

Ranworth Square Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104571
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	324072
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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)	152
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	Mr C Jervis
Headteacher	Mrs E Owen
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Ranworth Square Norris Green Liverpool Merseyside L11 3DQ
Telephone number	0151 226 1740
Fax number	0151 256 5952

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2009
Inspection number	324072

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school, in the main, serves an area of significant social and economic disadvantage. Over half the pupils, three times the national average, are eligible for free school meals. The proportion which has learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average as is the number of pupils who join or leave the school during the school year. The vast majority of pupils are White British. A small number are from minority ethnic groups. A Reception class forms the school's Early Years Foundation Stage provision. The school has National Healthy School status, the Active Mark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. It holds the Investors in People standard.

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, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve.

Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' achievement in English and mathematics, in the quality of teaching and in the rate of pupils' attendance. As a result, the school provides inadequate value for money. There are, however, strengths within the school and signs that things are already improving. Good quality pastoral care is provided, especially for those pupils who experience extreme levels of change in their lives. A further positive feature is the good quality provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school, held in high esteem within the local community, is popular with parents not least because of the attentive care staff provide for their children. A typical parental comment sums up the views of many, 'Staff are there to listen if you have any problems, nothing is too much trouble.'

Standards are significantly below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave in Year 6. Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Most pupils start Year 1 with skills close to those expected for their age. Year-on-year they do not make the progress they should in English and mathematics. This is particularly evident for all boys and the more able girls in some year groups. This is when activities set in lessons are either not understood by pupils or lack sufficient challenge. Another contributing factor is that subject leaders, many new to their role, do not rigorously check that expectations set and the quality of work produced in lessons are appropriate to pupils' learning needs. Although the quality of teaching and learning is inadequate overall, pupils make the best progress at the end of Key Stage 2, where some intensive and well focused teaching is particularly effective.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development, is satisfactory. Most pupils have positive attitudes to work and enjoy many aspects of school. Behaviour is satisfactory. However, the poor behaviour of a minority of pupils, in lessons and around the school, occasionally prevents others learning and enjoying school as much as they could. Pupils are aware of the need to help others and show their concern through supporting charitable work. Attendance is well below average despite the school's efforts to address the persistent absence of some pupils.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It pays close attention through its good personal and health education programme to ensuring pupils know the importance of leading a healthy and safe lifestyle. It is also effective in addressing the complex personal needs of a significant number of pupils and equipping them with skills such as confidence and self-belief. This helps to prepare them for their future lives although the low level of their basic skills is a significantly limiting factor.

The school has faced some difficult challenges in recent years, including long-term staff absences and high numbers of pupils starting and leaving school at different times throughout the year. These have been managed effectively and leadership and management are satisfactory. Some progress has been made since the last inspection, for instance, in improving the attainment of girls in the school's national tests in 2008 and in sustaining the good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, the overall effectiveness of the school has declined. As a result of recent external advice, staff now have a more accurate knowledge of the school's strengths

and weaknesses, an understanding of what they need to do, and a commitment to get things right. Improvements are already evident. Consequently, the capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

In most years, children begin Reception with skills generally well below those expected for their age. The welcoming atmosphere, thorough induction arrangements and strong partnerships with parents ensure that children settle quickly and soon learn the routines. The bright and lively learning environment, interesting activities and warm, caring relationships develop children's curiosity and help them to understand that learning is enjoyable. This very effective provision including teaching of good quality ensures that children make good progress in most areas of their learning. By the end of the Reception Year most children are working close to levels expected for their age particularly in reading and writing. Progress is a little slower, however, in creative development. This is because these activities are less popular with the children. Particular attention is paid to children's speaking, listening and mathematical skills. Daily teaching of letter names and their sounds accelerates children's reading and writing skills effectively. Children develop a good understanding of how to keep healthy and stay safe. All welfare requirements are met. Adults pay close attention to tracking children's small steps in learning and use this information to ensure planned activities build on what children already know and can do. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed to ensure children receive a good start to their education and the needs of all individuals and groups are met.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in English and mathematics throughout the school, particularly for boys of all abilities and the more able girls
- Eradicate inadequate teaching and ensure tasks set in lessons match the learning needs of each pupil and provide sufficient challenge
- Ensure that every teacher is held to account for their pupils' progress and that leaders at all levels drive school improvement more urgently
- Improve pupils' attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Too many pupils do not do as well as they should in English and mathematics during their time in school. Pupils' achievement declines in Years 1 and 2 so that standards are well below average at the end of Key Stage 1. This decline in attainment continues in Years 3 and 4. This is particularly so when teaching is of poor quality and boys and more able girls, for instance, are not challenged or engaged sufficiently well to achieve the levels of which they are capable. By the time they reach Years 5 and 6, pupils have a very great deal of lost ground to make up. The senior management team has made improvements to tackle the causes of underachievement by setting challenging targets to be achieved within each year group. This is starting to make a difference. A focus on extending pupils' writing has begun to raise attainment in writing as seen in the slight improvement in standards attained by girls in Year 6 in 2008 and in the improved quality of writing noted in the work of pupils currently in Years 2, 5 and 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

A focus on developing pupils' social and moral understanding provides a sound basis for improving their academic achievement. However, pupils' spiritual development and their understanding and experiences of other cultures and traditions, whilst satisfactory, are more limited. Pupils say they feel safe in school. If any bullying occurs pupils say it is dealt with quickly. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive and are one of the reasons for the enthusiastic attitudes shown by most pupils. Even so, attendance is well below average. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles which reflects the external awards achieved. Pupils know why they should exercise regularly and eat fruit and vegetables. High numbers of pupils eagerly attend the activities available before and after school. Pupils welcome the opportunities to be involved in decision making in the school. For example, as members of the school council, they have had a hand in deciding on healthy menus for lunchtime.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

In most classes, pupils are keen to learn. However, inadequacies and inconsistencies in teaching and learning dampen this enthusiasm and are the main reason why pupils underachieve. There are some examples of good teaching where lessons are stimulating and challenging and result in brisk learning. In other lessons, teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should do are not high enough and work is not always planned or matched sufficiently well to meet the different abilities within the class. Similarly, until recently, systems to keep a check on how well pupils are doing in their work and what they need to do next to improve have not been used frequently enough or monitored by subject leaders. Support staff provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not deployed sufficiently well to ensure pupils make enough progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is planned well enough to show teachers what pupils need to do from year to year. Several commercial schemes and support programmes provide an adequate framework to develop pupils' skills and knowledge. However, senior leaders do not check that all teachers follow the schemes effectively. Work to improve writing, a school priority, has had insufficient impact on standards because, in the past, progress has not been monitored closely. Provision to enhance pupils' investigation skills in mathematics and science is improving. Helpfully, a strong emphasis is placed on pupils' personal development which is supported effectively through a good programme for personal, social and health education. Visits, visitors and a good range of out of school activities add to pupils' enjoyment and give them good opportunities to develop their sporting, musical and artistic skills. For instance, all pupils benefit from weekly swimming lessons and, in Years 3 to 6, learn to speak Spanish. Such activities extend their physical skills and general confidence and enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of pupils' pastoral care is a strength. Pupils know that staff will help them if they are worried or upset. The learning mentor and the senior leadership team are particularly influential in this aspect. Parents say they welcome this support which helps pupils overcome the considerable barriers many face in terms of their social and emotional needs. Pupils who have specific needs and the more vulnerable are supported sensitively and external agencies consulted where necessary. Children are supported well when they first start school and, despite their low basic skills, pupils in Year 6 feel emotionally ready for the move to secondary school. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet current government requirements. The school works hard to promote the importance of pupils' regular attendance but has not yet raised attendance to national levels. Insufficient attention is placed by teachers on checking pupils' day-to-day progress. Pupils have targets; for example, in writing and mathematics, but these are not challenging or updated regularly. Marking is recently improved and good in some classes in showing pupils what they need to do to improve their work. However, teachers do not always check that pupils respond to the guidance in subsequent work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. With valuable support from external agencies, senior leaders have set the school on the road to recovery, with a firm vision for eliminating underachievement and improving pupils' progress. This focus, shared by staff and governors, has identified the areas of improvement that are necessary to raise standards for all and tackle weaknesses. The revised school improvement plan provides a clear direction for moving forward and reflects the school's status as an Investor in People. The strategies introduced are beginning to raise standards. However, subject leaders are not all sufficiently involved in checking pupils' progress. As a result, pupils and, in particular boys and the more able girls are not achieving their best in English and mathematics. Community cohesion at the local level is strong with good partnerships established which contribute well to pupils' personal development. However national and global links, to strengthen pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural world, are less well developed. Governance is satisfactory. Governors, many who have served the school for a considerable number of years, work cooperatively with the school fulfilling their responsibilities appropriately. They have a clear understanding of the challenges the school faces and of their role in securing improvement.

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
---	----------------

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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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/or disabilities make progress	4

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	3
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 learners' needs?	4
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?	3

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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors when we came to inspect your school. We enjoyed seeing you in lessons and at play, talking about your school with you and your teachers, and looking at your work. Now we want to share with you what we found.

We judge that your school needs a 'notice to improve'. This means that although there are some good things about your school there are some important aspects that need to be improved quickly so that you can learn better. In the future an inspector will come to the school to check how well things are going.

You get off to a good start in the Reception class. All the staff take good care of you. You told us that you are made welcome in the school, feel safe and enjoy lessons. You especially like the activities that the school provides at the beginning and the end of the day. You know about the importance of eating and drinking healthily and you play and work happily with each other. Many of you help with the running of the school, for example, by serving on the school council or looking after younger children at lunch time.

We have asked your headteacher and other staff to help you make the progress you are capable of in English and mathematics, in particular for boys and for the girls who learn quickly. We have also asked the teachers to make sure that you understand what it is you are to learn and always challenge you to do your best. We have asked the people who manage the subjects you study to look more closely at how well you are learning, so that they know quickly how to improve things for you.

There are lots of things you can do to help including working hard and always doing your best. Your families can help too by encouraging you to attend school every day so that you do not miss out on your learning.