

Livingstone Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106210
Local Authority	Tameside
Inspection number	336635
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Hemmings

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 of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Steward
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Zrada
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2006
School address	Valeside Mossley Ashton-Under-Lyne OL5 0AP
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited 14 lessons or parts of lessons. Inspectors observed seven teachers and held discussions with governors, staff, groups of pupils and the School Improvement Partner. They observed the school's work and looked at school policies, records of meetings, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, 73 questionnaires from parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- how effectively the school has worked to improve pupils' writing skills
- the extent to which links between subjects have been established
- the consistency of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the involvement of governors in promoting the school's improvement.

Information about the school

This primary school is smaller than average size. It has achieved Healthy Schools status. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of educational needs, is below average. Most pupils are White British.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. The headteacher leads by example and provides focused educational direction. All staff share her vision for improvement and there is a firm commitment to improving pupils' progress and raising standards. Senior leaders accurately monitor the progress of pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. Observations of lessons identify areas for improvement but leaders do not always rigorously check if these have been successfully acted upon by teachers. Governors support the school well but are not fully involved in planning for long-term improvement or in holding the school to account for its performance. Accurate self-evaluation enables priority areas for development to be identified. Action is then taken to bring about improvement, as is evident in the way attendance has been recently improved by leaders working closely with parents and carers, pupils and outside agencies. Management systems run smoothly and the capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

Pupils make satisfactory progress and, by the end of Year 6, attain average standards in English, mathematics and science. This represents satisfactory achievement from their starting points on entering school, which are broadly typical for their age. In recent years leaders have worked to improve pupils' writing, including providing training to develop staff's expertise and making guided writing sessions more focused. This has proved successful in improving pupils' ability to construct sentences accurately, with correct punctuation and interesting vocabulary. Nonetheless, the school rightly acknowledges there is more to do, particularly in terms of improving pupils' spelling skills and in providing further opportunities for pupils to write in a variety of styles across the curriculum. The school is exploring ways of better developing pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics.

The school is a friendly and caring place in which to learn. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. Their progress is no better than satisfactory as not all teachers consistently set challenging work that matches the abilities of different groups of pupils. This also leads to inconsistency in teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The involvement of pupils in evaluating how well they are doing and how they might improve is at an early stage of development. Curricular planning builds systematically upon previous learning. It does not sufficiently indicate how links between subjects can be made in order to provide further interest and increase opportunities to apply skills. Parents and carers appreciate the commitment of staff to ensuring the safety and well-being of their children while the children are in the staff's care.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise standards, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - developing stronger links between subjects
 - improving pupils' spelling skills and providing further opportunities to write in a variety of styles across the curriculum
 - improving pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that all teachers consistently set challenging work that matches the abilities of different groups of pupils
 - fully involving pupils in assessing for themselves how they could improve
 - improving the consistency of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - rigorously checking that areas for improvement identified in lesson observations have been successfully acted upon by teachers
 - developing governors' skills in planning for the school's improvement and in holding the school to account for its performance.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils work steadily and concentrate for long periods. They are interested in their work and willing to listen to and appreciate the views of others. Pupils enjoy books, and improvement in the teaching of reading over the last year means they have good reading skills. Their spelling skills and ability to use a variety of styles, including poetry, instructional and narrative writing, to express their ideas and feelings across the curriculum, are less well developed. Pupils are not always confident in applying their mathematical calculation skills to solve real-life number problems. They capably use information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects. There is no significant difference in the achievement nor in the quality of learning of different groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as other pupils, because of the extra support they receive. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to reach average levels of attainment in the national tests, as in previous years.

Pupils are polite and show respect for different people's feelings and values. They willingly take on responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council. They make a good contribution to the local community, including taking part in local arts projects and working with Friends of Mossley Park to improve the facilities there. Pupils' understanding of cultures in other countries is enhanced by work in geography and studies involving their partner school in Kenya. Nonetheless, there are limited

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opportunities to engage with pupils from different backgrounds beyond Mossley. Pupils know the need to eat a balanced diet and take regular exercise in order to stay healthy. They say they feel safe and secure in school. They are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of education and for their future lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan their lessons carefully to build on previous work. This enables pupils to use what they already know and understand to support their current learning. Good management in classrooms means pupils are usually engaged in their work and little time is lost. Not all teachers consistently set challenging work that matches the abilities of different groups of pupils. Pupils are informed about their progress and how to improve, through marking and by talking to adults. They are not fully involved in assessing their own progress and acting accordingly. Staff make good use of a variety of resources, including new technology, to support learning. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support all pupils, in particular those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

¹ 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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Extra-curricular activities, visits to places of educational interest and opportunities to work with a variety of visitors effectively extend pupils' skills. Good links with the local high school promote older pupils' learning, particularly in mathematics. Planning does not sufficiently emphasise how skills developed in one subject can be used to support learning in others. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their literacy skills by writing purposefully in different styles across the curriculum. The programme for personal development, including a residential stay at an outdoor centre, contributes well to pupils' good progress in this aspect of their learning, as is evident in the school achieving Healthy Schools status.

The school provides a safe learning environment. Staff know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about the well-being of a pupil. Clearly targeted support for pupils whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable plays an important role in promoting their learning and development. Transition arrangements are good throughout the school and onto secondary school and contribute well to pupils' development. Action taken by leaders over the last few months has improved pupils' attendance and their punctuality. Established links with outside agencies ensure that extra support for individual pupils is available when required.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders establish ambition and drive improvement by making sure the school concentrates on priorities. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly but leaders do not always ensure that identified areas for improvement have been acted upon by teachers. The governing body is supportive of the school but not fully involved in influencing its strategic development. The school promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination well. It has relevant information about different groups of pupils and carefully checks their performance and their contribution to school life. All safeguarding requirements are met and arrangements are regularly reviewed.

Governors and staff have a good awareness of safeguarding issues and they receive regular training, particularly in child protection. Leaders effectively promote community cohesion within the school. Pupils from different backgrounds get on well with each other and enjoy opportunities to learn about communities in other countries, for example Kenya. Leaders are now working to improve community cohesion overall by developing better links at a national level. The school has a good relationship with

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parents and carers, keeping them well informed about their children's achievement and well-being.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Reception and Nursery classes adults work well as a team and plan activities that are practical and often linked to children's personal experiences. As a result, children are engaged in activities, both indoors and outdoors, that encourage them to investigate and explore for themselves. This contributes well to their development as independent learners. Children play happily together, willingly sharing resources and taking turns fairly. Nonetheless, their achievement and progress are not better than satisfactory because of inconsistencies in teaching and learning between the classes. In Reception the planning does not consistently ensure that children of different abilities are provided with sufficiently challenging work. Questioning is not always used effectively to encourage children to answer in full sentences and so develop their speaking skills.

In both classes the curriculum is enhanced by an interesting range of enrichment activities, such as seasonal walks around the school environment and visits to shops and a café in Mossley. The outdoor area provides a stimulating setting in which to learn and play. It is used well to promote children's development across the areas of learning throughout the day. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses and is working closely with the local authority to enhance overall provision. Children are cared for well in this calm and happy setting. Parents and carers say that staff are approachable and keep them informed of their children's progress.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Just over a half of parents and carers completed questionnaires. The overwhelming majority of responses were positive about the school's work and the efforts of all staff. Two comments were typical of many: 'The school has a caring ethos. Children and parents are listened to and their views are taken into account,' and: 'Livingstone has always integrated children with different needs. It's a very happy and safe place.' A very few parents and carers did not agree that their children were making enough progress or that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspection evidence does not support these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Livingstone Primary 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 13 statements about the school. The inspector received 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 143 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	68	23	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	81	13	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	57	79	15	21	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	58	26	36	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	52	72	19	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	71	21	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	65	23	32	0	0	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)	40	56	27	38	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	61	27	38	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	65	24	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	63	25	35	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	61	27	38	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	68	23	32	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



30 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Livingstone Primary School, Mossley, OL5 0AP

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing the many interesting things you do.

The inspectors judge that:

- you enjoy coming to school and your attendance is improving
- the headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to help you do even better
- you behave well and enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council
- adults look after you well and make sure you are safe
- your school helps you to be healthy and adults explain how to improve your work – you say this in your questionnaires and the inspectors agree.

What we have asked your school to do now is to:

- develop closer links between subjects and improve your spelling and writing skills and your ability to solve mathematical problems
- ensure that you are always given work that makes you think hard and that you are fully involved in deciding what you need to do next to improve
- check whether identified areas for improvement in teaching are being successfully achieved and help governors to promote the school's improvement better.

You can help the school to improve further by continuing to attend regularly and trying your best in all your activities.

Yours sincerely

Melvyn Hemmings

Lead inspector

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