behaviour on the playgrounds.

The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. There are numerous and well established links with local, national and international institutions. These range from residential visits to a European partner school in Germany to nationally recognised awards for the arts and

for the physical education curriculum. The school is also an integral part of its local community and has a range of local visits and visitors, which enrich the curriculum.

The governors are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and supportive yet critical friends of the school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities and make a valuable contribution, working alongside the school's management team in guiding the school forward.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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	2
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 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?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

I would like to thank you for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school. We spoke to many of you in lessons, around school and of course we listened to your school council. You told us a lot about your school and how much you enjoy it.

We think your school is a good school. This is because your headteacher leads the school very well and is one of the main reasons things are improving so rapidly.

We were impressed by your positive attitudes and willingness to learn. From looking at your work, visiting your lessons and speaking to you we can see that you are making good progress overall and that standards throughout the school are rising. We feel that your teachers are teaching you well and provide opportunities for you to experience a broad and exciting curriculum.

To help your school to become even better we have asked your teachers to help you reach more challenging targets, particularly in writing. We have also asked your teachers to involve you more in your own learning and encourage you to work out how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve.

I hope you all continue to work hard in the future and enjoy your school.