

North Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119126
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358496
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Derek Parkin
Headteacher	Mr Adrian Ibison
Date of previous school inspection	18 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in nine lessons taught by eight different teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. Inspectors scrutinised the views of staff and pupils and analysed 55 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether pupils make at least satisfactory progress in English and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- How effectively assessment and tracking systems enable the more-able pupils to achieve the higher levels of attainment.
- Whether the Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.
- Whether leaders and managers ensure the school's capacity to sustain improvement is at least satisfactory.

Information about the school

The school is smaller in size than others of the same type. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average while those at an early stage of speaking English is average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Following a period of falling numbers on roll in recent years, numbers are beginning to rise and the school has admitted 12 pupils since the start of the school year. The headteacher was appointed in September 2010.

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

This is a satisfactory school. It is happy and welcoming and pupils say they feel safe. Pupils' good behaviour and above-average rates of attendance are testament to this. Children make a good start to their education and, from generally below expected starting points, make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The highly perceptive headteacher has, in the short time in post, galvanised the enthusiasm of staff and begun to improve systems which check pupils' achievement. As a result, staff morale, pupils' current work and rates of pupils' learning are improving.

Pupils begin Key Stage 1 with skills which are broadly in line with expectations. By the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment in English and mathematics is average and the progress they make in their learning is satisfactory overall. In lessons, relationships are good. However, all teachers do not consistently use assessment information to set work which is sufficiently challenging, particularly for those pupils who are more able. Furthermore, pupils are not consistently involved in assessing their own learning and marking in books does not always give them a clear understanding of how to improve their work.

The school engages well with parents and carers to promote pupils' enjoyment of school. Despite this, pupils have too few opportunities to take on responsibilities in school and the wider community. The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' achievement. The school has good systems to support the pastoral needs of pupils. However, because a minority of pupils are not achieving their potential in learning, the care, guidance and support they receive is satisfactory rather than good. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils work and play happily together but have limited awareness or contact with other communities beyond their own or in the wider world.

Senior leaders and the governing body know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and current planning shows a clear awareness of the ways to take the school forward. They particularly recognise the need to accelerate rates of progress in English and mathematics and further develop the involvement of subject leaders and the governing body in school improvement. New initiatives, such as improved tracking and monitoring systems, are beginning to embed and the rate of pupils' progress is improving. However, the work of the new leadership team is too recent to yet show a track record of success. Consequently, the school's capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory rather than good.

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.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress in English and mathematics by ensuring that all teachers:
 - – consistently use assessment information to ensure tasks challenge
 - all pupils and, particularly the more able, to achieve higher levels of attainment.
 - – consistently involve pupils in evaluating their own learning and use marking to provide them with a clear understanding of how to improve their work.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - – developing the leadership skills of subject leaders so that they have a greater impact on raising attainment and accelerating progress
 - – providing further opportunities for members of the governing body to develop their knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities in school improvement.
- Enhance the promotion of community cohesion by providing pupils with more opportunities:
 - – to engage with pupils from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds nationally and within the wider world
 - – to take on roles and responsibilities within the school and the wider community.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are keen to join in discussions and activities particularly when learning has a creative or practical focus. At these times, they are fully engaged and their learning is accelerated at a good pace. In a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson, for example, pupils learnt at a fast rate when they were challenged to use prior learning to write mythical stories. On occasions, the pace of learning slows when learning does not match pupils' abilities or provide sufficient challenge. The work seen, in lessons and in pupils' books, shows that pupils' achievement, although satisfactory overall, is good in some classes. This is evident when pupils are involved in evaluating their own learning and receive clear direction in how they can improve their work. However, this good level of progress is not consistent in all year groups and especially the more-able pupils do not always make enough progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the few from minority ethnic groups make similar progress to that of their peers. Their work with specialist support staff and in small groups with teaching assistant support develops their self-esteem effectively and has a positive impact on their learning.

Behaviour is good and pupils say the rare occasions when pupils misbehave are quickly sorted out and they can talk to any member of staff if they have a problem. They say they feel safe in school and have an adequate awareness of how to stay healthy. They eat the healthy meals provided by the school, and benefit from the increasing range of physical exercise activities on offer. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They are very keen to take on more roles and responsibilities within the school and wider community and to learn more from and meet a wider range of pupils from other religious and cultural backgrounds than their own. Pupils' satisfactory achievement, together with their confidence in beginning to work collaboratively with

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others, means that the school is making adequate provision for their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ 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?

Teachers and teaching assistants relate positively to the pupils and use an adequate range of strategies to make learning interesting and exciting, including using the interactive whiteboards effectively. The restructuring of large mixed-age classes, this school year, into single year groups for English and mathematics contributes to a general improvement in pupils' achievement. However, not all teachers use assessment information consistently and well enough to ensure pupils, especially the more able, are suitably challenged and make as much progress as possible. Pupils receive help and support during lessons when they need advice. However, comments in their books do not always provide them with clear enough guidance on how to improve their work.

Pupils speak enthusiastically about the increased availability of outings and clubs that enhance the curriculum. They enjoy participating in, for instance, the opportunity to learn to play the guitar. It was an impressive sight to hear 40 pupils in Year 3/4 enthusiastically playing their guitars and preparing to present a concert for their parents and carers. Although as yet the needs of all pupils are not always fully met the school has made headway in adding richness to the curriculum by linking subjects and encouraging pupils to use their basic skills across the curriculum.

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Care, guidance and support for all pupils are satisfactory. The school works adequately with outside agencies, while using the on-site pastoral work of the special needs coordinator and teaching assistants to provide effective support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable or who join the school during the school year. Administration staff have introduced rigorous systems which follow up pupil absences. As a result, attendance is above average.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's enthusiasm and clear direction is infectious and has spread to all adults. Consequently, the management of the quality of teaching and learning and a drive for improvement is reflected in pupils' rapidly improving achievement. However, there is still a way to go in embedding change especially in developing the role of subject leaders and members of the governing body in monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress and checking on the impact of change. The governing body provides satisfactory management. Governors are supportive and keen to play their part in promoting improvement. They ensure that all safeguarding requirements are adequately met and that procedures to check that all staff are suitable to work with pupils are thorough.

Discrimination of any form is not tolerated and the ethos established in the school is one of promoting equality for all. However, not all pupils and, particularly the more able, achieve as well as they could because assessment systems are not used sufficiently well to track pupils' progress. Partnerships with others are satisfactory overall. Good links have been established with parents and carers, enabling them to know how they can help with their children's learning at home. Links to advance pupils' academic achievement are less effective. The quality of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school understands the local community well and the school itself is harmonious. However, pupils' experiences and knowledge of other cultures and lifestyles both nationally and globally are limited.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children start in Reception, their knowledge and skills are generally below age-related expectations. Their smiling faces show how much they enjoy coming to school as they learn and play well together, for example when happily role-playing in Jack's Farm. They access a good balance of activities they have chosen for themselves and those directed by adults. A good range of opportunities is provided, both indoors and outdoors, which develop children's physical, problem-solving, investigative and creative skills well. This is despite current, though soon to be extended, limited outdoor facilities. Planning is based around children's interests and focuses on developing their thinking, speaking and listening skills. For instance, a visit from a local farmer increased their confidence in asking questions and extended their knowledge and understanding of life in the local community well. Good relationships with parents and carers underpin the school's good induction and care procedures. 'Wow' sheets and 'just a note' slips provide them with a way of sharing their children's successes at home with adults in school. Workshops for parents and carers keep them well-informed as to how they can help their children's learning at home. Adults provide good levels of care for children and, particularly, for those at an early stage of speaking English. Leadership is good and all adults work together as an effective team. They use observations effectively to track children's progress and the learning journeys, which illustrate their progress, are exemplary records of their first year in school. As a result, of good quality provision and leadership, children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and, by the end of the Reception Year, they reach age-related levels.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

About half of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Most of these expressed their support for the work of the school. A comment typical of the questionnaires was 'the new headteacher has been extremely helpful' and 'my child has really settled in and been made welcome by staff and children'. Inspectors endorse these positive opinions and consider they are a reflection of the good levels of engagement the school has with parents and carers. A few felt that: their children are not making enough progress; that the school does not meet their children's particular needs or take account of parents' and carers' views. A few also felt that the school did not help children have a healthy lifestyle and that teaching and learning and leadership could be better. Inspectors followed these issues up and found that the learning needs of each child are considered satisfactorily. However, more-able pupils do not always achieve their full potential in English and mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning and of leadership and management, although satisfactory, is rapidly improving under the current leadership.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at North Road 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 inspector received 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 120 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	54	26	46	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	47	82	10	18	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	47	24	42	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	51	22	39	4	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	51	25	44	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	53	25	44	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	47	28	49	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)	24	42	27	47	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	44	29	51	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	51	27	47	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	42	30	53	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	56	24	42	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	63	20	35	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



16 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of North Road Primary School, Carnforth, LA5 9LQ

I would like to thank you for the help you gave the team when we inspected your school. I especially enjoyed chatting to some of you at lunchtime. I would like to share with you what the inspection found out about your school. It is a satisfactory school. These are some of the best things about it.

- Reception children have lots of fun, enjoy learning and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Your behaviour is good, you say you feel safe in school and your attendance is above average.
- You make satisfactory progress and your attainment in English and mathematics meets national averages.

To make the school better, I have asked senior leaders to:

- check that work in lessons enables you to achieve as well as you can and to see that you make enough progress in each class

- make sure that all teachers consistently plan tasks in English and mathematics lessons which match your needs and extend your learning and provide you with a clear understanding through marking of how to improve your work further
- make sure you have opportunities to learn about and meet pupils from a wider range of religions and cultures
- make sure that the leadership roles of subject leaders and members of the governing body are fully developed.

I hope you will all play your part by continuing to work hard and do your best to help North Road become an even better school.

Yours sincerely

Clare Henderson

Lead inspector

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