

Longmoor Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133334
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	316091
Inspection dates	12–13 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Frank Carruthers

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	405
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs D Hart
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2003
School address	Hall Lane Liverpool L9 0EU
Telephone number	0151 5215511
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large primary school serves a residential area of Liverpool. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the average of most primary schools. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school during Key Stage 2 is above average. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award, the Football Association Chartermark, Activemark and holds Dyslexia Friendly status and the intermediate level of the International Award.

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 is providing a satisfactory education and has good aspects, including one that is outstanding. Key strengths are pupils' good behaviour, personal development and well-being and that pupils become sensible and mature in their attitudes to learning. These achievements reflect the emphasis that the school's leadership team gives to promoting the care, guidance and support of all pupils, which are outstanding. Despite the considerable efforts of the school, well supported by the local authority, levels of attendance remain below the national average. The biggest single factor has been parents taking pupils on holiday during term time. This has had an adverse impact on these pupils' learning, especially in mathematics and science, where the learning of important skills is disrupted by a fortnight's absence.

In recent years, pupils have been making satisfactory progress overall in school subjects but achievement in Key Stage 2 in mathematics and science has been inconsistent, often significantly below nationally expected levels and lower than achievement in English. Standards in Year 6 have been average in English but more erratic in mathematics and science and were below average in 2006. In the most recent but as yet unvalidated 2007 tests, standards improved in all three subjects and this indicates a good response from the school to previous shortcomings. Standards were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. However, information from the tracking of pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 classes up to the end of the last school year shows that there remains an inconsistent pattern. Progress is good and more consistent in reading and writing than in mathematics but more needs to be done if pupils' achievement is to be good overall. The impact of pupil mobility contributes to variations in standards but does not account for this discrepancy. Standards in the current Year 6 are below average and this is mainly due to the nature of the year group as a large minority of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The impact of the school's work to promote higher achievement is yet to be fully felt and requires consolidation.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and leads to the satisfactory achievement of pupils. The teaching of English is good and leads to the good standards evident. However, there are some shortcomings in teaching across Key Stage 2 classes. Most lessons have good pace and focus but a minority lack pace and sometimes pupils' attention wanders. In addition, in some mathematics and science lessons the time spent introducing a topic by the teacher does not leave enough time for practical activities and investigations. The quality of the curriculum is good. It is well planned and enriched with a good range of out-of-school activities, visits and visitors as well as the teaching of French. There is a good focus on developing positive attitudes to health, fitness and emotional well-being and this is evident in the awards the school has achieved and in pupils' good personal development and well-being. However, practical and exploratory activities in science for pupils in Key Stage 1 classes are underdeveloped.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory with good features. The leadership team has ensured that this is a school that reaches out to pupils, especially the more vulnerable and those at risk. The school's evaluation of its own performance is satisfactory and has led to the school identifying areas for improvement, such as standards in mathematics and science, and taking action. Partnerships with other schools, agencies and parents are well developed. Governors fulfil their statutory requirements satisfactorily and are well led by the chairperson. The cost of educating a pupil at the school is average and the school provides satisfactory value for money. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection but the school

still has some way to go to ensure the good achievement of pupils in mathematics and science. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery class with levels of learning that vary and are below the levels expected of children for their age. They are well cared for and staff expectations for their progress are high, especially in relation to their personal, social and emotional development. Children become confident and engage well with their learning, choosing activities and enjoying helping. They make good progress so that by the end of Reception standards are broadly in line with national expectations. Staff plan the activities together and all areas of learning are well covered in classrooms. However, the outdoor area poses problems of access, especially for the Reception classes, and is not set up as a learning environment apart from using it for children's physical development and for promoting their knowledge and understanding of the world. The Foundation Stage is well managed and organised. The transition into Nursery, between classes and on to Year 1 is well planned and ensures that the curriculum meets the needs of all children. The school development plan addresses the needs of the Foundation Stage and recognises the development needs of the outdoor area.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the pace of learning in the minority of lessons where it is lacking in order to raise achievement and standards in mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Do all it can to ensure that parents act upon the schools' guidance on the importance of regular attendance, especially in relation to taking holidays during term time.
- Develop practical activities in science for pupils in Key Stage 1 so that more use their skills of exploration and investigation effectively.
- Develop the outdoor area of the Foundation Stage in order to improve it as a stimulus for learning.

A small proportion of schools where overall effectiveness is judged to be 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

Pupils build on the good start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Standards in Year 2 have been consistently in line with the national average since 2005 and have improved in writing. This was the result of an effective focus on teaching skills of writing. Achievement in writing has also improved in Years 3 to 6. Not enough pupils, however, are doing well enough in mathematics in Key Stage 2. Standards in science in Year 6 improved in 2007 and this improvement requires consolidation, for instance through overcoming shortcomings such as the balance of time between explanations and investigative work in lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers and many achieve well in relation to targets in their individual education plans.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Their social and moral development is outstanding. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and show mature attitudes. Older pupils act as monitors, school councillors, librarians and buddies to promote the welfare of all. Pupils enjoy their education and have a good awareness of how to stay safe. They have excellent awareness of the implications of leading a healthy and fit lifestyle, resulting from the school's drive to become a Healthy School. They report that they enjoy the popular healthy lunches. School councillors are proud of such achievements, having developed a handbook for pupils new to the school, and make regular reports to governors. Pupils confirm that bullying incidents are few and are dealt with effectively by the school. Throughout the school, pupils work well cooperatively and independently. Through links with local businesses they learn about business enterprise and this also helps their self-confidence, providing them with good skills for the high school and workplace. However, the below average attendance of some pupils does not equip them well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Strengths of the teaching include good subject knowledge and lesson planning. Grouping the older pupils by their attainment into sets in English and mathematics helps this process and pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to explain the purpose of lessons and to make lessons more interesting. Teachers have good relationships with pupils. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning. However, in lessons where learning is only satisfactory, for example in some mathematics and science lessons, pace is not fast enough and pupils lose interest. Time is not used efficiently so that too little is spent on pupils doing practical activities. Pupils are involved satisfactorily in evaluating their work to promote their understanding of what they need to do next in their learning and know their targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum places a strong emphasis on the basic skills of literacy, evident in the school achieving the Basic Skills Quality Mark, and develops pupils' writing effectively through good links between English and other subjects. An increased focus on basic skills in mathematics last year included the introduction of individualised computer programs so that all pupils can improve their skills. These methods are beginning to have a positive impact. The science curriculum provides good coverage of topics but has an insufficient focus on investigations in Key Stage 1. The curriculum offers pupils a wide range of interesting opportunities, including learning French. A strong feature of the curriculum is the use made of visitors to school from interesting fields such as archaeology and the visits to places of interest that embellish pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school promotes the well-being of pupils exceptionally well and this leads to pupils' good personal development. All aspects of health, safety, child protection, risk assessment and safe recruitment of staff are in place. Parents who responded to the inspectors' questionnaire have very positive views of these aspects of the work of the school and appreciate how well their children are cared for. A typical comment is 'All staff are highly committed'. An excellent feature is the school's provision of a trained counsellor to support pupils who are experiencing family distress and finding school difficult. She runs a lunchtime club designed to give pupils a quiet haven to reduce stress and recover their emotional well-being. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and links with outside agencies are used effectively to help pupils make progress. Procedures to track the progress of pupils have developed well in recent years and are based on regular assessments in English, mathematics and science.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and deputy headteacher promote good teamwork among members of the senior management team, which includes a number of middle managers. The team is developing skills and expertise, for example in analysing pupils' responses in test papers, and has a common purpose. The school development plan has school improvement at its heart and the school now sets challenging and realistic targets which result from careful consideration by teachers of individual pupils' potential. Targets are mostly attained but not always; however, they help to raise standards. School self-evaluation is satisfactory and observation and evaluation of lessons regularly feature in the cycle of monitoring. The views of the school match those of inspectors in relation to the achievement and standards of pupils and the care, guidance and support the school provides. In other respects, the school has overestimated its performance. Overall, the impact of the work of governors and senior staff to promote improvements in pupils' achievement is yet to be fully felt.

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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 ¹ 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	1
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?	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?	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

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

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.

- The staff take excellent care of you and help you all to be fit, safe and healthy.
- You are gaining an excellent understanding of a good diet and a fit lifestyle.
- Your behaviour is good and you are growing into sensible students who take responsibilities seriously and want to learn.
- You are doing particularly well in English.
- The staff provide you with good opportunities for sports, visits, clubs after school and for interesting visitors.
- The school councillors have much to be proud of.

These are the things that need to be improved.

- You should be doing better in mathematics and science so we are asking the staff to make sure lessons are brisk and you learn a lot in them. We also want there to be more practical activities in science in Years 1 and 2.
- It is very important that you all attend school regularly, so we want the staff to do even more to get that message over to your parents. Pupils who miss school through going on holidays in term time fall behind in their work, especially in subjects like mathematics and science.
- The outdoor area for the children in the Nursery and Reception classes needs to be used better.

As you can see, you have a part to play in this: to make sure you attend regularly, work hard in lessons and do your very best!