

Trumacar Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119272
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	363895
Inspection dates	27–28 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Jean Kendall HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	277
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Lund
Headteacher	Paul Slater
Date of previous school inspection	14 July 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons; nine teachers were seen. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, local authority representatives, parents, groups of pupils and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including safeguarding procedures, monitoring, self-evaluation and pupil progress tracking. Responses to questionnaires returned by pupils, staff and the 81 returned by parents were taken into account.

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

- Pupils' enjoyment, attainment and progress in learning in each class.
- How well teaching and activities are matched to pupils' learning needs.
- The quality of leadership and engagement of staff in self-evaluation and improvement planning.
- The quality and impact of support for pupils with special educational needs.

Information about the school

Trumacar is slightly larger than the average primary school. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The proportion identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities increased to above average levels in the last two years but has now stabilised at broadly average levels. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special needs is below that usually found. The school has achieved Healthy School status and the Activemark.

The previous inspection gave the school a notice to improve. Significant improvement was required in relation to leadership and management, pupils' achievement and engagement with parents and carers.

There have been several staffing changes since the previous inspection. An associate headteacher has been working with the school during extended absences of the substantive headteacher. The substantive headteacher left the school at the end of August. The associate headteacher has very recently been appointed as the permanent headteacher and takes up the post full-time in January 2012. Two teachers have left and two have been appointed to the school. An interim chair of governors has been brokered through the local authority.

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

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires a notice to improve. It is providing a satisfactory standard of education and satisfactory value for money.

The school has successfully tackled inadequacies identified at the previous inspection, with support from the associate headteacher. Issues caused by a lack of continuity in leadership and disrupted teaching have been resolved with recent appointments. The associate headteacher has provided very effective leadership to ensure the school remains focused on priorities to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement. Staff are supportive, citing his 'clear vision and inspirational leadership' which is moving the school forward. Parents are overwhelmingly positive, stating for example, 'There have been huge improvements', and, 'it is going from strength to strength'.

Teaching has improved and is mostly satisfactory. Teachers provide a stimulating learning environment and pupils are enjoying their learning more. There is some good practice, where activities are very effectively matched to pupils' learning needs because the teacher has a good understanding of their prior learning. However, the assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills to plan the next steps in learning is not used as effectively in all classes. The teaching of reading is weak across the whole school because skills are not taught systematically and progressively. Teaching about the sounds that letters make (phonics) has been introduced recently, but good practice is not sufficiently embedded.

Improvements to teaching mean that pupils of all ability are now making expected progress in each year group. However, many pupils are still working below expected age-related expectations across the school because progress has been too slow in the past. Attainment is closer to expected levels in the current Year 6 class because appropriate support has been put in place to help them fill gaps in their learning. Their progress in reading lags behind their progress in other subjects in all year groups.

The associate headteacher has introduced good systems to monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. These provide the means to identify any pupils who are not achieving as well as they should and to manage the performance of staff. Consequently, leaders and the governing body have a clear understanding of the

school's performance and areas that require improvement. However, teaching staff have had a limited role in analysing information, monitoring pupils' progress and planning for improvement to date. The role of middle leaders in leading improvements in their area has been similarly limited. Some initiatives are at early stages but they provide firm foundations for further development. Staff are fully committed to bringing about further improvement. Their improved skills and recent appointments have secured satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and quicken the rate of pupils' progress in every class, including classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
 - assessing pupils' prior learning and building on their knowledge and skills progressively in every area of learning
 - ensuring that reading skills are taught systematically in every year group and good practice in teaching about the sounds that letters make (phonics) is embedded.

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing the role and accountability of middle leaders in driving improvements
 - clarifying responsibilities of all staff in monitoring pupils' progress and planning for improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy learning and show perseverance when they are given opportunities to work independently. They are enjoying a broader range of activities and most are making satisfactory progress in lessons. Pupils whose context makes them vulnerable and those with special educational needs make similarly satisfactory progress in support groups and in class. Overall attainment at the end of Year 6 was low in 2011 because of previously inadequate teaching and slow progress. It is broadly in line with expectations in the current Year 6 class and showing signs of improvement across the school. However, achievement in reading is lower than it should be because skills are not taught well enough across the whole school.

Pupils display good behaviour in communal areas and are polite and considerate toward each other. They have a good understanding of risks and feel that any concerns they have are appropriately dealt with by staff. This ensures that pupils feel very safe in school. They are obedient in lessons but their opportunities to take responsibility and behave as independent, self-motivated learners are limited in some classes. Pupils are welcoming of the recently increased opportunities to contribute to the running of the school through the school council and positions of responsibility.

Pupils’ increasing enjoyment is reflected in their improved attendance which is now above average. The majority of pupils engage in a range of healthy activities and understand what they need to do to stay healthy. They are active participants in the breakfast club and various after-school activities. Pupils enjoy socialising in communal areas and collaborate well in lessons. Their understanding of moral issues is promoted effectively in lessons and assemblies and pupils are able to reflect on their experiences. These skills, together with improving basic skills, prepare them adequately for the next stage of their education. They show respect for people from different backgrounds but have limited experience of the diverse cultures represented in society.

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	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop 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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory and there is some that is good. The school has developed a consistent approach to marking which gives pupils a clear indication of how they can improve each piece of work. Teachers are encouraging and have worked hard to create a bright, stimulating environment. However assessment is not used consistently well to plan activities that build on prior learning and develop key skills systematically and progressively. The most effective learning occurs where teachers give clear explanation and provide a range of activities to enable pupils to practise and reinforce their learning. Some lessons are less effective because pupils are given activities that occupy them but do not provide sufficient challenge to extend their skills.

The curriculum adequately meets pupils’ needs. A recent review of the curriculum has led to greater continuity in planning, but is at early stages of implementation. The teaching of writing has been a focus and there are now many more opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills across the curriculum. Grammar and punctuation for writing are covered in depth and taught effectively. However, reading skills are not taught explicitly enough. There are good opportunities for pupils to enrich their experiences through after-school clubs and activities.

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Teachers are encouraging so that pupils feel secure and grow in confidence. A consistent approach to behaviour management has ensured that all pupils understand and respect the behaviour code. Support for families and pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is a strength of the school. The identification and support to pupils with special educational needs have been revised and improved. Closer monitoring and earlier intervention are ensuring that pupils’ needs are accurately identified so that appropriate support can be put in place.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
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?

Leadership and management have improved since the previous inspection and are satisfactory across the whole school. The associate headteacher has provided very good leadership. His clear vision is firmly focused on raising pupils’ achievement and improving provision and supported by all staff. His very recent appointment to the permanent headteacher position secures capacity to build on improvements. Staff have shown commitment and drive under his leadership. They have welcomed professional development are fully committed to realising the ambition for pupils and for the school as a whole. They are taking appropriate action to promote equality of opportunity and ensure that pupils who have underachieved in the past make more rapid progress. Members of the governing body have developed a sound understanding of the school’s performance and are increasingly involved in holding school leaders to account.

The school has established a number of partnerships with local schools. These are being further developed to provide opportunities for professional dialogue and extend the curriculum. Partnerships to promote pupils’ health and well-being are well established and effective. Safeguarding and recruitment procedures meet all government requirements. Staff have undertaken relevant training and follow recommended procedures and school policies to keep pupils safe. Governors and staff know the local community well and promote community cohesion adequately. Their engagement with parents and carers has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Although several initiatives are at early stages, parents are appreciative of increased communications. They have a high level of confidence in the school’s capacity to bring about further improvements.

These are the grades for the 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	3
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

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage play happily and settle quickly into new routines. This is because adults take time to welcome each child and are caring and supportive. Children therefore feel safe and grow in confidence. They learn well together and their behaviour is good. Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are broadly in line or slightly lower than expectations for their age. They make satisfactory progress across all areas of learning, so they are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education as they move into Year 1.

The environment is well organised, bright and stimulating. The outdoor area is well resourced but was not being used to its full potential at the time of the inspection. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Whole-class teaching is appropriately focused for this time of year on establishing routines, getting to know each other and behaving appropriately. However the pace of sessions is slow at times, with children spending too long waiting their turn. Resources indoors are easily accessible and children enjoy the range of activities available across all areas of learning. Children are very well supported socially and emotionally as they move from Nursery and into Year 1, but assessment is not used to inform next steps for learning in all areas for each child. There is an appropriate focus on developing number, language and listening skills in the early stages but skills for reading are not taught explicitly enough. Staff have good relationships with parents and carers, who are warmly welcomed.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	3
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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires feel that their children enjoy school and are happy with their children's experience. A few parents feel that they could be better informed about their children's progress. A very small minority also feel that behaviour could be better managed. Inspectors found that revisions to behaviour policies have enabled pupils and staff to have a clear understanding of the behaviour code and they uphold it consistently.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Trumacar Community 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 277 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	72	22	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	63	27	33	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	51	33	41	6	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	51	37	46	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	52	37	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	46	40	49	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	58	31	38	1	1	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)	41	51	33	41	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	48	40	49	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	42	42	52	4	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	48	36	44	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	48	59	31	38	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	63	27	33	2	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



29 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Trumacar Community Primary School, Morecambe, LA3 2ST

Thank for your warm welcome when we inspected your school recently. I am pleased to tell you we found that your school has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Mr Slater and all staff have worked very hard to improve teaching and help you achieve your best. You told us you are enjoying school more because lessons are interesting and school is a happier place. We agree and you have played an important part in this by behaving so considerately toward each other. Teachers are caring and supportive so that you feel very safe and make good gains in your health and well-being.

Better teaching is helping you to make satisfactory progress in your learning. Teachers are using more interesting approaches to help you learn. They are giving you good advice when they mark your work and we were pleased to see that you take time to follow it up. However, activities do not always provide the right amount of challenge to help you build on what you can already do. Your writing and mathematics are showing good improvement – well done! The next big task is to make sure your reading also improves.

Please thank your parents and carers for returning questionnaires. The vast majority are very pleased with the school. They feel that Mr Slater has made a real difference; they feel much better informed and have every confidence in the staff to carry on making improvements. We agree. There are a couple of areas we have asked the school to carry on improving. These are:

- to raise attainment and quicken progress in every class, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We have asked them to do this by assessing your prior learning more effectively and improving the way reading skills are taught
- to strengthen leadership and management so all teachers have clear roles and responsibilities in driving improvements forward.

We would like to wish everyone at your school every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jean Kendall

Her Majesty's Inspector, on behalf of the inspection team

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