



Long Marton School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112182
LEA Cumbria
Inspection number 278872
Inspection dates 27 March 2006 to 28 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Pat Kime HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Long Marton
School category	Community		Appleby-in-Westmorland
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Cumbria, CA16 6BT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01768 361397
Number on roll	51	Fax number	01768 361397
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Judith Walker
Date of previous inspection	1 December 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Rachel Smith

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	27 March 2006 - 28 March 2006	278872

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. It included observation of parts of five lessons; examination of pupils' work, records of their progress and other relevant documents; and discussions with staff, pupils and governors.

Description of the school

This very small school is located a few miles north of Appleby-in-Westmorland. It serves the village of Long Marton and a very sparsely populated fellside community. Most families depend for their income on farming or tourism.

Since the last inspection the number of pupils has increased by 50 per cent. All pupils are of white British heritage. None currently receive free school meals. A very small number of pupils are in the care of the local authority. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is broadly average but a high proportion of them carry statements of special educational need.

The school has 'Healthy School' accreditation. Staff and governors have been instrumental in the development of the pre-school provision and before and after school care which a voluntary provider operates on the premises. The school has strong links with other small primary schools in the area.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. It gives good value for money. The school provides a very caring atmosphere in which pupils flourish as individuals and develop into mature and responsible young people with a social conscience. The school is at the heart of its community. Pupils contribute to community life and the school makes extremely good use of the expertise and facilities available locally. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and a very high percentage returned the inspection questionnaire.

The quality of teaching is good overall. Pupils make good progress. By the time they move on to secondary school, standards are generally above average, though writing lags behind reading. Provision in the Foundation Stage (reception) is effective and the school's records show that children make better than average progress in this year. Nonetheless, opportunities for them to learn through play could be enriched. In Key Stage 1 pupils make steady progress but do not catch up in reading and writing, though there are now signs of improvement. Progress is most rapid in Key Stage 2.

The school is very well led. The teachers are always looking for ways to improve their work but more streamlined systems for tracking pupils' progress could alert them sooner to any early signs of underachievement. All the issues for improvement from the previous inspection have been dealt with. The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate and all the areas for development identified by the inspector are included in its improvement plan. These factors show the school is well-placed to improve further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

There are wide variations in what children can do when they start at the school but overall attainment on entry is below average, particularly in social development and in language skills. From this starting point all pupils make good progress and reach challenging targets by the end of Key Stage 2.

Progress in the reception year is good. In Key Stage 1 pupils make steady progress but, in recent years standards at the end of Year 2 have been below average and, in reading and writing, standards have slipped for two years. The school has recognised this and taken appropriate steps to improve matters. The benefits are beginning to show.

Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is particularly good and for five years standards in the end of key stage tests have nearly always been above average in all of the three subjects tested; English, mathematics and science. Last year's leavers made exceptionally good progress in English in Key Stage 2, though reading was better than writing. The school is improving the teaching of writing successfully. Standards in science at Key Stage 2 are consistently well above average. This is because the subject is very well taught and much of the work is pitched at an advanced level for the pupils' age.

Throughout the school pupils with LDD make at least good progress because their needs are identified, very good individual programmes of work are devised to help them, and very good track is kept of their progress. The most able do well and flexible class organisation enables them to work with older pupils in many lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils, including those with behavioural difficulties, make outstanding progress in their personal development. When they start school several children find it hard to behave well, to share and to make friends. By the time they leave pupils are mature and responsible. They show a high level of care and respect for others and a very good degree of independence. They make a very good contribution to the life of the school and to the wider community, for instance through the recent 'Fair Trade' coffee morning they organised. Pupils learn to pursue the common good. Class councils and the school council, which manages its own budget, contribute particularly well to this. Pupils develop skills and attributes for their future economic well-being very well.

Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils know where they stand at school, not least because they have been involved in formulating the rules. They have a very good understanding of values and for the vast majority behaviour is good. The curriculum provides particularly well for pupils' cultural development, through the arts and by raising their awareness of cultural diversity in Britain and the wider world. As a result, cultural development is very good.

Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and how to keep safe and, for the most part, apply this in their lives. For example, many participate in sport in out of class clubs. Older pupils have produced a 'power point' presentation to promote the advantages of active playtimes to the younger ones.

Pupils enjoy school and work hard. The attendance rate is above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most of the teaching observed was good and none was unsatisfactory. This positive picture was confirmed by the work in pupils' books and the school's regular monitoring of lessons. Throughout the school staff have positive relationships with pupils and manage behaviour effectively so the focus is firmly on learning. The most successful teaching occurs when expectations are high and teachers have very good knowledge of the subject. These strengths account for high standards in Key Stage 2 in science and, from photographic evidence, in art and design. In the best lessons seen teachers aimed high, they ensured the work was presented in ways that appealed to pupils, and they questioned pupils incisively to get them thinking hard. Teachers generally succeed in meeting the diverse needs of pupils in the mixed age classes, though occasionally there is little challenge for a few

pupils whilst the teacher concentrates on other groups. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and check their progress half-termly, but they could make more use of these processes to set short-term targets that tell pupils how to do better.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum which is coherent and interesting and has some outstanding strengths. Teachers work closely together to plan the work in each subject carefully and link work in different subjects wherever possible. This ensures pupils cover everything required and build up knowledge and skills progressively in the mixed age classes. The curriculum for children in the reception year covers all the required areas of learning but could place more emphasis on children learning through play activities they choose.

Staff make every effort to broaden pupils' horizons and the curriculum is greatly enriched by many visits to places of interest and artistic events and by visitors who share their expertise with pupils. The programme of extra activities and clubs, many run by voluntary helpers, is exceptionally extensive for a school this size. Collaborative links with other primary schools in the local area and further afield promote pupils' personal development very successfully and enrich the academic curriculum extremely well, particularly the arts, and provide access to additional resources purchased jointly.

Provision for pupils' personal development is outstanding. For example, 'Philosophy for children' is well-established in personal, social and health education (PSHE). The 'Diversity on Track' project for pupils in schools close to the Settle to Carlisle railway has led directly to 'twinning' with a school in Carlisle city and to the establishment of links with a school in Yorkshire which serves a multi-ethnic community. Both are broadening pupils' cultural awareness and promoting social skills. Links with the local community are a significant strength.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is excellent and academic support and guidance are good. Comprehensive arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils. For example, risk assessments are thorough and all staff are familiar with the child protection arrangements. The school champions its pupils and staff have shown determination and tenacity in securing additional support to help them overcome the barriers to learning faced by some. It is the driving force behind the development of extended provision to meet local families' needs. Staff know the pupils very well and assess their day by day progress effectively. The whole-school arrangements for assessment are thorough but systems for the tracking of each pupil's longer-term progress are not as efficient as they might be. Support for pupils with LDD is very well-organised and effective. They and their parents and carers are involved well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

This forward-looking school is very well led and managed. The headteacher gives a very clear lead to all aspects of the school's work. She promotes the very positive ethos, the strong teamwork and the very good partnership with the community. There is a highly reflective culture. The processes of self-evaluation and development are managed well, with governors making a good contribution, particularly by checking plans are carried through. The views of all members of the school community are sought and acted on. Whilst success is celebrated, less effective aspects are identified and squarely faced so the plans for improvement and development are well-founded. Governance is good and governors know the school well through involvement in its life and work. Much has been achieved since the last inspection and the school is strongly placed to continue improving.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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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The Pupils

Long Marton School

Long Marton

Appleby-in-Westmorland

Cumbria

CA16 6BT

28 March 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently and for helping me with the inspection. You were all friendly and polite. I enjoyed my visit, especially seeing your lessons and talking to you. You know I came to see how good your school is and how well you are learning. I'm writing to tell you what I found.

Yours is a good school and some things about it are excellent. The teaching is good and you all try hard and learn well. Year 6 pupils' achievement in the national tests (SATs) is good, particularly in science and reading. You learn important skills that you will need as you grow up, like literacy and numeracy and how to work in groups. But I think you are capable of doing a bit better at writing, and at reading in Key Stage 1. The teachers are working on this.

The staff help you learn to be responsible, to care for others and to keep healthy and safe. They organise really interesting things for you to do and there are a lot of clubs and visits and visitors who help you learn. I was very pleased to see how big a part you play in school life and in making decisions about how to make it even better. This is excellent. So is the way your school is involved in the local community.

You are looked after very well at school. When pupils find it hard to learn, whatever the reason, the staff do everything possible to help them. The staff keep good track of how you are all getting on in your learning but they could improve the system.

Your headteacher leads the school very well and all the staff and governors want to make it better still. I'm sure that, with the support of every one of you, they will. I hope you keep on working hard and enjoying learning.

With all best wishes for the future

Pat Kime

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools