

Eccleston Lane Ends Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104788
Local Authority	St. Helens
Inspection number	287036
Inspection date	4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Frank Carruthers

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	242
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mrs Rachael Rimmer
Date of previous school inspection	24 February 2003
School address	Albany Avenue Prescot Merseyside L34 2QN
Telephone number	01744 678270
Fax number	01744 678272

Age group	5–11
Inspection date	4 July 2007
Inspection number	287036

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This average-sized primary school serves a residential area with housing that consists mainly of owner-occupied terraced and semi-detached property. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and very few are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has the Artsmark (Silver), Activemark, the Foundation Stage Kite Mark and Investors in People Award. The current headteacher is leaving at the end of term to take up a post within the local authority and a new headteacher has been appointed starting in September.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding education for its pupils. Standards are high.

Outstanding provision, leadership and management lead to the positive outcomes evident in the pupils' excellent achievement and outstanding personal development. Pupils do exceptionally well in English, mathematics and science. Where the school has identified relative weaknesses, for example in standards of pupils' writing, they have taken very effective steps to promote better achievement. In most years, well over half the pupils in Year 6 reach the higher Level 5 in tests, which is significantly above the average for schools nationally. Pupils' progress is very impressive because they are given clear guidance on how they can improve, work is challenging and their targets are demanding. The few pupils with additional needs make excellent progress because they are given all the support they need and the standards they achieve often match those of their peers in tests in Year 6.

Pupils enjoy school very much, behave exceptionally well and develop an excellent awareness of personal safety and how to lead a healthy and fit lifestyle. They develop the essential skills of cooperative behaviour and independence in learning which help them when they begin secondary education. Provision for the care, guidance and support of all pupils is excellent. Staff and pupils have outstanding relationships and these are the foundation for the pupils' mature, positive attitudes. In recent years, the school has developed excellent procedures to keep track of how pupils achieve, and uses the information very well to identify gaps in their learning.

The quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum is outstanding. Strengths of the teaching in all classes include the challenging and interesting work and highly effective use of new technology such as interactive whiteboards and personal computers. The curriculum has a richness which promotes the pupils' enjoyment of school exceptionally well. Links between subjects are well established and there are exciting themed weeks in which topics are explored with visitors to school and a wide range of events, trips and activities outside lessons. The standard of artwork displayed in school, for example linked to a recent visit by African dancers, is very impressive. It makes for a lively learning environment and promotes the pupils' self-esteem exceptionally well. The school operates an extensive programme of activities that extend the length of the school day, and these are highly valued by parents and pupils. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are outstanding and the children's learning is built on exceptionally well in Year 1. Major strengths of both the Reception and Year 1 classes are the expertise of teaching and support staff and the excellent links created with parents. These give the children a great start to school life.

The headteacher provides inspirational, dynamic leadership, and the recently formed senior leadership team has excellent expertise and monitors the school's performance exceptionally well. Their self-evaluation of the school is accurate, though they have been too modest in their views. A remarkable feature of the leadership is that it is rarely satisfied with its achievements and is always striving to improve. The school takes a lead part in a network with other schools and this is particularly effective in sharing best practice. Governors are very supportive, have a very good understanding of the school's performance and are very well led by the chairperson. Very effective steps have been taken since the last inspection to maintain high standards and improve provision, and this indicates an excellent capacity to improve. The cost of educating a pupil at the school is below average and because of the excellent outcomes the school provides

outstanding value for money. Parents are extremely active in their support for their children's learning and for the school as a whole. They fully appreciate the work of the school, which includes many facilities, workshops and drop-in sessions for the benefit of families in the neighbourhood. Typical comments include: 'The school provides ample opportunities for our children and ourselves to develop outside the normal curriculum' and 'I'm very glad that our daughter is part of this vibrant community.'

What the school should do to improve further

There are no significant aspects for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

From levels of attainment that range from average to above average on entry to the Reception class, pupils' achievement is excellent. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress towards the goals for their learning because of excellent teaching. Standards are consistently high in Years 2 and 6 and this remains true for the current year groups. Preliminary results of Year 6 tests in mathematics and science show that over 90% of pupils reached the expected level in both subjects, while 60% achieved the higher Level 5 in mathematics and 80% in science (English results were unavailable at the time of the inspection). This excellent achievement is the result of outstanding teaching together with the strong support of parents and pupils' excellent attitudes to learning, which are fostered by the staff's high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning. Where the school has identified relative weaknesses, for example in standards of writing, the outstanding teamwork of all staff has led to rapid improvement. As a result, standards of writing in the current Year 6 are well above average and match more closely the high standards of reading.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils are enthusiastic and behaviour is excellent both in class and around school. Pupils report that 'everyone is friendly' and that bullying is very rare. The role of the 'playground squad' and friendship stops are very helpful in making pupils feel safe and welcomed. They say that any incidents of misbehaviour are handled properly by staff. There have been no exclusions and levels of attendance are well above average. Pupils enjoy school and this is evident in the high take-up of activities outside lessons. School councillors have done much to make playtimes more enjoyable and are currently planning more facilities for the school grounds. Pupils are aware of the need to help others less fortunate than themselves, for instance when they raise money to adopt a child abroad and learn about life in other countries. They have excellent opportunities to work independently and as a team so they are exceptionally well prepared for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Lessons are very well planned and pupils listen exceptionally well. Very effective support from teaching assistants helps all pupils to

learn very well. Team teaching and the teaching by staff of specialist subjects are strong features. Staff are very well qualified in specialist areas of the curriculum. The sharing of best practice with less experienced staff has a very positive impact on the overall quality of teaching and learning. Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to the achievement of pupils through teaching additional programmes of work very effectively. Marking is especially thorough and helps the pupils to know what they must do to improve. Pupils indicate how successful they consider their learning has been and older pupils often comment on the work of others. As a result, their learning is highly effective.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum places a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy and links between subjects are very effective in promoting these skills. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and is being continued into Year 1 with excellent results. For example, pupils' writing is improving in leaps and bounds because of the stimulus afforded by the focus on play activities and investigations. The learning environment is very stimulating with excellent displays of artwork and pupils' achievements. The school has gained the Artsmark and Healthy Schools award and these contribute exceptionally well to pupils' cultural awareness and a healthy and fit lifestyle. There is an outstanding range of activities outside lessons for pupils to enjoy. Visits out of school to promote understanding are excellent. Provision for a modern foreign language, Spanish, is very well established and highly popular with pupils of all ages.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school promotes the well-being of pupils exceptionally well. All aspects of health, safety, child protection, risk assessment and safe recruitment of staff are in place. There have been very good improvements to arrangements for the transition of children into the Reception class and links with the associated high school are very effective. Parents who responded to the inspectors' questionnaire have very positive views of the school and appreciate how well their children do. A few parents consider communication from school to parents is not as good as it might be but this was not endorsed by the majority and by those who met with the inspector. Regular newsletters, including a very popular 'Reception Rag' for parents of the youngest children, give appropriate information and notice of forthcoming events. Provision for the few pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good and links with outside agencies are used very effectively to help pupils make excellent progress. Procedures to track the progress of pupils are used very effectively to identify good achievement and gaps in learning. Targets are clearly understood by pupils, are shared with parents and have a positive impact on how pupils achieve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding at all levels. The current headteacher, appointed in 2004, has had a highly significant influence on improvements to the school and her high expectations are reflected in the attitudes of all staff. Issues from the previous inspection, which judged the school to be good, have been addressed very well. Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning has been fully effective in identifying areas for improvement. These then

have become key priorities in the thorough school development plan. The school is very successful in meeting these priorities and its challenging targets for standards in Year 6, which the school frequently exceeds. As a result of these procedures, staff have an excellent overview of their performance and effectiveness, and the school is highly valued by the local authority, parents and governors. There is outstanding commitment to achieving the best for all pupils and to promoting effective links with agencies and schools for the benefit of all, parents and pupils alike.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
--	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Eccleston Lane Ends Primary School, Prescott, L34 2QN.

I would like to thank you very much for your help when I inspected your school. I enjoyed my visit very much indeed. Now I would like to share with you my thoughts about your school.

Yours is an outstanding school. Here are just some of the excellent features of your school.

- The staff take excellent care of you all and teach you exceptionally well.
- Your headteacher has high expectations for your school, and everyone in it responds to the challenge.
- Your attitude to lessons is excellent and it is clear that you enjoy school very much and are all becoming mature students who want to do well.
- The children in the Reception class get off to an excellent start in school.
- You are doing exceptionally well in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
- The school makes your learning very exciting and interesting, for instance in planning trips and organising visitors and events in the themed weeks and at other times.
- The staff provide you with excellent opportunities to take on responsibilities in school and to enjoy activities at playtimes, lunchtimes and after school.

Congratulations to everyone! Please carry on working hard and enjoying school.