



Lancaster Road Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119137
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291333
Inspection dates 16–17 January 2007
Reporting inspector Carole Cressey

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Lancaster Road
School category	Community		Morecambe, Lancashire
Age range of pupils	4–11		LA4 5TH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01524 410914
Number on roll (school)	419	Fax number	01524 831763
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr John Caston
		Headteacher	Mrs Hilary Papard (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 16–17 January 2007	Inspection number 291333
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is set in the town of Morecambe. Most children come from White British backgrounds; a very small number are from other backgrounds and have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is above average, as is the percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was on long-term sick leave and the school was being led and managed by the deputy headteacher. The attainment of children when they start school is typical for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lancaster Road School is a good school, which gives good value for money. Its own evaluation provides a very accurate insight into the quality and impact of its provision. The school's success is due to its strong leadership and management, which promote an ethos where the care, safety, well-being, enjoyment and achievement of every pupil are central to its work. The change in leadership, due to the headteacher's long-term absence, is seen by parents as a 'seamless transition' during which the ethos of the school and the commitment to enabling all pupils to do their best has been maintained. Standards are above average and pupils make good progress. No matter what standards of attainment pupils enter the school with, they leave having worked hard, done their best and achieved the standards of which they are capable. This is because throughout the school, including the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning, the curriculum and care are good with some very good aspects.

This is a school that continually 'buzzes' from early morning until well after the official school day is over. Corridors, shared areas and classrooms are full of pupils eagerly engaged in learning. Their concentration and determination to do well are almost tangible. Pupils talk enthusiastically about how much they like their teachers and the work they do. One parent wrote that her child enjoys school so much that she never wants to leave. Staff know the pupils well and teaching is matched accurately to individual needs and provides pupils with the skills they need to be successful learners. Assessment systems provide them with an overwhelming amount of information on pupils' attainment. However, these systems are not used as effectively as they could be to check whether pupils are making the best progress they could over time.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who need help with a particular problem are well supported by staff and time is made available to meet these needs. There is a successful programme of personal, social and health education, which provides pupils with the tools necessary to keep safe and healthy and become responsible members of the community. The school has been particularly successful in supporting those pupils who find it difficult to behave well. Pupils have responded well and behaviour during the inspection was exceptionally good. Older pupils enjoy taking responsibilities and enjoy the many after school clubs available; by Year 6 they are well prepared for the next stage of learning. However, younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 have fewer opportunities to have a say in the running of their school.

The strong links with the school's own successful independent nursery, the local sports college and a range of other agencies and support networks have a very positive effect on the progress pupils make from the minute they enter the school at age 4 to when they leave at age 11. The vast majority of parents have complete confidence in the school and its leadership and management.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers use assessment information to consistently challenge pupils to make the best progress of which they are capable.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and all pupils achieve well and reach the expected standard for their ages and abilities.

The attainment of children when they first start school is broadly typical for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and most reach the learning goals expected of them before they enter Year 1, with a significant number exceeding them. In most years, this good start has been built on well and by the age of seven, standards have been above average. However, in 2005 and 2006 standards dipped. Effective intervention has now halted this decline and children are making good progress. The school data and inspection evidence indicate that standards at the end of Year 2 are at least average.

At the end of Key Stage 2, standards have typically been well above average and pupils have achieved very well. However, in 2005 pupils did not achieve as well as in previous years and, although standards in English and mathematics were average, and in science were above average, they were not as high as in previous years. The school reacted swiftly to introduce successful strategies to improve standards, particularly in mathematics and writing. The latest 2006 test results indicate standards are above average and that the school exceeded its targets. The school has been particularly successful in improving the attainment of boys' writing. As a result, in 2006 almost all boys reached the expected Level 4 and over a third reached the higher level. Pupils consistently achieve high standards in science and, in 2006, over half reached the higher level. The school's own assessments indicate that the school is on course to meet its ambitious targets set for 2007.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported exceptionally well and, as a result, most make rapid progress towards their targets. The very few pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. Gifted and talented pupils achieve well as shown by the high standards so many of them achieve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils enjoy school and most are regular attenders. They talk enthusiastically about how much they like their teachers and the work they do. Most pupils are highly motivated, exceptionally well behaved and independent learners who are keen to succeed. In classrooms and shared areas, pupils frequently work on their own or with a partner on challenging tasks, games and computer programs. Pupils understand how to take responsibility for themselves and friends. Older pupils proudly wear their 'buddy' badges and are on hand to sort out any playground disagreement and to provide care for anyone who is upset. Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to have a healthy lifestyle. The school council helps to select healthy menus and pupils look forward to taking part in the many high quality sporting activities

which are available. Pupils say that bullying is rare but when it occurs their teachers quickly 'sort it out'. Even the youngest pupils are well informed about how to stay safe and all pupils are especially aware of the dangers of living close to the sea. Pupils understand they have responsibilities to the wider community, through fundraising for charities and opportunities to learn about and care for the environment in the pond and wild garden area. Pupils show a mature tolerance and respect for the faiths and traditions found in the wider community. Although the school council represents each class, the members are all taken from Year 6 and there are fewer opportunities for younger pupils to have their own say about the school. By Year 6, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall with some very good aspects in all key stages. A significant strength is the way lessons are planned to meet the needs of different ages and abilities. Teachers skilfully question pupils to extend their thinking. Less confident pupils are encouraged 'to phone a friend' if they are unsure of an answer. Higher attaining pupils confidently extend their own answers or those of the other pupils and occasionally that of their teachers. Challenging tasks reinforce new learning well and provide pupils with lots of opportunities to work independently, either alone, with a 'talk partner' or in groups. Teachers use different teaching styles, tasks and activities to maintain the interest of both boys and girls and this has been very successful in raising the standard of boys writing to an exceptionally high level.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very effectively to enhance learning at all levels. Teaching assistants play an important part in lessons, taking on responsibility for groups and effectively supporting those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, helping them to make good progress. Teachers use an extremely wide range of strategies and systems to check and record levels of attainment and whether pupils have understood the tasks. Pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn and how to improve their work. However, teachers do not always use their assessments to measure the rate of pupils' progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. There is good emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills, an effective programme of personal, social and health education and strong links with other schools, colleges and agencies. All these provide pupils with the necessary tools to achieve well and develop good personal safety, care and healthy lifestyles. Throughout the school, flexible groupings and the effective use of well-trained support staff ensure that all pupils achieve well. Pupils who learn at a slower rate or have complex learning difficulties work in very small groups for part of the week and their

parents are delighted with the rapid progress their children make. Similarly, parents of pupils who are gifted and talented value the fact that their children have especially challenging tasks and experiences, which accelerate their learning. In one very successful lesson, the reward for one pupil's hard work and good behaviour was to challenge the teacher to a game of chess at lunchtime! Enrichment activities are good. The learning of French, after school clubs, well planned visits and visitors all add a breadth to pupils' learning, which is valued by pupils and parents alike.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided by the school are good overall. Pupils achieve well in their personal and academic development because of the very good care the school provides for them and the excellent ethos within school. Effective procedures are in place to safeguard children's welfare, health and safety. The school liaises closely with a range of providers to ensure that the care and support provided to vulnerable children is of the highest order. New systems to improve behaviour and attitudes, especially among older boys, have been highly successful. Trained staff are on hand to help pupils manage their own anger, resolve conflict and deal with the many problems they face in and out of school. The school's care for those with complex special needs is outstanding. This is reflected in the number of pupils with hearing impairment who now attend the school because their parents have learned about how well these children are cared for. Although there is a wealth of recorded information on pupils' attainment, the school does not yet use this information to check whether targets set for pupils are consistently challenging enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. During the extended absence of the headteacher, the acting headteacher, very ably supported by the acting deputy, leads and manages the school well. Leadership has galvanised all concerned within the school to address the recent decline in standards. The school's self-evaluation is very effective and accurate. Senior staff rigorously monitor teaching and learning and additional assessment and tracking systems are in place. However, assessment information is in danger of becoming unmanageable and it is not being used effectively enough to ensure that teachers can judge whether pupils are making the best progress of which they are capable. Central to the school's success is the way it meets the needs of pupils with different abilities and attitudes. New resources to motivate reluctant writers are paying off with rapidly improving standards. The school has been quick to introduce a new behaviour policy which addresses the needs of the most challenging pupils. The leadership has been very successful in acquiring funds to improve the school environment. As a result, the school is a calm, well-ordered and exceptionally attractive and stimulating place to learn and teach. Governance is very good. Governors are fully supportive of the school and have a very good knowledge of its strengths and

weaknesses. The school has a very good capacity for further improvement and is well placed to continue to be successful.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Lancaster Road Primary School

Lancaster Road

Morecambe

Lancashire

LA4 5TH

17 January 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for being very friendly and welcoming when we visited your school a short while ago.

There were many things about your school that we liked. It was good to hear how much you enjoy all the many exciting activities, games, trips and visitors that your teachers provide for you to help you to become successful learners. You all behave really well, work really hard and reach high standards in your work.

We will remember for a very long time how well behaved you all are, even when you are working on your own or with a partner in the corridors outside your classrooms. You looked so interested in the task your teachers had set you and worked with such concentration to get your work right. You seem to know the importance of eating sensible food and taking lots of exercise. Do keep that up because it is so important to staying healthy and happy.

We were very pleased to hear that there is very little bullying in your school but that when it does happen you know your teachers will sort it out very quickly. You all seem to care a great deal for each other and enjoy being buddies and being members of the school council. We think you are very lucky to go to such a good school where your acting headteacher and teachers work so hard to make lessons fun and help you learn such a lot.

We think your teachers could look at your work more closely to be sure that you are all working as hard as you possibly can. We also think Year 1 and Year 2 pupils could have a bigger say in how to improve your school. We do hope you continue to enjoy school as much as you do now and that it will help you to become happy and successful adults.

Yours sincerely

Carole Cressey (Lead Inspector)

Jean Harvard

Andrew Stafford