



Mossgate Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 130262
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 282133
Inspection dates 19 September 2005 to 19 September 2005
Reporting inspector Gordon Alston

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Kingsway
School category	Community		Heysham
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Morecambe, Lancashire
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01524 850736
Number on roll	193	Fax number	01524 850737
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr M Butlin
Date of previous inspection	1 January 2000	Headteacher	Ms A C Lawler

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 19 September 2005 - 19 September 2005	Inspection number 282133
-----------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Mossgate Primary school is situated in Heysham in Lancashire. It serves an area of significant social deprivation where the surrounding area ranks in the worst 5% in the district. There are 192 pupils in the school aged 4 to 11. The proportion of pupils who receive free school meals and the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are both well above the national average. There are almost no pupils who do not have English as their first language. Testing of pupils on entry to the school indicates that the level of attainment on entry is well below average. In the past two years, the school has suffered from a period of staffing instability because of a number of long-term absences that have been covered by temporary teaching staff.

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 an effective school that provides a good standard of education for its pupils. Parents, pupils and the surrounding community think highly of the school. Reception children make good progress in all areas of their learning. Although standards according to national test results are well below average, particularly in 2005, the overall picture is one of improvement and pupils are making good progress. The weakest aspect of the pupils' performance is in writing, especially for the more able pupils. Pupils' personal development is outstanding and the care provided for them helps them to be confident. They are helped and encouraged to have healthy lives with a high priority given to sport and exercise. The school council, the 'Mossgate Parliament', exemplifies the school's desire for pupils to think for themselves and have a say about their education. The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school and the school works hard at enriching pupils' experiences through visits and visitors. Curriculum provision is good overall, though not all pupils have sufficient opportunities to use their ICT skills in other subjects. Leadership and management are good. The very good performance of the senior managers is demonstrated by their success in leading the school during a period of staff instability over the past two years. This led to some unevenness in the effectiveness of subject leaders, which is now being tackled. Governors discharge their responsibilities well and strongly support the school's work on improving standards and teaching. The school gives good value for money and now that staff stability has returned, it is in a good position to improve further.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

Continue to work on the planned programmes it has in place to:

- raise standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly by improving the range and quality of writing for the more able pupils
- increase opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills across all subjects in order to raise standards further
- improve the consistency and effectiveness of subject leadership.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well, although standards in English, mathematics and science are well below the national average. Results in national tests show an improving picture up until 2005, but in 2003 and 2004, long-term staff absences adversely affected the quality of teaching and the Year 6 test results in 2005 were adversely affected. The school's own records of pupils' progress demonstrate that pupils did not achieve as well in classes where their permanent teacher was absent. However, the school has done well to counteract the negative effects and pupils are now making good progress.

When they first start school, many children have skills well below those expected for their age. Their communication, language and literacy skills are particularly weak. They make good progress in the reception and infant classes, although many pupils are still in the early stages of learning to read by the end of Year 2. It is only the most able pupils who read with fluency and expression. As the pupils move through Years 3 to 6, they increasingly make good progress, although their difficulties in recording their ideas in writing contribute to lower standards overall in English.

All groups are now achieving well. The large number of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities and the very few pupils whose home language is not English make good progress. The effective help they get from a very conscientious, knowledgeable team of support assistants enables them to take part fully and successfully in lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school's work in this area is outstanding. Pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development is very good, and cultural development is good. The joy that pupils express through their learning indicates that the school promotes a great sense of spirituality. The very effective contribution of all staff helps to enhance pupils' views of themselves. Pupils of all abilities, and the very small numbers from other ethnic backgrounds, treat each other with great consideration and respect. The 'Mossgate Parliament' enables pupils to make a significant contribution to the running of the school, and to take on additional responsibilities.

The pupils' behaviour is excellent and their attitudes in lessons are extremely positive. The fact that attendance is about average reflects not only how much the pupils enjoy coming to school but also how much parents value the work of the school.

Pupils are very proud of their school. One pupil said 'teachers are interested in you and always help you'. Pupils take an active role in keeping healthy. The school's wide range of out-of-school clubs and its provision of equipment at breaks are instrumental in ensuring that pupils exercise regularly and participate in sport. Pupils are free from bullying and know about the dangers associated with drugs. They are very actively involved in several community projects and the school is seen as a very important contributor to community harmony.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and as a result, the pupils are making good progress. Teachers effectively motivate and enthuse the pupils with a wide range of interesting activities. Rigorous testing and recording of pupils' achievement in lessons help teachers plan challenging learning activities. Pupils want to succeed, partly because they want to please their teachers. Pupils are aware of their responsibility

to learn, and are encouraged to work independently: they do this very well. The challenging targets that pupils are set are great motivators, and often pupils assess their own work themselves or discuss reaching their targets with the teacher. 'Teachers are always telling us to do our best work,' one pupil commented as he pondered over the most important rules for a class visit to a river. Clear, achievable targets in individual plans for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are used well in setting relevant tasks for these pupils. Alongside the effective input from well prepared, conscientious support staff, the plans ensure these pupils receive good quality teaching.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum meets the pupils' needs well and contributes effectively to their good academic progress and excellent personal development. A good range of visits and visitors to school provide pupils with good opportunities to learn in a range of stimulating ways. The school is beginning to make good use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to help learning in other subjects. However, the use of pupils' ICT skills is not sufficiently well used in many subjects. Great care is taken to attend to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties, effectively using a wide range of very good additional support. Staff at all levels help raise pupils' awareness of the need to take regular exercise and encourage them to take up additional sporting activities. The school has taken effective action to ensure that pupils have access to good quality information related to drugs misuse, which is a major concern in the immediate community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding and as a result, the pupils are self-assured and eager to learn. They communicate with adults very confidently and know that their contributions are greatly valued. The high quality of support and encouragement that pupils receive from the school's own education support assistant is instrumental in motivating pupils who have emotional difficulties, helping them to achieve well and play a full life in the school community. The very high level of commitment from all staff is outstanding in promoting the health and safety of pupils. Child protection procedures are very good. There are no incidents of bullying or nastiness between pupils. Arrangements for pupils to start school and the support provided for them when they leave are also very strong features of the school's work. The school quickly responds to pupils who have problems, often involving parents and other agencies to ensure that learning does not suffer and their good progress continues.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The very good combined performance of a conscientious and highly committed headteacher and deputy headteacher has

successfully led the school through a very difficult period of staffing instability. They have a strong belief in the importance that all pupils should do well both academically and in their personal development. This strong commitment is the driving force in providing a school that simultaneously makes sure that pupils make good progress on all fronts and meets the needs of its community well. Coordinators are enthusiastic in their roles and strive to raise the quality of teaching in their subjects. However, due to long-term absences and differences in teachers' experience, the quality of subject leadership is uneven. The school's improvement plan is addressing this issue.

The school successfully evaluates its own performance and sees effective self-evaluation as central to improvement. All issues from the last inspection have been dealt with effectively, demonstrating that the school has good capacity to improve further. The views of parents and pupils are taken into account when considering school improvement planning. Resources are used and deployed effectively to the benefit of the pupils. The school provides good value for money.

The governors meet their statutory duties well and clearly know what the school is achieving. They are regular visitors, getting to know pupils and staff and good use is made of their expertise.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------	--------------

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?	2	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	4	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	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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	2	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?	1	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

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE
T 0207 421 6800
F 0207 421 6707

www.ofsted.gov.uk

Mossgate Primary School
Kingsway
Heysham
Morecambe
Lancashire
LA3 2EE

21 September 2005

Dear Pupils

I am writing this letter after spending two enjoyable days in your school and want to thank you all so much for making the experience such a pleasurable one. Your friendliness, very good behaviour and excellent relationships with one another are a credit to you all, and helped us to judge just how good your school is in helping you to grow and learn.

Well, what did we think after these two days? I know your teachers were worried about inspectors coming, but hopefully our report will help them feel all their hard work is worthwhile. I always ask pupils their views of the school and one boy said 'our teachers are interested in us and help us a lot'. He was right; your school is a good, caring school. You have a good team of adults led by a hard-working headteacher and deputy headteacher and everyone wants you to do as well as you can. Your teachers make learning interesting, encourage you to work hard and, as a result, you make good progress in lessons. They also arrange a number of visits for you and visitors to talk to you. We were pleased to see how very hard you worked but of equal importance was how very well everyone got on. We saw lots of pupils who had responsibilities and jobs to do, and they did these well. We were also very pleased to see all the clubs you go to regularly, the way you take regular exercise, and how important sport is to you.

I'm sure your teachers always say 'this work is good but you could make it even better if you...'. Well, this is what we are telling your school – to make it even better standards need to be higher in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in writing, and especially for the more able pupils. We also want your teachers to give you more opportunities to use computers to help you learn in all subjects. Finally, we feel that some teachers who are in charge of subjects are very good, and it would benefit you if they were all as good as each other.

Good luck!

Gordon Alston
(Lead inspector)

Annex B