

# Blueberry Park

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133691
<b>Local Authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	344694
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen Isherwood HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	260
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Barbara Murray
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Ngenda
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Ackers Hall Avenue Liverpool Merseyside L14 2DY
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## Introduction

When Blueberry Park was last inspected in June 2008, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors subsequently visited the school on four occasions to monitor its progress. This inspection was carried out by this inspector, two additional inspectors and one other of Her Majesty's Inspector. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed 10 teachers. The inspectors held meetings with a member of the interim executive board, staff, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence including: the school improvement plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, monitoring reports and the work pupils were doing in their books.

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

- the current progress of pupils from their starting points
- the quality of pupils' learning and engagement in lessons
- whether teaching is consistent enough to improve outcomes for pupils further
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in raising standards
- the capacity of the school to sustain improvement.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average school. A higher proportion of pupils than normal are entitled to a free school meal. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a small number from minority ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Nursery classes and one Reception group. The school has gained a number of awards including the Healthy School Award, the physical education Activemark, the International School Award (first stage) and has recently achieved Beacon Status for Enterprise Learning.

**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**

**2**

### Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Blueberry Park is a rapidly improving school and according to many, is unrecognisable from what it was like when its effectiveness was judged to be inadequate at the previous inspection. It now provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. Under a new headteacher, much has been achieved to turn things around since the school became subject to special measures in June 2008. The challenges faced were formidable. The inadequacies identified in the previous report were deep-rooted. Nevertheless, improvement is now evident in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are now making good progress and attainment is now rising across the school. More pupils are reaching the levels expected of them. The quality of teaching and learning has significantly improved. This is because the school is driven forward by good leadership and management and the outstanding leadership of the headteacher who has masterminded a remarkable recovery in the school's fortunes over the last two years. The impact of her high quality work lies behind all aspects of the school's improvement.

Although attainment at the end of Year 6 is low, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving. Current school assessments show improvements since 2009 in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. There is an upward trend in performance, although senior leaders are well aware that work is still required to raise attainment and improve pupils' achievement further.

A significant factor in this improvement is that teaching is good overall and contributes well to pupils' learning and their progress. Pupils' skills as independent learners have been developed well. Increasing numbers of pupils are engaged in their work and are active in their learning. The good practice within the school is being dispersed but needs to go further so that all teaching is at least good in all year groups.

Teachers' planning of work across the curriculum is achieving a stronger balance between the abilities of the pupils and the work they do in English and mathematics, but not consistently so in foundation subjects, such as history and in topic work. Similarly, teachers' marking of pupils' work is much more helpful to pupils in literacy and numeracy than it is in other subjects. In addition, at present there are insufficient opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to make links between activities, or to practise and hone their skills in a range of subjects.

Attendance, although below average, is improving because the school has worked effectively to reduce persistent absence and improve punctuality. However, senior

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leaders are correct in recognising that improving attendance further by working with parents and carers and pupils remains a key priority for the school.

The school has made good progress since its previous inspection. As a result, and along with its other strengths, including the rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and accurate self-evaluation, its capacity to improve further is good.

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

- Raise attainment and improve pupils' achievement further, by:
  - ensuring that work in foundation subjects matches pupils' learning needs and that marking enables pupils to improve their work
  - ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in other subjects
  - improving curricular planning for foundation subjects so that pupils can make links between different subjects
  - making teaching at least good throughout the school by sharing the school's good practice more widely.
- Improve attendance further, by:
  - working with parents and carers to promote a shared understanding of the importance of regular attendance
  - developing closer links with the Children's Centre
  - extending the breakfast club.
- 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 behave well in lessons, are eager to learn and apply themselves well. Their enjoyment of learning has risen as the school has improved and can be seen in the way in which they persevere and answer questions in class. Increasingly, pupils are more engaged in their work. They particularly enjoy activities which fire their enthusiasm for learning, such as making their own decisions, directing their own activities and discussing and sharing their ideas with others. For example, pupils in Year 3 and 4 made great strides in their understanding of how to tell a story about a shipwreck using pictures and artefacts. With excellent prompting from the class teacher, one child impressively came up with the sentence, 'bravely, I crept into a rusty, dilapidated ship'. Pupils' current work as well as the test results for 2009, together with the school's own data, shows that while their attainment remains low, pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as they move through the school to Year 6. Increasing numbers of pupils are working at age related expectations and standards are beginning to rise. A notable success is that in reading, writing and

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mathematics, pupils in Year 6 have made better than expected levels of progress in just two terms. This reflects the improving impact of the school's work at intervention and significant improvements to the way in which pupils are taught.

Pupils enjoy taking part in school life and feel safe. The school council is increasingly influential and takes its role in suggesting improvements very seriously. Pupils are confident that staff will listen to their concerns and that any problems will be swiftly resolved. They have a good understanding of how to protect themselves. 'We don't talk to people we don't know,' said one child. Pupils have a good awareness of leading a healthy lifestyle. Their readiness to wash their hands, eat fruit and take part in physical activities shows a developing understanding of good hygiene, diet and exercise. The well-attended breakfast club gives pupils a good start to the day with a range of healthy eating options. Gaining the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards confirms the school's strong commitment to pupils' health and well-being.

Despite the school's best efforts, pupils' attendance, while improving, is proving difficult to shift. This is because the level of persistent absence is too high.

A strong focus on preparing pupils for their future life is promoted through an impressive range of initiatives that reflect the school's beacon status for Enterprise Learning. These include Year 6 interview panels, financial and literacy workshops and an 'Aspirations Week' where pupils were given the chance to learn from visiting professionals, such as a dressmaker, an accountant and an oceanographer. However, because pupils' attendance is still below the level of other schools, the development of pupils' skills for the next steps in their education is judged as satisfactory.

Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is shown in the respect that pupils have for each other and to others from different ethnic groups in the school council 'Diversity Art Project' and through global links with a school in Uganda.

*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>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</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>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>2</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>
	<b>4</b>
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching has a good impact on pupils' learning in lessons and on their progress over time. Over 70% of lessons observed were of good quality and none was less than satisfactory. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Very good relationships exist between adults and pupils which provides a sound basis for learning. All staff use praise well to celebrate pupils' achievements. Teaching assistants provide an effective layer of extra support, particularly for those that find learning difficult. Where teaching is strongest, pupils are encouraged to make the learning their own with carefully crafted activities that promote high levels of discussion and active learning. In these lessons, teachers extend opportunities for pupils to be inquisitive with interactive displays of work which draw the eye and stimulate pupils' thinking. The beginnings and endings of lessons are used effectively to set out what pupils will learn and to gauge how successfully pupils have progressed. Where teaching is less strong, the pace of learning slows, because teachers are less confident in applying the school's learning strategies. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to be active and engaged in their work. Senior leaders are well aware that the next challenge is to make teaching at least good by spreading the existing good practice more widely. For example, in encouraging learners to check on each others' work.

Teachers have a much improved understanding of what each child can do and what they need to learn next, based on accurate assessment and good use of tracking information. Teachers' guidance to pupils through marking in English, mathematics and science is consistently helpful. There are some very good examples where pupils are given clear advice on how to improve their work and reach the next level. However, this effective practice does not extend to foundation subjects, such as history and in topic work. In these books, work is not always planned effectively for pupils of different abilities and comments from staff do not consistently help pupils to improve their work. The curriculum is improving and is increasingly matched to pupils' needs. Good enrichment opportunities are provided through themed weeks and a range of visits and visitors to school. Careful attention is given to the development of key skills in literacy, numeracy and to a lesser extent in information and communication technology. For example, writing skills are increasingly supported in several areas of the curriculum, but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and use these skills in other subjects. In addition, the planning of work in foundation subjects lacks precision and

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does not consistently make links between subjects.

Pupils, including those most vulnerable are well cared for and supported by staff. Careful attention is given to the personal and emotional needs of each individual child. There are effective procedures for introducing children to school and for ensuring pupils smooth transition to secondary school.

The school's extensive procedures for promoting better attendance are working. Attendance is improving; rafts of interventions are beginning to pay dividends. However, senior leaders recognise there is still more to be done on this with parents and carers and pupils.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<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>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Central to the school's impressive recovery on its journey out of special measures are good leadership and management, spearheaded by the outstanding leadership of the headteacher. Since her appointment, her drive, ambition and clear direction have been pivotal in bringing about the school's sustained improvement and ensuring that pupils are making better progress than before. With the good support of colleagues, including governors, she has breathed new life into the school and much has been accomplished in tackling the substantial weaknesses in teaching identified at the previous inspection. The bar has been raised, teamwork is strong and there is clear agreement on where further improvements are required. Effective action is being taken to accelerate the progress of pupils further. As a consequence, the school's commitment to equality of opportunity is strong and the school is effective in improving pupils' life chances and in tackling discrimination. The school's work on promoting pupils' understanding of diversity demonstrates its good contribution to community cohesion. Opportunities that develop pupils' awareness of other faiths and cultures in their own community and further afield are carefully planned and sensitively taught across the curriculum. The links with other schools in different contexts, lessons on cultural identity and the wider community, and through shared activities with the 'Dovecot Diverse Community' group all contribute to this.

The school meets all statutory requirements to ensure that pupils are safe and cared for properly. Appropriate systems are in place to check on the suitability of employees to work with children and staff are vigilant in identifying and responding to any potential dangers that pupils may encounter.



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Members of the interim executive board play an effective role in shaping the school's direction and in holding it to account. They are well-informed about the school's performance and are involved in evaluating how well pupils are achieving and in monitoring their progress in lessons and in their books. The school is working effectively to establish a new governing body with similar skills to take over the governance of the school in the coming months ahead.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Following the last inspection, all aspects of planning and provision have been thoroughly reviewed and significant improvements made. Children are now making good progress, particularly in their personal and social development from very low starting points. By the time they reach Year 1, the majority of learners are approaching the levels expected of them and have come on in leaps and bounds. This is because of the warm, nurturing environment that prevails coupled with a good range of activities that are well targeted on key learning goals that match well with children's stages of development. As a result, there is a purposeful buzz to learning and children are keen to take an active role and show independence. For example, in one session children made good progress in their creative skills by modelling shapes from play-dough. In contrast, children improved their language and communication skills by answering questions about the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Elsewhere, outdoors, children had great fun in planting carrots and potatoes and in writing their own labels.

There is a good balance between child-chosen and adult-led activities. Good use of the outdoor learning environment mirrors the learning inside. Staff are skilled at developing

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children's confidence and extending their language as they work alongside, although on occasions adults could extend children's thinking further by allowing more time to encourage children's own responses to questions, rather than supplying them with the answers.

No stone is left unturned to ensure that all children, including those most vulnerable are well cared for and supported. Staff continually assess how well children are achieving and use this information to plan further challenges. Parents and carers are increasingly involved in their children's learning and are kept well informed. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. There is a good understanding of the strengths in provision and where further improvements can be made.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so. Nevertheless, the school's most recent evaluations of parental opinion from their own questionnaires show that parents and carers are increasingly supportive of the school and have recognised the recent improvements in provision and in the leadership of the school. Inspectors agree with this view. The school now works effectively to keep parents and carers informed and partnership working between home and school is a developing strength.

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

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

## 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.**



12 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Blueberry Park Primary School, Liverpool, L14 2DY

Thank you very much for the friendly way in which you helped the inspectors and myself when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed chatting to you in the playground, in your classrooms and in the pupils' interviews. We learnt a great deal about your school. You expressed your views very clearly and they were very helpful to us. As I told some of you I would, I am writing to say what we found out. Firstly and most importantly, we have decided that your school no longer requires special measures. We are pleased to tell you that your school has improved well and is now giving you a satisfactory and improving education. This is because your teachers have worked very hard to make sure that you make better progress than before and that your lessons are much better than they used to be. We were delighted to see how well you behave and how you help one another in class and around the school.

I know that better can always be better and we have put forward some ideas that will help your teachers to carry on improving the school. We have asked that you continue to make good progress in your work and that more of your lessons are like the very best ones we saw. In these lessons, you were very involved in making decisions about how you learn and were able to investigate things for yourselves. We have also asked that when your teachers plan your history and topic work they make sure that you can make links with other subjects and have plenty of opportunities to practise your skills in lots of different ways. This will help your teachers to make sure that your work is neither too easy nor too hard. In addition, we have suggested that when your teachers mark your history and topic books, they give you better advice on how to improve your work.

Finally, we have asked the school to work with you and your parents to improve your attendance still further. This is because your attendance is still below the level of other schools.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by doing your best to attend school more regularly. Thank you once again for helping. We can see why your teachers love working with you every day.

Yours sincerely

Steve Isherwood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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