

# Linaker Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104864
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	355645
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Colin Smith

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	464
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr M Fearn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Colin Coleman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Sefton Street Southport Merseyside PR8 5DB
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<b>Email address</b>	office@linakermail.co.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons, involving 16 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books; the school's assessments, planning and policies, including safeguarding; and examined 148 parents' and carers' questionnaires and questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

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

- The quality of pupils' learning and progress, particularly in writing in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- The extent to which the curriculum meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and English as an additional language.
- The quality of teachers' use of assessment data in providing challenging and well-matched activities for all pupils.
- The effectiveness of the schools' monitoring systems in establishing accurate self-evaluation and identifying and remedying areas for improvement.
- Children's attainment on entering school and their progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than average in size for a school of this type. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Some of these pupils are attached to a learning resource unit based in the school. Although the very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, the proportion of pupils with minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. A small number of these pupils are from Bangladeshi, mixed or other backgrounds but the majority are children from Eastern European families, many of whom join the school speaking little or no English. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made for children aged three to five years in the Nursery and two Reception classes. The school has gained the Healthy Schools, Activemark, Eco-Schools and International School awards and achieved Investors in People status. The governing body manages a breakfast and after-school club and early years childcare which runs from within the children's centre. This provision was evaluated as part of the inspection. The adjoining children's centre 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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Linaker Primary School and Children's Centre is a good school. Pupils' learning in lessons and their progress over time are good as a result of good teaching. The childcare provision offers good-quality care and education. Care, guidance and support and safeguarding procedures have been systematically built up to outstanding levels over recent years and are beginning to have a notable impact on outcomes such as pupils' behaviour, attendance and community awareness, which are all improving.

Pupils' learning in lessons and their progress over time are good. Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6, though many of these pupils started school with low attainment. Attainment has consistently improved across the school over recent years, apart from writing in Key Stage 1, which remains weak. Pupil's rates of progress have also increased over recent years, particularly in English and science in Key Stage 2 and mathematics in Key Stage 1. However, a minority of junior pupils have gaps in their mathematical skills, which adversely affects their progress in lessons.

Teaching is good, and underpinned by effective use of assessment data to provide activities that are usually well matched to pupils' different learning needs. Increasingly good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make a good start. The good curriculum provided for older pupils enables them to build securely on earlier learning and enjoy their time in school. The quality of childcare provided by the school before and after school is outstanding.

Strong drive and clear vision characterise the leaders and managers of the school. Some aspects of leadership and management are outstanding, such as developing partnerships, involving parents and carers and promoting community cohesion. Although much of the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is rigorous, the views of all pupils are not taken into account sufficiently in strategic planning. The school has remedied the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and built on its strengths. The school's self-evaluation is well-informed and accurate. These factors ensure that the school has a good capacity to improve.

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

- By July 2011 improve attainment in writing in Key Stage 1 by:
  - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - increasing the focus on writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
  - adjusting the curriculum to make for smooth transition into Year 1.
- By July 2011 improve progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:

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- sharpening pupils' mental mathematics
- strengthening their calculation skills
- encouraging them to discuss and explain to increase their understanding.
- By July 2011 devise effective systems to gather, understand and take into account the views of all pupils in strategic planning.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils' achievement, enjoyment and learning in lessons are good overall. Pupils listen attentively, answer questions eagerly and derive satisfaction from applying their skills, for example to calculate shopping bills in Year 2 and writing imaginatively in Year 4. Pupils respond well to challenges such as proving mathematical rules in Year 6. However, learning slows when younger infant pupils are asked to write formally before their skills and confidence have been established. Although older junior pupils are enthusiastic learners, progress in mathematics is sometimes held back by weaknesses in basic mental and calculation skills. Improved curriculum provision and teaching is helping to accelerate pupils' progress. Although children's attainment on entry to school is rising, it is still below that expected. Pupils are entering Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 at higher levels than in the past, which reflects the rising attainment in the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the resource unit and classrooms make good progress towards challenging targets. Increasing numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from intensive support. This enables them to master English quickly and paves the way for particularly good progress in other subjects.

Pupils are developing an increasingly good understanding of how to avoid dangers and keep safe. Behaviour is good and often exemplary in lessons and pupils say that bullying is rare, and dealt with promptly by adults. This is why exclusions are very uncommon. Attendance has improved and is now average. Leaders have convinced parents and carers not to take their children out of school to visit the country of origin. Pupils' good awareness of diet and exercise is influencing their choice of healthier lifestyles. Pupils strongly support school, for example as buddies and language translators. They make an excellent contribution to the global community through links with schools in three continents, which is reflected in their impressive cultural awareness. All other aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are good. Most pupils have secure literacy and numeracy skills, good information and communication technology (ICT) skills and a clear grasp of their next steps. These factors ensure a sound preparation for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<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' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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>
<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>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is improving. Lessons are well prepared, organised and managed. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn and check their achievement at the end of the lesson. Teaching methods are carefully selected to engage pupils. For example, the use of laptop computers helps pupils to consolidate literacy and numeracy skills and teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards to explain and illustrate difficult ideas such as number sequences. Regular and accurate assessment of pupils' learning enables teachers to plan activities that are well matched to pupils' different learning needs. Pupils have clear targets to aim for and teachers mark their work constructively to move them forward. Improvements in the teaching of writing are evident in stronger progress in Key Stage 2. However, expectations of what pupils can achieve in writing in Key Stage 1 are not high enough. Pupils who are fluent writers are not always given sufficient opportunities to write at length. Although the teaching of mathematics is improving, and pupils are learning to solve problems, opportunities for pupils to explain their reasoning and share their understanding are still too limited.

The curriculum is carefully adapted to meet the needs of most pupils. Specific learning programmes for pupils who speak English as an additional language are highly effective in ensuring that they have access to the full curriculum. Breaking learning down into manageable steps is a major factor in helping pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to grasp the basic skills. Providing higher levels of challenge enables more-able pupils to fulfil their potential. Good curriculum breadth and enrichment are evident in the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided, the emphasis on safe

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and healthy lifestyles, the impact of ICT across the school and excellent opportunities for pupils to develop global awareness, evident in the International School award. Senior staff recognise that the Year 1 curriculum requires adjustment to match children's experiences in the Early Years Foundation Stage, not least to ensure that their confidence and skills in areas such as writing are nurtured and developed more effectively.

Increasing ethnic diversity and rising numbers of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable have precipitated a total review of the procedures to ensure effective care, guidance and support. Leaders are passionate in their view that pupils must be safe, happy and secure before their learning and development can be maximised. To this end, excellent partnerships with outside agencies and parents and carers have been established over recent years to ensure that safeguarding is paramount and barriers to learning are dismantled. Parents' and carers' high levels of satisfaction with the school reflect this high-quality provision. Its impact is evident in improving outcomes such as attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour. Childcare provision in the breakfast and after-school clubs is excellent. Pupils are very secure, highly motivated by the wide range of stimulating activities provided and extremely enthusiastic about the quality of childcare they receive.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher leaves no stone unturned in his pursuit of excellence. High expectations, challenging targets, corporate vision and strong teamwork lie at the heart of the school's improving provision and higher standards. Senior staff provide strong support in observing lessons, analysing assessments in checking pupils' work to increase consistency, prevent underachievement, identify areas for improvement and ensure accurate self-evaluation. The governing body provides good support, particularly with regard to ensuring high-quality care and welfare, well-managed finance and effective staff recruitment. However, the governing body and senior staff are too reliant on the views of a small number of pupils to ensure that they are aware of wider perceptions. Exceptionally good partnerships have been developed with a myriad of institutions to broaden, deepen and enhance pupils' school experiences. The school's engagement with parents and carers is first class and extends beyond the school in providing additional family support. Comprehensive risk assessments and child-protection training, and

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excellent links with health professionals, help to make safeguarding exemplary. The school's promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. The school has carefully analysed its role within the community, taking action to reach out, involve and support different minority groups and involve pupils in global projects overseas. Such activities enable the school to challenge stereotyping, avoid discrimination, and eliminate racism by developing pupils' understanding and respect for others. School leaders make effective use of data to close any gaps in performance between different groups of pupils. These measures have significantly enhanced the attainment and progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school uses its resources wisely and deploys staff effectively to ensure good value for money.

*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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The excellent liaison between the childcare provision and the main school ensures that children soon settle in to all settings when they arrive and are happy. Babies and toddlers enjoy exploring the well-ordered and stimulating environment. Staff deployment is very good and care plans ensure that individual and complex needs are well met. The provision meets the requirements for registration.

Although children are currently entering school with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age, attainment on entry has been even lower in the past. The impact of the good and increasing childcare provision, and the children's centre, is helping to raise children's starting points as they enter school. Children make satisfactory progress in the Nursery overall and their personal and social development is rapid. In Reception,



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children's progress accelerates. By the end of the school year, most children achieve the goals expected in creative, physical and personal development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In aspects of communication and language, such as early writing skills and mathematical development, attainment is still below expected overall. Provision is good. Staff's expertise is evident in the selection of a wide range of stimulating learning experiences, such as tasting and describing food and using ICT to improve children's early number skills. Observing and assessing children's learning are highly effective in tracking their progress, identifying next steps and providing challenging activities. Outdoor provision has been imaginatively developed. Some first-class learning takes place when children choose activities and adults intervene to extend children's spoken language. Children are encouraged to write, although its profile is not sufficiently high to ensure that they all do so. New ambitious leadership is already evident in the strengthening links with parents and carers, robust safeguarding procedures, the colourful and welcoming atmosphere and children's increasing progress.

*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**

There was a fairly typical response in terms of the number of questionnaires returned. The very large majority of respondents are highly satisfied with all aspects of the school's work. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are happy with teaching, their children's safety, enjoyment and overall school experiences. Parents and carers greatly value the quality of the school's leadership, the extent to which their children's needs are met, the encouragement their children receive to adopt healthy lifestyles and their preparation for the future. The very large majority of parents and carers feel that behaviour is well managed and are confident that the school welcomes their suggestions and helps them to support their children's education. Most believe that their children make enough progress. Inspection findings endorse parents' and carers' positive views but indicate that the attainment of infant pupils in writing and progress of some of the junior pupils in mathematics are satisfactory rather than good.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Linaker 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 inspection team received 148 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 464 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	89	60	55	37	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	86	58	60	41	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	58	39	79	53	6	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	58	39	75	51	12	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	73	49	70	47	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	60	41	76	51	8	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	60	41	75	51	7	5	2	1
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)	58	39	73	49	10	7	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	42	77	52	4	3	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	39	73	49	9	6	5	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	32	83	56	7	5	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	68	46	70	47	3	2	4	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	77	52	61	41	6	4	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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"><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.**



23 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Linaker Primary School and Children's Centre, Southport, PR8 5DB

Thank you for answering our questions politely and making the inspectors welcome. I would like to share the inspection findings with you.

Linaker is a good school with some excellent features. All adults in school take exceptionally good care of you and keep you very safe. Your behaviour is good and attendance is average and improving. Your efforts to improve your work and try to lead safe and healthy lifestyles are positive signs that you are taking more responsibility and helping your school.

Teaching is good. This helps most of you, including those who need extra help with language or learning, to make good progress and reach the standards expected. Your progress in mathematics is improving but held back because of insecure mental and calculation skills. Young children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception, and make good progress in mathematics in Key Stage 1 but their writing skills are too weak. Leaders and teachers work very hard to provide an interesting curriculum with lots of extra activities. This is why many of you enjoy school.

The school's leaders do a good job. They are constantly finding ways to make the school better, improve your progress and increase your enjoyment of learning. They check teaching and how well you are learning regularly to help the school to continue to improve but they do not know enough about how you feel about school.

To help your school to improve even further we have asked staff and governors to:

- improve pupils' writing skills in infant classes
- increase pupils' progress in mathematics in junior classes by improving their basic mental and calculation skills
- ensure that they know exactly how you all feel about all aspects of school.

You can play your part by continuing to work hard and ask questions when you do not understand. Your teachers will be pleased to help.

Yours sincerely

Mr Colin Smith

Lead inspector

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