

Litherland Moss Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104875
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	331408
Inspection dates	29–30 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Mr Kevin Johnson

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	138
Childcare provision for children Aged 0 to under 3 years	42
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Dave Sweeney
Headteacher	Miss Sarah Greer
Date of previous school inspection	February 2006
Date of previous childcare inspection	October 2006
School address	Moss Lane Liverpool L21 7NW
Telephone number	0151 9284544
Fax number	0151 9490252

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average size primary school serves an area where social and economic circumstances are very challenging. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Nearly three-quarters of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A higher than average proportion has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has specially funded provision for pupils who have physical disabilities. Pupils currently receiving this provision are integrated in classes and work alongside their peers. A well above average number of pupils join or leave the school outside the normal times. After a period of disruption to the leadership, the headteacher was appointed temporarily in September 2008 and permanently in 2009. In the past year, the school has achieved Healthy School's status and has been awarded the Activemark. A breakfast club is provided.

The Litherland Moss Children's Centre shares the same site as the school. The centre is managed by the school's governing body. The centre provides integrated services for parents and families in the community and provides day-care for up to 42 children from 0 to 3 years of age. At the time of the inspection, there were 38 children on roll. A breakfast club held in the school also provides childcare for pupils each school-day morning. The education and childcare elements of the centre were inspected at the same time as the school and the findings are incorporated into this report.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. Strong leadership has brought about significant improvements over the past year. The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding. Consequently, standards are improving and pupils achieve well.

Since the last inspection, the school has been supported in various ways by the local authority. Until just over a year ago it was part of a supportive partnership with another local school. During that time standards began to improve. Since the appointment of the current headteacher the school has operated on its own and has built very well on earlier improvement. In fact, the school is now fully able to stand on its own two feet and there is good capacity for further improvement.

Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2009 rose to above average in English, mathematics and science, in which high numbers of pupils reach above expected standards for their age. At the end of Year 2, pupils reach average standards in mathematics, but standards in reading and writing are too low. From their starting points when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, with skills well below expectations for their age, pupils now achieve well, although in the past their progress has been slower. The rate of pupils' progress is quickening and there are pockets of outstanding progress by some of the most vulnerable pupils particularly for who receive specially funded provision and who work in classes alongside others.

Pupils' achievement is underpinned by outstanding care guidance and academic support, in particular for the most vulnerable pupils and those who have specially funded support for physical disabilities. This begins as soon as children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage and, more than anything, it boosts pupils' self-esteem and enables them to learn. Attitudes, of both pupils and parents, to the school have changed for the better. Attendance has improved. Parents speak very highly of what the school had done for them and their families and pupils now enjoy school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. They show caring attitudes towards one another and their behaviour in and around the school is outstanding. Pupils say they feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe. Peer mentors and playground buddies help to keep relationships on an even keel and adults are always there to offer further support when needed. Although their knowledge of their own culture is satisfactory, pupils have limited knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures. They are intent on leading healthy lifestyles. Sports are ever popular, as well as healthy food choices at lunch times. Pupils contribute well to the life of the school. Everyone has a say through the school council. There are good links with the local schools and community groups that help pupils to develop their good personal and social skills. Mathematical, literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are developed well, and pupils are prepared well to move on the next stages of their education and for their future life.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is an improved picture that is again due, in no small part, to the quality of care, guidance and support provided in every classroom. Teachers and teaching assistants are extremely sensitive to each pupil's particular learning, physical or emotional needs. Relationships are excellent and

pupils feel valued, work hard and are keen to do well. Another improvement that is having a positive impact on learning is the way in which teachers plan the curriculum. Not only is it more creative and exciting for pupils, and enriched well by a good range of first-hand experiences, teachers say it is also more fun to teach.

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher's single-minded determination and drive to raise aspirations and opportunities for pupils has been a great success and set the school on a clear path to improvement. Academic targets have been exceeded so leaders have raised the school's sights and set more challenging targets for the future. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's work has been incisive. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's work enabling them to tackle the most important areas effectively, while recognising areas that still need further work. Inclusion is at the heart of what the school does, and as a result, the school is meeting attendance targets, has eliminated pupils' exclusions and provides a safe, supportive environment for all pupils and staff alike. The school provides very well for the youngest children within the Children's Centre, to give them an exceptionally good start. Community cohesion, although strong locally, is an area needing improvement in order to give pupils better knowledge and understanding about the lives of people from different cultures throughout the world. Governors support and challenge the school vigorously. They ensure provision and expect results. Financial management is efficient and provides good value for money, which is reflected in the school's rapid improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage **Grade: 2**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. This is another area where the school has made good improvement since the last inspection. As a result, there is good provision for children's learning and development and they make good progress. Their skills and abilities are very low when they enter Nursery, especially in the areas of communication, language and literacy and their personal, social and emotional development. However, when they leave Reception children are beginning to work confidently within the early learning goals and some are more advanced. Their personal development progresses well and children quickly learn to work confidently in their surroundings. They behave well, because that is what is expected of them and by the end of Reception children begin to develop firm friendships. A good balance is planned between activities led by adults and those that children choose for themselves. The outside classroom is used effectively to allow children to explore and develop learning independently. Adults are very good at engaging with children during activities to encourage their language development and stimulate their imaginations. Daily lessons to learn letters and sounds are well focused and move learning on at a good pace. Children soon become confident enough to tackle simple reading and writing on their own. Provision for children's welfare in school, and for those who receive day care, is outstanding. The well-being and learning and development of children from 0 to 3 years is given very high priority by staff in the Children's Centre who provide a safe and stimulating environment for children. Their learning and development is carefully observed and progress recorded so that next steps can be planned. All staff members are very watchful over the safety and well-being of their designated groups. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive. There are excellent opportunities for them to be involved in their children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading and writing in Key Stage 1.
- Improve the school's contribution to community cohesion and pupils' recognition of diversity.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards currently are above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils achieve well. Standards have risen rapidly in the current Year 6, with impressive performances in English, mathematics and science. Standards at Key Stage 1 are broadly average. There was improvement in mathematics, in that more pupils reached a higher level, but standards in reading and writing are still a focus for improvement. Despite this, they have made good progress from entering Year 1, because the starting points for that group were lower than expected at the end of Reception. Progress has picked up considerably throughout the school because of the highly effective academic support, accurate assessment and target setting, and the very well planned interventions to cater for individual pupils' needs. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are on track to reach, and in many cases exceed, their end-of-year targets. Progress in Year 5 is gathering pace. Changes in leadership and in teaching have meant that they have not had the continuous level of support in the past that is now available to them. Further additional support is already planned to boost progress and standards in the coming year. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress overall, because of the efforts by staff to make sure that pupils' specific needs are fully met. Some outstanding progress is evident for some more vulnerable pupils because of what the school does to help them. Those who are supported through the unit for physically disabled pupils achieve well because of the well planned, sensitive support they receive to ensure all of their needs are met.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school because, they say, they have a friendly welcome and lessons are more exciting. This is reflected in their good attendance and improving punctuality, which are further encouraged by the 'walking bus' and breakfast club. Pupils have really taken the idea of a healthy diet to heart. The school council has got off to a good start by organising a fruit stall during morning break, which they run themselves. Sports clubs are well attended and pupils are justifiably proud of their Healthy School and Activemark awards. Pupils are polite and well-mannered, and they contribute well to the everyday life of the school. They say they are safe and happy and develop positive relationships with adults and with each other. They are keen to take on responsibilities. Solo performances in the forthcoming end-of-year production show pupils' confidence and pride in what they can do. Good links with the high school and through projects, for example, the Children's University, take their personal development beyond the school. Very impressive digital photography, for example, enables pupils to experience some of the wonder of learning and contributes well to their spiritual development. With their associated academic skills they are firmly on the way to securing their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Positive relationships in lessons create a 'safe to have a go' climate for pupils, which encourages their good attitudes to learning. Teachers plan work that is matched well to pupils' interests and abilities. Pupils particularly enjoy those lessons that are based on first-hand experiences, such as a visit, because it gives real purpose to their learning. Resources are used well to help pupils' thinking and to stimulate discussion. Teachers' good use of electronic whiteboards enlivens lessons and helps to keep up a brisk pace. Time is used well so that there is a good balance between listening and practical times in lessons. Teacher use an increasing range of strategies to engage pupils and role-play is a feature in many lessons. Teaching assistants are a valuable part of the teaching team, they know pupils well and make a significant contribution to their progress. Although good practice in teaching and learning is a growing strength of the school, there are still some inconsistencies to be addressed. For example, sometimes challenges to take the most able pupils that step further are not planned, and there is scope to encourage pupils to be more responsible for their own learning. Teachers mark pupils' work well and pupils are beginning to be more involved in assessing their own progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum engages all pupils well and enables their good achievement. There is a good focus on their literacy and mathematical skills. New approaches to planning the way in which the curriculum is taught mean that pupils use their skills more creatively across different subjects, making learning more exciting and meaningful. There is some good development of writing and mathematical skills, for example, linked to learning in history, geography, and science. The use of computers to support learning is progressing well. The curriculum broadens pupils' horizons well through the teaching of Spanish, as well as through a good range of visits and after-school clubs. Pupils learn how to stay safe through the sensitive teaching about sex and relationships and the potential dangers surrounding drugs and other substances. This enables pupils to make informed choices about their personal well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding quality of care, guidance and support is fully embedded in the school's work. It is a major influence on pupils' achievement. Parents are full of praise for the way in which staff 'go the extra mile' to help families through their difficulties. The breakfast club, while meeting the needs of some parents also provides a good start to the day for pupils. The careful consideration given to the needs of the most needy pupils and the resulting plans for their individual help is a credit to the whole school. Support from the school and outside agencies is built around individual pupils to ensure their full inclusion. The provision for children in the the Children's Centre has a considerable impact in helping children make progress towards the expected learning goals. Guidance and support with regard to behaviour and relationships has a good impact on pupils' personal development. Safeguarding requirements are met. The school monitors and promotes attendance well. This has

shown a significant improvement over the past year. Systems to check on pupils' academic progress and to set their next targets work very well. Pupils know their personal targets and confirm that guidance from teachers about how to improve is helpful.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has brought clear vision and a new drive for improvement that is shared by the whole school community. She is ably supported by senior leaders, teachers and governors who, as a cohesive team, fully recognise their respective roles and accountabilities. Standards continue to rise along with improved teaching quality and curricular provision. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's progress is effective and informs improvement planning well. The leaders' determination to provide equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination is a driving force in the school. The school responds extremely well to the needs of its community and promotes strong links with local groups and providers to increase pupils' life chances. These are enhanced from an early stage by the well-managed Early Years provision. Links that might inform pupils about different cultures and lifestyles of communities beyond their locality, however, are still at the planning stage. Governors actively support the school and ensure that resources are available to meet the extensive needs of its pupils. A comment that aptly sums up the vast majority of parents view is 'no complaints, the school is just smashing!'

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

¹ Grade 1 – Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 – Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 – Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 – Exceptionally low.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B



1 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Litherland Moss Primary School, Liverpool, L21 7NW

Thank you for making the team so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. There were many things that impressed us. For example, we were very impressed by your good behaviour and how well mannered you are. We were also impressed by the way your attendance has improved. That is very important, so do make sure that you keep on coming to school regularly. We noticed how healthy you all are. That can only be down to those super school lunches you have every day. We also enjoyed your singing in assembly and in your rehearsals. And those solo performances... Wow!

Litherland Moss is a good school and has made some really good improvements over the past year. Well done for achieving such high standards in English, mathematics and science. The next step is to make sure your reading and writing catch up. Your teachers assess your work carefully and plan some exciting lessons for you. The grown-ups in school take excellent care of you. They make sure you are happy and safe and that is why you achieve so well. The children in Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start. Your headteacher works very hard to make sure the school runs smoothly and that you all have the best help possible.

Your parents, teachers and school governors really want your school to go on improving and become even better. Therefore, I have suggested two ways that will help. Firstly, I have asked everyone in Key Stage 1 (including you) to work hard and reach better standards in reading and writing. Secondly, I have asked your school to help you to learn more about the lives of people from cultures other than your own, so that you will have better understanding of the world you live in.

Best wishes and good luck to all of you

Kevin Johnson
Lead inspector