

# Ancaster CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120512
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358778
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lois Furness

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	105
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Adrian Fovargue
<b>Headteacher</b>	Katie Durant (Acting headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Mercia Drive Ancaster, Grantham NG32 3QQ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Eleven lessons were observed and five teachers seen. Meetings were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation including the school improvement plan, monitoring and evaluation reports, assessment records, pupils' work, safeguarding documentation and the recent report of the School Improvement Partner. In total, 49 parents' and carers' questionnaires were analysed. The team also analysed 60 responses to the Key Stage 2 pupil survey, and 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.

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

- The impact of the school's work to improve attainment in writing.
- How well the most able pupils are challenged throughout the school.
- How effectively the curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of boys and of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The reason why the school evaluates outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage as good, but provision, leadership and management and overall effectiveness as satisfactory.
- The depth of pupils' understanding of different religious and ethnic communities within the United Kingdom.

## Information about the school

In this much smaller than average primary school the vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are a very small number of Traveller pupils, who attend the school during the months of November to February. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Provision for Early Years Foundation Stage is in a combined Year 1 and Reception class. All classes, apart from the class for Year 6 pupils, consist of pupils from two year groups. The school has received a number of awards including Healthy Schools status, Sportsmark and Activemark. An on-site breakfast club is managed by the governing body. There have been considerable staffing changes, including leadership changes, over the last two years. During this time there have been three headteachers, and since February 2010 the school has been led by an acting headteacher. Two new members of staff joined the school at the start of the autumn term 2010. Over the past year, the school has been involved in the local authority's Improving Schools Programme (ISP).

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. It is emerging from an unsettled period that has seen significant staffing changes. However, in a very short time, the acting headteacher has strengthened links with parents, enhanced pastoral care, and improved attainment at the end of Year 6. Self-evaluation is accurate and successfully identifies the right priorities to bring about sustained improvement. Parents are appreciative of the changes, as shown by the many positive comments made in the Ofsted parents' and carers' questionnaire returns. 'I think the school is improving, and although it still has quite a long way to go I am willing to give the new leadership time to make the changes,' and, 'I strongly believe the school has turned a corner,' exemplify the many positive comments made.

Pupils enjoy school and they also appreciate the changes made. Staff respect and value the pupils, who consequently develop in confidence and self-esteem. Pupils' behaviour is good. They know how to keep safe, and respond well to initiatives to encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles by taking part in sport and eating a balanced diet. Pupils say they feel safe and find it hard to identify any instances of bullying. They welcome opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as helping to look after the younger ones and taking an active role on the school council.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is some good and outstanding teaching, but over time teaching has lacked rigour and so some groups of pupils have not achieved as well as they should. Assessment information has not been used well enough to ensure that pupils learn exactly what they should. Whilst there are good examples of written feedback, a lack of consistency leaves pupils with insufficient guidance about how to improve. The school is aware of these shortcomings but it is too soon for the actions implemented to have had a full impact on pupils' progress. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, although provision is satisfactory, assessment information is not always accurate. The planning of learning is not linked closely enough to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, and the teaching of linking letters and their sounds is not strong enough to promote good early literacy skills.

Attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average. Focused intervention work led to more pupils in 2010 reaching the expected level for their age in English and mathematics but too few pupils attained the higher level, especially in writing. Although there have been improvements in writing attainment, not all staff are confident in the teaching of this subject area. Pupils' spelling, handwriting and punctuation skills are not good enough throughout the school.

The acting headteacher, who is the driving force for change, has quickly developed a strong team spirit. There is an unmistakable sense of purpose and determination to raise attainment and improve provision. Although this is clearly an improving school, actions to

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rectify the issues identified in the previous inspection have only recently been implemented, and their full impact is yet to be felt. Meetings take place to discuss pupils' progress, but these have not been able to ensure the consistently good progress of pupils, especially in English. As yet, staff are not held fully accountable for the progress of pupils. Most leaders and managers are new to their posts and are still developing their understanding of the strengths and the areas to develop further. The governing body is supportive of the new leadership, but knows that its role in holding the school to account for the progress of pupils is not sufficiently robust. However, the improvements so far and the rise in attainment by the end of Year 6 in 2010 show that the school has a sound capacity to improve further.

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

- Accelerate the progress of pupils, especially in writing, by:
  - ensuring teachers make effective use of assessment information so that the majority of pupils progress by at least two sub-levels each year
  - ensuring that teachers are clear about the intended learning outcomes in every lesson
  - improving teachers' subject knowledge of the teaching of writing and focusing on improving pupils' skills of spelling, handwriting and punctuation
  - involving pupils more consistently in knowing how to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - ensuring that planning for learning is securely rooted in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum
  - arranging regular moderation meetings to clarify the meaning of the assessment statements, so ensuring the accuracy of assessment
  - providing training for the effective teaching of linking letters and sounds.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - developing the role of the middle managers in monitoring and evaluation
  - using regular pupil progress meetings to identify any underachievement, swiftly taking any necessary action, and holding staff accountable for the progress of the pupils
  - developing the role of the governing body in holding the leadership to account for the progress of pupils.
- Up to 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**

Achievement is satisfactory but the pace of learning in lessons varies between classes. Pupils work hard and demonstrate good respect for each other's views. They persevere with tasks, and respond well when given the opportunity to show what they can do. In

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Class 3, Year 3 and 4 pupils eagerly showed others their techniques for adding and subtracting two- and three-digit numbers, whilst Year 6 pupils collaborated well to discuss the features of an interesting poem. When pupils have to sit for too long listening they lose concentration and learning slows. Even so, behaviour remains good. At the moment, there is limited involvement of pupils in planning their own learning and opportunities to reflect on and evaluate learning are not consistent between classes. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers. Traveller pupils also make satisfactory progress. Although boys in the past have not achieved as well as girls, especially in Years 1 and 2, the gap is closing as the curriculum is being adapted to become more interesting for them.

Pupils enjoy being at school and they speak enthusiastically about the range of opportunities they have to develop their skills, particularly in music and sport. Attendance is broadly average. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe, including the risks associated with alcohol and drugs. Healthy School status and the acquisition of the Activemark and Sportsmark reflect the pupils' good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Pupils enjoy helping others by managing the school tuck shop and by raising money for those less fortunate than themselves. For example, the school council has been proactive in organising a cake sale in order to raise money to send to the Pakistan aid relief fund. Pupils receive good help to understand their feelings and emotions, and reflect on these well during assemblies. They are satisfactorily broadening their understanding of different cultures through visits and visitors to the school. Pupils' good personal skills, alongside their satisfactory progress in developing basic literacy and numeracy skills, prepare them soundly for the future.

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*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>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<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>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

Good features of teaching and learning were seen in most lessons. Pupils are eager to learn and good relationships mean they are willing to answer questions. Most teachers use 'talk partners' to enable pupils to share ideas and learn from each other. In the most effective lessons teachers make the purpose of lessons clear so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them, the pace of learning is swift, tasks are challenging and excellent use is made of prompts and 'handy hints' to support pupils' learning. This was seen as Years 3 and 4 pupils learnt how to use connectives to change simple sentences into more complex ones. However, teachers' planning does not consistently identify the specific learning intended for different ability groups, so not all pupils make the progress they should. The planning is better in mathematics than in English. Assessment information is not used consistently well to ensure activities are the right ones for all, especially for more-able pupils. Teaching assistants generally provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are occasions, however, where they provide simple solutions for pupils rather than guiding and extending their thinking. Boys are becoming more interested in the curriculum, as teachers try hard to link subjects together to make learning more meaningful. Extra-curricular opportunities are good, and many pupils take up the chances for learning beyond the classroom. For example, pupils appreciate the opportunities to learn a musical instrument.

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The school takes good care of its pupils and their welfare is at the heart of its work. Responses to the questionnaires from pupils and from parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that children are safe. Effective systems to deal with any incident of bullying are in place, and pupils say that adults act swiftly to address any concerns or worries they express. Supervision is good, the building and grounds are secure and there is a safe hand-over of younger pupils to parents. Parents and carers are appreciative of the breakfast club, which provides a safe and caring environment for their children.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<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?

In this inclusive school, equal opportunities are promoted appropriately, although pupils do not consistently make good progress throughout the school. However, the acting headteacher is committed to improving the quality of education. Since her appointment, she has made a priority of evaluating school effectiveness more closely and has generated a 'can-do' spirit with a clear focus on improving learning. The impact of greater rigour in the monitoring of pupils' progress is beginning to be felt as attainment and achievement show signs of improvement in all classes. There is a secure tracking and target-setting system in place and the acting headteacher has a good understanding of the features of a good lesson. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory, and new members are receiving training about how to hold the school to account whilst providing valuable support. All requirements for safeguarding pupils' health and well-being are in place, and meet statutory requirements.

The school is a harmonious community with all groups of pupils getting on well together. There is a developing understanding of difference, and of tolerance of different communities within the local community. Pupils' understanding of different communities within the United Kingdom and the wider world is developing satisfactorily. A range of good partnerships, including with the local authority and nearby schools, contribute to the school achieving sound value for money. Sports, language and music partnerships extend pupils' learning opportunities well, and links with agencies such as the police and fire services and the local church are supportive of pupils' health, safety and well-being.



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*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	3
<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>3</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school in Class 1 (Reception and Year 1 pupils) with the knowledge, understanding and skills that match those expected for their age. They settle quickly and behaviour is good. Children concentrate well, for example when playing in the role play area or when using different counting equipment. They particularly enjoy the opportunities for outdoor learning, and spoke enthusiastically about their trip to see 'Thomas the tank engine'. Progress is satisfactory, with attainment average on entry to Year 1. Although the school's latest assessment information suggests that attainment is higher than this, observation of children at work does not support this judgement. The teacher is aware that assessments are not always accurate. She is committed to improving the provision and has identified the correct priorities to do so, including the development of a consistent system of assessment through the 'learning journey'. Teaching is satisfactory. Planning shows a wide range of activities with a good balance between activities adults direct and those children choose for themselves. Adults are very attentive to ensuring that children are kept safe and all welfare requirements are met. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

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

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

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Stage

## Views of parents and carers

An above average number of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. Almost all of them thought their children enjoyed school and were happy with their children's experience of school. The vast majority thought their children were kept safe and the school listens to their suggestions and concerns. A small minority thought that their children did not make enough progress, and that unacceptable behaviour is not well managed. Although progress is not consistently good throughout the school, during the inspection no instances of inappropriate behaviour were observed.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ancaster CofE 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 105 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	65	16	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	53	20	41	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	45	23	47	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	37	24	49	3	6	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	21	43	22	45	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	43	23	47	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	43	25	51	2	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	39	23	47	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	41	25	51	2	4	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	31	25	51	5	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	37	28	57	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	51	20	41	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	51	23	47	1	2	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 all 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 pupils' 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.**



27 September 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ancaster CofE Primary School, Grantham, NG32 3QQ**

Thank you very much for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. It was interesting to hear about all the things you do. Your school has come a long way in a short time, and your learning and progress are improving. We found your school to be satisfactory, but the good progress that we are starting to see in different year groups shows that what has been put into place recently to help you do better is beginning to work. It is good to know that you and your parents and carers recognise this. You have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe, fit and healthy. You behave well and all the extra work you willingly do beyond lessons underpins the good contribution you make to the school and wider community. The school council does a good job in raising funds both for the school and for those people who are less fortunate in the world. We hope you raise lots of money at your cake sale for those people affected by the floods in Pakistan.

Those who lead and manage the school are working very hard with all of the staff to help you make faster progress than you do now. They rightly want you to attain higher in English, particularly in writing, and in mathematics by Year 6. Your leaders have identified ways to do this and we have asked them to concentrate on ensuring that information about what you know already is used more carefully to help you accelerate your progress. We think you need to be clear about what you are learning and how you can improve. Teachers should help you more to improve your spelling, handwriting and punctuation skills. We have also suggested that leaders and managers and governors regularly check that you are all learning as much as you can, and that the use of assessment is improved in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Early Years curriculum guidance is used to plan your activities.

You can help by continuing to work hard, behaving well and doing your best to help the school improve further.

Yours sincerely

Lois Furness

Lead inspector

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