

# Lancaster Ryelands Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119132
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379733
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 April 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Gillian Salter-Smith

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	409
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Rivet
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carolyn Singleton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Torrisholme Road Lancaster LA1 2RJ
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Gillian Salter-Smith  
Katherine Lee  
Sheila Mawer

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Parts of 28 lessons were observed taught by 12 teachers. These included short sessions led by teachers and teaching assistants on guided reading, learning letters and the sounds they make, and basic skills. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and the local authority general adviser. Inspectors observed the school's work and listened to children reading. Documents looked at included the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, data of pupils' progress and policies and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. Questionnaires received from 44 parents and carers were scrutinised in addition to those received from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

Ryelands is much larger than the average-sized primary school. A well-above average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The vast majority of pupils are from White British heritage. A below average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. An average proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs are supported by the school at school-action level, and an above average proportion are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. During the academic year 2010/11, the school received pupils from a local primary school that closed down; the number of pupils on roll increased by 25%. The school meets the current floor standard, the minimum standards for pupils' achievement expected by the government.

A new headteacher was appointed in September 2011. In January 2012, due to unavoidable long-term absence of the headteacher, an associate headteacher was appointed to lead the school for three days per week and the deputy headteacher was appointed as acting headteacher for two days per week. There have been a significant number of staff changes since the last inspection.

The school has the following awards: Healthy School, International School – intermediate, Food for Life partnership – Bronze, Activemark, Investors in people, Eco-School.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is improving but is not yet good because teaching and pupils' progress are satisfactory. Consequently, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in all key stages including Early Years Foundation Stage. Attainment is broadly average, though not as strong in English as it is in mathematics. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- From low starting points when children join the school, pupils make satisfactory progress overall and by Year 6 reach broadly average attainment. Progress is inconsistent between year groups and classes and is stronger overall in Key Stage 2. Attainment is higher in mathematics than in English. Attainment in reading and writing among current pupils is broadly average and is improving in response to the school's strong and effective drive for improvement in these subjects.
- Teaching is satisfactory and improving although inconsistencies in its effectiveness remain between classes. It is better in Key Stage 2 than other key stages. Overall, pupils are making at least the progress expected of them. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and supportive. Pupils' emotional and social needs are very well supported and pupils' behaviour is well managed.
- Pupils enjoy learning and behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in many ways. The school is working hard with pupils, parents and carers to improve low attendance.
- A turbulent period of leadership and staffing has been managed well. Leaders have been resolute in monitoring teaching which is now improving and having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Performance of staff is managed well and they are now made closely accountable for pupils' progress.

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

- Improve pupils' overall achievement, particularly in English, by:
  - consistently implementing policies designed to improve the quality of pupils' writing such as opportunities to write at length, and using effectively targets to improve literacy skills
  - providing more opportunities to involve parents and carers in supporting their children's learning.
- Improve attendance by increasing further the work with pupils, parents and carers to recognise the value and importance of regular attendance.
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good or outstanding by:
  - setting consistently high expectations of pupils' performance
  - ensuring tasks are matched accurately to pupils' abilities and prior learning in every lesson
  - increasing the pace of learning so that pupils are more often actively engaged in learning, working both independently and collaboratively
  - improving the deployment of teaching assistants so they are actively supporting learning in every part of a lesson
  - developing the use of targets and teachers' marking in every class so that they are helpful and supportive to pupils in improving their work.
- Improve children's progress and achievement in Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - improving children's play and learning so that they choose their own activities and work independently more often
  - planning and enhancing resources so that they better support and challenge the learning intended, especially outdoors
  - increasing the frequency of assessment and recording of children's progress as they are learning so that children, parents and carers can more fully share and appreciate the progress that is being made.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

In classrooms observed, learning and performance are satisfactory. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy drama and role play and discussing their work with each other. In a Key Stage 2 lesson, they fully entered the spirit of the role play giving their strong views articulately to the 'Queen' who had just declared that she was 'bringing back beheading for all criminal acts'. This proved very effective preparation for pupils' writing. Pupils take care to present their work well. On occasions, pupils' interest flags when they sit for too long listening to the teacher.

From low starting points on entry to the Nursery, especially in communication, language and literacy, children make satisfactory progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time pupils enter Key Stage 1, knowledge and skills, although improved, are well below average. Progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall because there are inconsistencies in progress between classes and year groups. Overall, progress is stronger in

Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence shows that progress is accelerating in response to improved teaching and a strong focus on improving writing and reading in all key stages. Attainment is broadly average by the end of Key Stage 2 and has improved since the previous inspection; it is stronger in mathematics than in English. Current attainment in reading in Year 2 is below average and in Year 6 is broadly average.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Their needs are identified quickly and well-targeted support promotes their learning and progress. The gaps between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils are narrowing and are smaller than the national picture. Overall, boys are catching up on previous underperformance in writing and in 2011, boys were broadly in line with national averages for boys in reading.

Parents and carers responding to the questionnaire consider that their children make good progress. Inspectors found that progress is improving; it is not consistently good across classes and is judged satisfactory.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching is improving and helping to accelerate progress. It is satisfactory overall with some that is good and outstanding. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and supportive, and behaviour is well managed. Staff support pupils' emotional and social needs well so that they make good progress in their personal development.

In the best teaching, staff set high expectations of pupils' performance, provide relevant activities and well-planned steps in learning so learning is rapid. Teachers expect pupils to make independent decisions about their learning and work collaboratively. Teachers make sure that pupils fully understand what is expected in lessons and give pupils clear individual targets to guide their learning; tasks are matched well to individual needs. In a good Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils were enthralled by a series of filmed news reports from the time the Titanic sank. Skilful questioning developed pupils' thinking about the emotions of the different people they saw. Good collaborative talk led to high quality independent writing. All pupils worked to specific targets to help improve their writing skills. Effective teaching of letters and the sounds they make among younger pupils and children, well-planned sessions for guided reading across the school, and a good range of reading books targeted to different levels of ability are helping to raise attainment in reading. The introduction of a system that allows pupils to select their homework from a wide range of activities is improving attitudes and commitment to learning.

Where teaching is satisfactory teachers do not set high enough expectations of pupils' performance; they do not match tasks to pupils' abilities and prior learning well enough. The pace of learning can be slow because pupils listen to teachers talking for too long; and pupils are not actively engaged in learning. In some lessons there are not enough opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively or independently. Teachers' marking does not always provide enough guidance and pupils' personal targets are not always used well enough to help improve work.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported when they work individually or in small groups with staff. Teaching assistants are less effective during periods when the teacher talks to the class as a whole.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage children are happy, safe and well cared for. They enjoy extensive resources both indoors and outdoors. The teaching of early reading is well structured. However, too many formal whole-class activities disrupt children's continuous flow of play and learning so they do not choose their own activities often enough. Good resources are not always planned and organised well enough to support the planned learning intentions, especially outdoors. The assessment of children's progress as they learn and play is not frequent enough; nor is it recorded in such a way that children, parents and carers can fully share and appreciate the progress that is being made.

Parents and carers consider their children are taught well. Inspectors found teaching to be satisfactory and improving but not yet consistently good.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils are happy and settled in lessons and ready to learn. Pupils' behaviour over time is satisfactory and improving. Pupils consider behaviour to be good most of the time, but recognise there are times when a few pupils do not behave well. Pupils have contributed to deciding the boundaries and expectations within the school's revised policy on managing behaviour; this is used consistently across the school. Pupils have responded particularly well to the range of rewards offered. Most parents and carers responding to the questionnaire are satisfied with the standard of behaviour in school and feel that their children are kept safe. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when using technology. They are aware of different types of bullying, including name-calling. They say bullying is rare and they know staff will help to sort it out quickly. However, a very small number of parents and carers are not totally satisfied that bullying is dealt with effectively.

Attendance was at least average for a number of years and then dipped in 2010/11 to low. This coincided with a large intake of new pupils from a local school that closed. Despite the school's rigorous efforts to discourage holidays taken in term time and much work with pupils, parents and carers to encourage and value good attendance, it has not risen significantly so far this year.

### **Leadership and management**

A period of turbulent leadership and changes in staffing has been managed well. Throughout this period leaders have focused on and been successful in improving teaching and achievement. The monitoring of teaching is rigorous and is closely followed by well-targeted professional development and support tailored to meet individual staff needs. Performance management of staff is linked well to whole-school priorities and individual needs. Consequently, teaching is improving but is not yet good because changes have not been fully embedded and inconsistencies across the school remain. Improved systems of tracking pupils' progress are used to identify and tackle potential underachievement quickly and teachers are now being held more firmly to account for pupils' progress. An improved curriculum is effective in improving early reading skills, basic skills across the school and pupils' attitudes to learning. The school self-evaluation and improvement plan is realistic and sets out clear priorities and areas to improve. Since the previous inspection, attainment for pupils by Year 6 has improved and inspection evidence shows progress is improving in all key stages and in the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection. The capacity to improve further is demonstrated in these achievements.

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The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities to keep pupils and staff safe. Staff are rigorously checked for their suitability to work with children and arrangements for child protection and risk assessment are robust. Members of the governing body are very supportive of the school and a number visit the school regularly. They are well informed of the school's performance but are not involved in evaluating the impact of the school's plans for improvements as systematically as they could be. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The school is committed to tackling discrimination, and gaps in performance for different groups of pupils are reducing.

The curriculum is improving and more closely matches pupils' different needs, especially those in danger of falling behind. Good attention is paid to improving basic skills and preparing pupils for the next stage of education. Activities that interest pupils, especially the boys, are giving more opportunities to write in subjects across the curriculum; they result in good motivation and writing. However, these opportunities are not yet consistent across the school. The curriculum supports pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The school recognises the need to involve parents and carers more closely in supporting their children's learning.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



30 April 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Lancaster Ryelands Primary School, Lancaster, LA1 2RJ**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to my colleagues and me when we inspected your school. Your school is a satisfactory school. You make the progress expected of you in English and mathematics. You have reached better standards in mathematics and the school is working hard to help you to do better in English, in both reading and writing. Your response to changes is encouraging. It was good to see the interest you showed in the work on the Titanic, a subject that you chose to pursue, and how it led to your producing some good quality writing. Your involvement in the new behaviour policy means that most of you know and readily accept the boundaries and expectation for behaviour and are proud of the rewards you receive.

Your school is improving because leaders are working hard with all the staff. They are keen to improve even more and they have agreed to continue to try to raise your attainment and improve the progress you make, especially in English, by:

- giving you lots of chances to write about things that interest you
- encouraging you to focus very closely on your own targets when you are writing so that you know what you need to do to improve
- encouraging more of you to come to school every day
- improving lessons so that you always do your best and enjoy working with each other.
- ensuring that children in the Nursery and Reception classes have every chance to do their best.

You can help by making sure that you continue to work hard and try hard and that everyone comes to school every day unless there is a very good reason not to. I wish you all the best for your futures.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Salter-Smith  
Lead inspector

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