

# Booker Avenue Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104522
<b>Local Authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	336327
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eileen Mulgrew HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	341
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Rafferty
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr J McCausland
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Booker Avenue Liverpool Merseyside L18 9SB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and held meetings with the chair and vice chair of governors, all teaching staff and several groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including: the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress, teachers' planning and assessments, information on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, information on safeguarding, 76 parent questionnaires, 27 staff questionnaires and 31 pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' current attainment, especially in mathematics and science; and the quality of learning and progress throughout the school
- the evaluation of the quality and impact of the monitoring of teaching and learning to determine whether it has improved from the last inspection
- whether pupils' outcomes are positive, particularly in behaviour, in taking responsibility for their own learning ; in taking wider responsibility and in their involvement in decision making
- the effectiveness of the curriculum in meeting the needs of all pupils
- the effectiveness of governors in providing challenge and support; and whether they fulfil their statutory responsibilities.

## Information about the school

The pupils who attend this much larger than average-sized junior school come from a wide range of backgrounds. The vast majority are White British. The percentage with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average, although the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is much lower. There is a small number of looked after pupils. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meal is much lower than the average.

The childcare provision on site is subject to a separate inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**4**

## Main findings

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 the school's capacity for sustained improvement, the use of assessment to support learning and the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures.

Booker Primary School has a number of positive features and pupils' receive a satisfactory education. However, there has been insufficient progress in tackling the issues identified at the previous inspection and some aspects of the school's work are now less effective than at the time of the last inspection. This includes the achievement of pupils, the quality of teaching and the quality of the curriculum. This decline has occurred because leaders and managers have too positive a picture of the school's performance and have lacked the urgency to drive attainment higher and increase the rates of progress for all pupils. The quality of teaching has moved from good, at the time of the last inspection, to satisfactory. This track record indicates that there is insufficient capacity for sustained improvement. The collection of information on pupils' progress is too infrequent to enable senior leaders to make a robust evaluation of the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. The system does not give teachers a precise measure of pupils' attainment on which to base progress over the year. As a result, although pupils continue to reach above average academic standards, the progress they make over their time at the school is satisfactory. There are concerns, beyond the administrative, regarding the safeguarding procedures used in school.

The pupils were polite and welcoming, for example when an inspector thanked a girl for holding the door open she cheerily replied 'You're welcome'. Pupils are articulate and are happy to talk to visitors. There are good relationships between staff and pupils. They are eager to learn and enjoy coming to school and meeting their friends. Pupils have a good understanding of the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle. This is promoted through the school's curriculum and the many out-of-class sporting activities which develop pupils' keenness for physical activity and important life skills. The role of the school council is starting to develop. Council members are aware of the importance of their role and their potential influence on school improvement. The creation of a quiet area on the playground was developed from an idea by the councillors.

Senior leaders and governors have responded to concerns regarding the drop in the performance of science and mathematics in 2007 and 2008. While these subjects recovered in 2009, the performance in English then dropped significantly. Leaders and

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managers are unsure of the reasons for this. Identified priorities in the school development plan are linked to provision but do not clearly identify the required improvement in pupils' outcomes.

Staff are very caring of their pupils and when necessary work effectively with external agencies to secure support for more vulnerable pupils. Governors take seriously their responsibility in ensuring the effective health and safety of pupils and staff. Much time and money have been invested to minimise the risk associated with the school site. Despite this, the governing body has been ineffective in meeting the requirements with regard to safeguarding and in holding the school to account for its performance.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring senior leaders recognise the urgency required in raising the performance of the school
  - equipping leaders and managers at all levels with the skills necessary to evaluate performance information and use it to develop plans for improvement which link directly to the required improved outcomes for all groups of pupils
  - ensuring that statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding.
- Raise the quality of teaching to good or better by:
  - adapting teaching plans to more closely meet the needs of the individual abilities of pupils
  - providing further training for all staff to enable them to develop a wider variety of teaching styles and an understanding of the effective use of assessment
  - increasing the pace of lessons by decreasing the amount of time pupils sit listening to the teacher thus allowing pupils more time to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Ensure that pupils make much better progress and attain higher standards by:
  - standardising the current system for checking pupils' progress so that targets for individuals, groups and the whole school are sufficiently challenging.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

The quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils enjoy learning especially when it is active and fun. In a science lesson one boy commented 'I enjoy it when we do an investigation; that's real science'. Pupils concentrate and persevere even when the task lacks challenge. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and one stated 'We would like to do more work ourselves'. When activities excite them and they have an opportunity to work independently they apply themselves well and there is a tangible buzz in the classroom; for example, in a Year 6 lesson when pupils worked in pairs to discuss questions for a ghost writing an autobiography. However, pupils are not as excited when presented with photocopied worksheets. In these lessons opportunities for

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pupils to extend their understanding by suggesting methods of working out a problem and recording the solution in their own way were restricted. Through a limited use of targets, pupils are unsure as to how they can improve their work and check their own progress. A few pupils commented within the questionnaire that they did not know how well they were doing. As pupils are grouped according to ability most pupils in each set receive the same work, but there is scope to differentiate the work to more precisely meet pupils' personal needs. Pupils with special educational needs/and or disabilities have work which is more closely matched to their needs and this, combined with working in small groups and receiving additional support, means they achieve well. The majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress in English and mathematics across the school.

Pupils' attendance is above average. Behaviour in class and moving around school is good. During a fire drill pupils were sensible and lined up in the evacuation area quickly and without fuss. Behaviour is satisfactory when pupils attend assembly. Pupils have a good understanding of the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle and are aware of the dangers associated with the road, railways, water and the misuse of drugs. Most pupils say they feel safe in school and confident in going to an adult with any worries, although concerns about bullying and racist incidents were voiced by a small group of pupils. However, pupils did feel that most incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively. Some pupils take on the role of monitor in the classroom but other roles of responsibility are not offered to the pupils and so they have limited chances to contribute to the school community. Some activities have included the local community, for example a walk to raise funds for charity but more could be done to establish constructive links with the wider community. Although the curriculum provides adequate opportunities for pupils to learn about different ethnic, faith and socio-economic groups there is a need for pupils to gain a greater understanding of these groups within the local, national and worldwide contexts.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>3</b>
	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Although pupils make satisfactory progress, teaching is not good enough to further raise attainment and accelerate progress. This is because teachers use a limited range of teaching styles and do not use up-to-date skills and strategies to check learning throughout the lesson. During the inspection a range of satisfactory to outstanding teaching was seen; with the vast majority judged satisfactory. Effective teaching was characterised by active, challenging activities, based on an accurate assessment of pupils' prior learning, excellent pace and very good use of resources to enable the teacher to check pupils' understanding throughout the lesson. This was evident in a Year 4 numeracy lesson on angles where pupils were exceptionally keen to show their solution and explain their thinking. In less effective lessons pace is slowed by teachers spending too much time talking to pupils which restricts the time pupils have to take responsibility for their learning. Pupils are organised into ability groups for English, mathematics and science, and teachers receive assessment information for the pupils in their group. Teaching plans are based on the ability of the group but are not further refined to ensure each activity is honed to the individual pupil's need. Marking is regular and affirms the pupils' efforts. Although a minority of teachers give clear advice on how pupils can improve their work and set appropriate targets, this is inconsistent throughout the school. Teaching assistants are committed to supporting groups and individual pupils, which contributes to the positive achievement of pupils with special educational or emotional needs. However, teaching assistants are not always directed effectively.

The curriculum is adequately planned and gives pupils opportunities to develop their basic skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. The provision for personal, social and health education successfully contributes to pupils' good knowledge and understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities such as running, dance and judo are very well attended and appreciated by the majority of pupils. Many pupils are involved in musical activity which ranges from individual instrumental lessons to membership of the school choir. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the annual residential trips.

Staff know the pupils well, are very caring and form good relationships with them.

Vulnerable pupils receive good support. Arrangements for pupils joining the school are

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effective, enabling them to quickly settle into the routines of a new school. Likewise opportunities for pupils to become familiar with the high school ensure they feel comfortable about the move. Most parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaires believe the school keeps the pupils safe and systems such as 'text2messages', where the school sends text messages to parents' mobile telephones, and first day absence telephone calls reassure parents. However, the school does not fully meet the requirements for safeguarding and this is the reason care, guidance and support are judged inadequate.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>4</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Significant weaknesses in leadership and management have prevented the school from making improvements since the last inspection. Leaders and managers lack a sense of drive and urgency to promote higher standards and better achievement. Systems for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's work are insufficiently robust to secure further improvement. Senior leaders have too positive a picture about the performance of the school including the quality of teaching and assessment. Too little responsibility has been delegated to senior leaders, and as a result, they have not developed the necessary skills to lead major aspects of the school's work and are underused. Similarly, middle leaders are limited in the skills needed to lead their subjects in the school. Lessons are observed, but the judgements tend to be too generous. As a result there has been insufficient challenge and staff have not received enough guidance and training for them to raise the quality of their classroom practice. The school has some information about pupils' academic progress but this is used ineffectively to set and reach challenging targets, or to enable teachers to systematically plot the progress pupils make throughout their time at the school. However, the school's commitment to the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the successful focus on recovering the performance of higher ability pupils in science demonstrates that the school promotes satisfactory equality of opportunity. The links with the infant school ensure a smooth transfer into the school and parents appreciate this. Links with a local high school led to a teacher of science visiting the school to deliver lessons in investigative science, which contributed to the rise in pupils' performance at the higher levels in this subject. The school has developed a policy for community cohesion and is generally a cohesive community. Governors have not fulfilled their statutory responsibilities to ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.



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The school provides satisfactory value for money because the outcomes for the pupils are satisfactory.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents who returned the questionnaire are happy with their child's experiences at the school. Their view is that their children enjoy school and are well cared for. A few parents were concerned about the accessibility of the site.

Inspectors investigated this concern and agreed with the parents; the school took swift action to remedy the situation. Almost all feel that a healthy lifestyle is very well promoted. A small minority have concerns about the lack of information they receive about their child's progress, how well the school helps them to support their child's learning, the effectiveness of the school in dealing with unacceptable behaviour and how the school prepares their children for the future. These concerns formed an aspect of the inspectors' investigation. While agreeing with some of the parents' and carers' views, inspectors found other aspects of the school's work are weaker than the parents judge them to be.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Booker Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 76 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 341 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	96	66	46	32	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	93	64	51	35	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	64	44	66	46	10	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	71	49	61	42	6	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	84	58	57	39	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	57	39	74	51	11	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	85	59	58	40	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	69	48	62	43	5	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	68	47	69	48	5	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	62	43	68	47	6	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	35	78	54	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	88	57	57	39	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	90	62	50	34	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



01 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Booker Junior School, Liverpool, L18 9SB

On behalf of the team I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us during the inspection of your school. You were very polite and told us many things about the school including some things you would like changed. For example Year 6 pupils would like to write with pens and you would like to do more work for yourselves. All your views were very helpful.

The reason for our visit was to decide how good an education you receive. We judged that overall it could be better. As a result, the school has been given a notice to improve. This means that over the next year or so it will have some help to see that some aspects improve and other inspectors will visit to see if all of you are doing as well as you should. Many of the good things about the school are about your attitudes:

- you like school and that is reflected in your good attendance
- you behave well in class and have good attitudes to your work
- you are sensible in what you eat and you take full advantage of all the activities to keep you fit.

However, there are some important things the school needs to improve. We have asked your headteacher and the governors of the school to:

- improve the quality of leadership and management so the school can make faster progress.
- raise the quality of teaching to good or better so that you all have every chance to work at the right level for you and experience exciting activities which make you think for yourself.
- ensure that you know your targets and know how to improve your work so that you make much better progress and attain higher standards
- improve safeguarding arrangements so you will all feel safer in and around school.

I am confident you will do all you can to help your teachers.

With best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Eileen M Mulgrew

Her Majesty's Inspector

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