

Stockton Wood Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133338
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	316094
Inspection dates	7–8 November 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	288
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Martin Higgins
Headteacher	Mrs S Stacey
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2003
School address	23 All Saints Road Speke Liverpool L24 3TF
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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 above average sized primary school serves a residential area of Liverpool. Approximately half the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the national average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. None is at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Children start in the Nursery with attainment that is well below expected levels. Since the time of the last inspection the school has moved into new buildings on the same site. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the local authority's Healthy Schools Award and the Active Mark (Gold).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is, therefore, given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is needed in relation to standards and pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 and standards of attendance. The school does not provide value for money.

Standards in Year 6 have not risen sufficiently since the last inspection and are well below average. Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. Pupils' achievement in the key stage has been significantly below expected levels and the pattern of achievement in current Key Stage 2 classes is still uneven. This has been due partly to past staffing difficulties and means that too many pupils are catching up with their learning rather than forging ahead. The poor attendance of a minority of pupils has also had an adverse impact on their performance and standards. There are signs of recovery though, in response to improvements in teaching and learning and in strategies to promote better attendance. However, the impact is yet to be seen fully. Progress in reading is better than in writing and mathematics. This is also the case for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whose standards and achievement in Key Stage 2 have been below, and at times well below, the same groups nationally in recent years. Inspection evidence shows that improvement targets in these pupils' individual education plans are not sharp enough. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress. At Key Stage 1, progress is satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. There are some good features. These include pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning, both of which have been an important focus of improvement for staff. Pupils have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and personal safety. The school's good provision for care, guidance and support has made a significant contribution to these elements of pupils' personal development, for example through the work of the learning and family mentors and staff generally. However, despite the good efforts of the school, levels of attendance have remained stubbornly low since the last inspection and unauthorised absence is too high. The lack of progress academically and the poor attendance of a minority hinder the development of skills that contribute to pupils' future economic well-being.

The quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum is satisfactory. This judgement reflects a balance between the impact of past disruption to teaching, which has led to pupils' underachievement, and the quality of teaching currently evident in most classes, which is predominantly good. However, pupils' learning is not better than satisfactory because of gaps and shortcomings in previous learning, so they are not improving quickly enough. Links between English and other subjects are not developed sufficiently well to promote pupils' literacy skills, especially their writing. However, several initiatives to enrich the curriculum are currently being pursued and are helping to interest and motivate pupils, especially boys, who have been underperforming in the past.

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The headteacher, supported by the senior management team, has led the school effectively through a period of significant change, for example the move to the new building. There have also been barriers to overcome, such as a reduction in staffing, which was necessary to overturn a large, inherited budget deficit. The

headteacher has established a culture of support and teamwork, and the measures that have been put in place indicate satisfactory capacity to improve. So far, however, these measures have not had sufficient impact on standards and achievement, including the wide range of intervention programmes that are implemented to support pupils who are underachieving. The impact of the measures for improvement, including for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, through their individual education plans, is not monitored and evaluated rigorously enough.

Partnerships with others, including schools, parents, agencies and local businesses, are satisfactory and support pupils' personal development and opportunities for learning. Many parents have positive views of the school but some have expressed concern about the disruption to their children's learning caused by staffing difficulties and do not feel their children are making sufficient progress. Inspectors agree with these concerns. Improvement since the last inspection has been inadequate overall, because the key recommendations made at that time, relating to pupils' achievement and attendance, are still to be addressed.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are very well cared for in the Foundation Stage and relationships between staff and the children are excellent. Children gain confidence, with younger ones learning much from older children in the shared areas. They make good progress so that by the start of Year 1 their personal, social and emotional development is broadly in line with expected levels. In communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, most are still working towards the expected learning goals. Early skills of reading, such as linking letters and sounds, are often still well below expected levels.

Effective teamwork is a key strength and teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the good teaching. All areas of learning are covered well in the spacious classrooms, shared areas and outdoor areas. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed by an experienced practitioner. Resources are plentiful and provide children with the full range of learning experiences, including visitors to school. The Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good in Key Stage 2 and raises pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science.
- Provide better opportunities for pupils to practise and develop literacy skills, especially writing, across the curriculum.
- Improve monitoring and evaluation of the impact of individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and intervention strategies for pupils who are underachieving.
- Raise levels of attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and standards, though still well below average, are improving. A significant factor has been the benefits of the new, well-resourced, Foundation Stage provision which has prepared children better for beginning Key Stage 1. However, writing,

particularly that of boys, is slow to develop. Achievement in current Key Stage 2 classes is uneven. It is unsatisfactory overall but better in classes that have not been disrupted by staffing difficulties. Standards in the current Year 6 are well below average. This is better than last year, which was untypical, with around half the pupils having additional needs, including many with social and emotional problems. Nevertheless, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, many of whom are boys, are not progressing as well as they should, especially at Key Stage 2.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Good aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being include the pupils' moral and social development, their attitudes to learning and their behaviour. These aspects have improved in response to the impact of the work of teaching and support staff, including the learning and the family mentors. There have been no exclusions this term, an improvement on last year. Some pupils display challenging behaviour but they are managed well by staff. Most pupils respond well to the system of rewards and sanctions, which includes the use of a quiet room with specialist support to help pupils overcome feelings of frustration and anger. This has a positive impact on the pupils' spiritual development. Pupils are very willing to take on responsibility around school, for example as school councillors, peer mentors, eco-warriors, play leaders and monitors. They contribute well to the local community through charity work and community events. However, the overall level of attendance has remained low since the last inspection. This means that some pupils lose continuity in their learning and this hampers the progress they make.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Strengths of the teaching include positive relationships between staff and pupils, leading to pupils behaving well in lessons and being industrious. Teaching assistants make a good contribution in lessons keeping pupils focused and helping group activities. Where teaching is good, lessons have a brisk pace and teachers have good expectations of what pupils can achieve, but this is inconsistent across classes in Key Stage 2. Pupils are not always expected to respond in question and answer sessions and do not take enough part in lessons. Planning is satisfactory but evaluations of how lessons have gone are not sharp enough to modify further learning for pupils; for example there is not always sufficient challenge for the more able. The marking of pupils' work is improving and now indicates to pupils the next steps for improvement, especially in English. However, pupils are not learning quickly enough to overcome past underachievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements reflecting an improvement since the last inspection, especially in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Provision for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. The curriculum is being developed to promote pupils' interest and to engage boys more. Links are being identified across creative and other subjects, and enrichment through visits and visitors is being given a higher profile and having a more positive impact on pupils' attitudes. The links between English and other subjects are now strong enough to enable pupils to improve their writing skills across the curriculum. There is a

wide range of intervention strategies to help underachievers but little information about how effective they are. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' awareness of and involvement in developing a healthy and fit lifestyle. There is a good range of activities outside lessons, which adds to pupils' personal development and enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All procedures to ensure child protection, the safe recruitment of staff, health, safety and risk assessment are in place. The pastoral care provided for vulnerable pupils and the high level of support for pupils' emotional well-being are strengths. A recent initiative carried out by the family mentor to ease pupils' transfer from Year 6 to the local high school is proving particularly effective in improving the attendance of those identified as being anxious about transition or at risk of exclusion and non-attendance. Pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour benefit from the close relationship they have with the learning mentor, to whom they are confident to turn when they need support. The tracking of pupils' progress is thorough and has developed well with the local authority's advice and support. It is now helping to identify where there are gaps in pupils' learning. However, there are weaknesses in the individual education plans for pupils with additional needs. Targets are not specific enough; pupils' and parents' views are not always recorded; and progress is not evaluated well enough to help pupils to make better progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

There is clear commitment to school improvement and the headteacher has successfully encouraged the involvement of all staff in the process. Continuous professional development of teaching and support staff is a high priority and the impact of it is increasingly evident. For example, teaching assistants have been well trained in leading intervention programmes in literacy and numeracy, although senior staff have not measured the effectiveness of the programmes closely enough. The expertise of staff to use new technology is improving the range of opportunities for pupils' learning. School self-evaluation is based on regular monitoring and the analysis of performance data, and is satisfactory. However, the school's evaluation of its overall effectiveness as satisfactory is too positive. The school has overestimated the achievement of pupils and not taken sufficient account of the inadequate improvement in attendance since the last inspection. The governing body supports the school satisfactorily. Governors have a reasonable overview of provision and standards but are less aware of the level of pupils' underachievement in Key Stage 2 and the impact this has had on standards.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
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	4
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	4

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?	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	4
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?	Yes

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

Inspection of Stockton Wood Primary School, Liverpool, L24 3TF

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you very much for your help when we inspected your school. Now I would like to share with you what we found out about your school.

Your school has not been effective enough in helping you to do as well as you can so it has been given a Notice to Improve. This means that other inspectors will visit in the near future to check on how well it is improving. However, your school has some good aspects, which are as follows.

- The school provides you with good care and a high level of support for your personal and emotional development. As a result, your behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and you take on responsibilities well.
- The new school buildings provide an excellent place for you to learn and for your families and people in the local area to use.
- Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start thanks to lots of good resources and good teaching.

Nevertheless, there are some very important improvements the staff need to make.

- You have not been doing as well as you should in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6. Whilst teaching is mainly good in classes now, we want the staff to continue to improve their teaching so that you all achieve your best.
- It is very important that you all attend school regularly, so we want the staff to get that message over to you and your parents. Pupils who miss school often fall behind in their work, find it very hard to catch up and do not do well in secondary school.
- The teachers need to help you to get better at writing so we want them to plan opportunities for writing in other subjects in addition to English lessons.
- Senior staff need to check how well the programmes of work for those of you who find learning more difficult are helping you to make progress and catch up.

You have an important job to do in all this. You all need to attend school regularly and try your very best in lessons.