



# North Lakes School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112118  
**LEA** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 278852  
**Inspection dates** 9 February 2006 to 10 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr John Heap

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Huntley Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Penrith
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11		Cumbria, CA11 8NU
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01768 242150
<b>Number on roll</b>	224	<b>Fax number</b>	01768 242151
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Lynne Reside
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 July 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jean Wilson-Jowsey

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a broadly average sized school in an area with economic disadvantage. Attainment on entry is a little below average. The proportion of children receiving free school meals is broadly average. Most children are white British and a very small proportion comes from minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of children with learning difficulties is well above average. The school has an eight-place strategic facility for children with severe learning difficulties. The school has received several awards including Investors in People and Healthy Schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that it is satisfactory and gives sound value for money. After a long period of insecurity caused by staffing problems, there are strong signs of recovery. Effective leadership by the headteacher has meant that the school is once more improving, particularly in areas such as children's achievement which is satisfactory. The large proportion of children who have extra needs get good support and progress well. Moreover, there is an extra emphasis on boosting children whom the school judges could do even better. However, the school is right to identify the need to improve progress in writing and mathematics, particularly for the higher attaining children. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good features. However, there is insufficient attention paid to setting individual targets for children's learning and the use of marking to assess progress towards them. Care for all the children is good and the tracking of children's achievements is effective and mostly accurate. The curriculum is sound with good features, such as the out of school enrichment activities. As a result, children grow in confidence and their personal development is good. However, there is insufficient use of children's growing basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the full range of subjects. Overall, leadership and management are sound. Recent improvements in several areas mean that the school is soundly placed to develop further. The monitoring of teaching and the framing of subject action plans are insufficiently focused on children's achievement.

not applicable

### What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards in writing and mathematics, particularly for higher attaining children, by:

- setting individual targets for children and using marking to assess their progress towards them
- improving the range and quality of children's writing in all subjects
- improve the monitoring of teaching, so that there is greater focus on what children actually learn and achieve.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Most children progress soundly in their learning, but higher attaining children could do better in writing and mathematics. Over time, results in national tests have fluctuated according to the numbers of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example the results were particularly low in 2004 because of the high proportion of such children in the year group. The school reacted positively to this with much training and development in English and mathematics. At the core of this work is the extensive tracking of children's

achievements and the use of the information to identify the broad needs of groups and individuals. As a result, achievement rose in 2005. Nevertheless, the progress of higher attaining children in writing and mathematics is not good enough and ambitious targets in national tests have not been met. The main reasons for this are:

- weaknesses in setting challenging targets for individuals and marking to these targets
- insufficient use and development of children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in the other subjects.

The school is dealing with these shortcomings in partnership with the local authority through its involvement with the National Strategy Leadership Programme. Children with extra learning needs progress well and a few reach average standards by the end of Year 6. They benefit from good support.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children are friendly, considerate and eager to help each other and particularly the children from the strategic learning facility. Children enjoy school and attendance is sound. They feel safe and secure because they know staff will sort out any problems fairly. Behaviour is good and children are keen to earn rewards such as 'golden time'. They know the difference between right and wrong and respond well to the 'traffic light' system of rules. Children are well aware of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles. School councillors take their responsibilities very seriously and their suggestions have been acted on, such as when designing the 'Trim Trail'. Children have adequate responsibilities in classrooms and around the school. They make a strong contribution to the community by participating in local events and the choir has successfully sung in national festivals. Children are reflective learners and gain much from regular philosophy lessons, assemblies and class discussions. Children have a strong understanding of other beliefs and ways of life through:

- learning about a range of faiths
- active links with a school in Tanzania
- participating with visiting theatre workshops that support the school's strong commitment to racial equality.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are soundly planned and teachers make sure children know, in broad terms, what they will learn in each lesson. In the best lessons children's progress is good. These lessons have a brisk pace and teachers ask searching questions that keep children on their toes, as in a Year 3 history lesson about the Romans. Moreover, teachers and support staff provide children with good

opportunities to check their own and each others' learning and use varied resources well. Other lessons feature some helpful matching of work to different learning needs so that children's achievement is satisfactory. There is suitable emphasis on children acquiring sound basic skills and useful learning strategies. The school has good systems to track and monitor children's progress at set times in the year. This information is used well in English and mathematics to group children according to their broad learning needs. However, the setting of precise learning targets for individual children is weak. As a result, marking is too general and children have too few opportunities to develop as independent learners. The high level of support from skilled classroom assistants promotes the good achievement of children with extra learning needs.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. The programme for learning is enriched well by a good range of activities such as annual residential visits, environmental study weeks and a wide variety of well attended after-school clubs. All legal requirements are fully met and schemes of work provide a sound basis for varied learning activities. As a result, children make satisfactory progress in gaining basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. However, there are too few opportunities to use these skills across the full range of subjects and this slows the progress of the highest attaining learners, in particular. For example, despite good provision for ICT, children are not encouraged to use and develop their ICT skills in all subjects. Activities to promote safe living are satisfactory. Children with extra learning needs are well provided for and benefit equally from what the school has to offer.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. The school carefully monitors its practices to promote health and safety and, as a result, children are safe, secure and enjoy their time in school. The whole staff know well the children and, often, their families. This means that they cater for their wide and varied social needs to the satisfaction of the children and their parents. Child protection procedures and the response to absence are robust. Consequently, children who may be vulnerable are quickly identified and supported. In all of these areas, the school works successfully with outside agencies. The tracking of children's achievements is extensive and effective. The management is mostly accurate in predicting how well children will do, but occasionally they are over ambitious. The headteacher has led significant improvements in this area and this has resulted in recent improvements in children's progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. After the last inspection, a lengthy period of disruption and insecurity was caused by staffing difficulties. As a result, children's

behaviour and progress suffered. Leaders have tackled these and other issues well and, as a result, behaviour is now good and progress improving. The headteacher has established good practices for managing the school, which have brought greater consistency in the quality of education and the raising of morale. This is evident in the Investor in People award. Parents, children and members of the school council contribute their ideas to help the school form an accurate picture of its performance. Priorities are consequently clear and the good quality of long-term plans to address them is a good indicator of the breadth of vision and the ambition of the leaders and managers. Governors and senior staff are well informed and provide sound support. As a result, the school is soundly placed to improve further.

Regular monitoring of teaching focuses too often on the way that the teacher presents the lesson and insufficiently on children's achievement and progress for monitoring to play a full part in raising standards. Coordinators' action plans for their subjects are variable in quality. Good plans, such as the one for mathematics, have clear and measurable targets for children's achievement, while others lack clear criteria for measuring the success of actions and initiatives.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

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10 February 2006

Dear Children

Mrs McArthur and I thoroughly enjoyed being in your school this week. As always, it is a pleasure and privilege to work with you and the staff of the school. We were very pleased when many of you wished to talk with us and we were impressed by the courtesy and help you provided.

What we liked about your school:

the way that you play sensibly and safely and behave well

the important role the School Council plays in the school on your behalf

the considerate way that you treat each other and particularly the help and support you give to the children in the strategic learning facility

the good progress made by children with extra learning needs

how well all the staff care for you and make sure that you feel safe and secure

the hard work that the headteacher and staff are doing to work out how well you are doing and how to help you make more progress.

What we have asked your teachers and governors to make better:

improve your ability to write and do mathematics. You can be really helpful by making sure that you always do your best work and, in fact, try always to improve on your last piece of work

we want your teachers and governors to pay a lot of attention to the progress you are making when they watch lessons, look at your books and plan for the future.

The inspection team wishes you well and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Heap

Lead inspector