



Trumacar Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119272
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291369
Inspection dates 18–19 October 2006
Reporting inspector Kathleen McArthur

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Combermere Road Higher Heysham, Morecambe Lancashire, LA3 2ST
School category	Community	Telephone number	01524 851043
Age range of pupils	3–11	Fax number	01524 851043
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair	Mrs Sue Illingworth
Number on roll (school)	283	Headteacher	Mrs Sue Chambers
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 18–19 October 2006	Inspection number 291369
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The local area has high levels of social and economic disadvantage and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage and all speak English as their first language. A higher than average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school management has gone through a period of significant change in recent years and the headteacher has been in post for a year.

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 provides a satisfactory education and gives sound value for money. The inspection judged pupils' personal development and the care, guidance and support they receive to be good and better than the school's evaluation. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and their lessons are interesting. This caring community enables pupils to feel safe, secure and looked after. They understand how to follow a healthy diet and eagerly participate in all physical activities provided by the school. Good relationships foster good behaviour, politeness and respect. Pupils contribute well by carrying out responsibilities sensibly and helping others through charity work.

Pupils' progress is satisfactory. Attainment on entry is a little below that typically seen. Children get a good start in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception). Good teaching in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 promotes good learning, achievement and progress. This results in above average standards by the end of Key Stage 1. The 2005 results in national tests at Key Stage 2 show a drop in English and mathematics standards, but satisfactory progress. In science, progress is significantly below the norm. Early indications from the provisional 2006 results are low due to:

- a higher than usual number of pupils who moved in, or out, of the school at other than normal times
- a higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- a legacy of inadequate progress from when they were in Year 5 that was not made up in Year 6.

The new headteacher immediately recognised that this could not continue. Challenging processes were introduced to identify and overcome the underachievement by the end of Year 6, such as more frequent observations of teaching and tracking of pupils' achievements. These rigorous strategies were unpopular at first, but slowly the headteacher gained the support of staff and governors. As a result, teaching, learning and progress are improving at a good rate. Parents feel these changes will 'improve the school in the long run'. Teaching is satisfactory and the school data show the current Year 6 pupils make at least satisfactory progress in lessons and are back on track to reach average standards. This is confirmed by inspection evidence. Occasionally, teaching has less impact on learning because tasks are not matched well to pupils' different abilities.

The new headteacher provides strong leadership, demonstrated by the thoroughness of her swift and accurate evaluation of what the school does well and what needs to be improved. The school recognises that there is still work to be done to fully eradicate the legacy of underachievement. Development since the previous inspection has been slow, but inspection evidence shows the pace of improvement has quickened markedly in the last year and the capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2.
- Improve the quality of the satisfactory teaching by focusing on increasing the rate of progress made by pupils of all abilities in their lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage where most children reach the expected goals at the end of Reception, although literacy skills are weaker. Pupils' progress well in Key Stage 1 and the 2005 national test results were above average. In Key Stage 2, standards were below average in 2005 and look to be weaker in 2006. Pupils did not meet the targets set for English and mathematics and few reached higher levels. Progress was not good enough. The new headteacher meticulously analysed the reasons for this and acted swiftly to implement rigorous and comprehensive strategies to overcome this underachievement, including:

- rigorous monitoring of teaching
- the reorganisation of Key Stage 2 classes with extra staff to support learning
- improved assessment systems to track progress.

The thorough tracking information for pupils currently in Year 6, supported by inspection evidence, shows that they make at least satisfactory progress in lessons and at the current rate of progress are on track to reach the standards expected for pupils this age. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well in class and they make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils treat others with respect. The curriculum helps them understand other eras, cultures and beliefs; for example, the valuable link with the local Asian community and some exciting work on the Second World War. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They take every chance to join in physical activities and the kitchen team work hard to promote good eating habits. Outside experts contribute to the annual Health Week. Attendance is satisfactory, and the school is doing much to improve it further. For example, pupils respond enthusiastically to the idea of winning the attendance trophy. Pupils enjoy school, find lessons interesting and make the most of the many out of school clubs and events on offer. Behaviour is now nearly always good and pupils think fair incentives and rewards have made a difference. Pupils say adults are good at dealing with any incidents quickly so they feel safe and looked after. Pupils feel that adults listen to their ideas and suggestions and, as a result, they are growing into thoughtful and responsible young people. The new school councillors are keen to introduce ideas they acquired at the recent anti-bullying conference. Pupils show

concern for the wider world through charity work and by taking part in local community events. They move to the next stage of their education with positive attitudes, supported by good social and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, and improving literacy and numeracy skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. For example, good teaching in a Year 2 English lesson inspired pupils to write imaginative instructions for sandwich making and, consequently, they made good progress in the development of their writing skills. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 with some good lessons. For example, the fast pace and good use of humour in a Year 3 mathematics lesson led to high levels of enthusiasm and understanding. Pupils enjoy their lessons and learning because they benefit from hard working staff who seek to improve their practice. Typically, lessons throughout the school feature:

- the good use of interactive whiteboards to present subjects creatively and capture good levels of interest and enthusiasm
- warm relationships between staff and pupils which encourage pupils to try hard
- successful classroom management that ensures pupils' learning is not disrupted.

Classroom assistants provide valuable support, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. When teaching is less successful, tasks are not clearly explained or matched well to pupils' differing levels of ability, so work may be too hard for some groups or too easy for others. In writing, the good tracking of progress and direct help is improving basic skills. Pupils appreciate being shown how they can improve but teachers' comments are not always phrased simply enough for them to fully understand.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum contributes well to personal development and satisfactorily to pupils' academic progress. The school is rightly developing creativity and linking subjects together to make learning more relevant and enjoyable. For example, a Year 1 English lesson based on the Hindu faith story of Rama and Sita included writing, card making and cookery. Enrichment of the curriculum is good. The wide variety of out of school activities are well attended; especially musical and sporting activities. A good range of visits, including a residential, and visitors provide interesting and worthwhile activities beyond the school. Access to outdoor learning is good in the Nursery but Reception children have fewer but a satisfactory range of opportunities to learn outside. Throughout the school, pupils are beginning to use literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to help their learning in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet all current requirements. The school monitors closely all aspects of behaviour and pupils' individual needs and the evidence shows few problems caused by bullying or racism. When incidents do occur they are dealt with effectively by staff. The school works closely with parents and outside agencies and any changes in pupils' behaviour are quickly spotted and overcome. Pupils with learning or emotional difficulties are successfully supported and rewarded in lessons to boost their confidence and self-esteem. The new procedures for assessing progress are good. The information gained is used adequately in English and mathematics and, as a result, pupils make most progress in these subjects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

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Good leadership from the new headteacher ensured swift identification of the need to improve attainment and boost the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2. Sound school improvement planning is the result of management's honest evaluation of performance that led to the implementation of the rigorous actions to raise attainment. The school is well aware that clarity is needed to show how and when these actions will be evaluated. The newly formed senior management team is making a satisfactory contribution to the vigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation. Senior managers, governors and staff are united in the drive for improvement and good working partnerships are established. Consequently, there are early indications of higher standards and better progress. Governance is satisfactory. The chair of governors is well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the governing body is now more confident at challenging the work of the school. Staff performance management is linked to raising standards and their professional development. The school is well resourced and the budget is carefully managed to support teaching and learning.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Trumacar Community Primary School

Combermere Road

Higher Heysham

Morecambe

Lancashire

LA3 2ST

20 October 2006

Dear Children

You will remember that three inspectors visited your school before the holiday. We would like to thank you all for making us welcome and helping us find out lots of things about your school. Everyone we met was polite and friendly. We thought you would like to hear some of the things we found.

You said that you like school and feel safe there. We found that you are well looked after. You told us you think the rewards and incentives are fair and helpful, so you behave well and this helps you get on with your work.

You know how to eat healthily and it was good to see you enjoying the 'Wake up, Shake up' exercises each morning.

Most of you work hard in lessons and you use the computers well. Your teachers use the interactive whiteboards well and make lessons interesting to help you learn.

We think the older children could do better in their work so they reach higher standards in English, especially in writing, mathematics and science. We have asked the teachers to help you progress more quickly. They are going to make sure your work is not too easy for some of you and not too hard for others.

You can help by working really hard, aiming high and reaching your targets.

We hope you continue to enjoy your time at Trumacar School and we wish you well in the future,

With best wishes to you all

Kathleen McArthur

(Lead Inspector)