

# Morecambe and Heysham Grosvenor Park Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119351
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	291392
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jim Bennetts HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	260
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Gavin Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Kevin Kendall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	Roeburn Drive Grosvenor Park Morecambe Lancashire LA3 3RY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01524 845708
<b>Fax number</b>	01524 388026

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school serves a suburban area between Morecambe and Lancaster. The great majority of pupils are White British. However, about 10% of pupils travel away from school for parts of the school year. Overall, the community that the school serves is slightly less advantaged than most: the proportion of pupils entitled to free meals is a little above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with many good features. The achievement of pupils who are leaving the school this year is satisfactory although there has been some underachievement in the past. The determination of senior leaders and recent adroit initiatives, have brought about brisk and sustainable improvements in the overall effectiveness of the school and enabled most pupils to make rapid gains in basic academic skills over the last year.

Children's skills when they join the school tend to be slightly below those expected of children of their age. Those in their first year are doing well. Progress to age seven is satisfactory, though more able youngsters are not always challenged to achieve more. Progress in literacy and numeracy over the four years of Key Stage 2 has not been good enough in the past, but those in the present Year 6 have done well during this year. Results of national tests that are starting to come through confirm indications from classroom work that standards are close to those for 11-year-olds across the country; achievement is satisfactory. Elsewhere in Key Stage 2, there are some instances of remaining underachievement, for instance in a few aspects of mathematics. The school monitors the progress of individual pupils. This has been instrumental in directing support for those who are at below average standards for their age. The system is yet to be refined to pick up more able pupils who are falling behind. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well. Boys and girls make much the same progress.

Teaching has been largely reorganised. Teaching and learning are now good, though teachers are not always sufficiently responsive to the way things develop for individual pupils during a lesson in order to take advantage of opportunities to maximise learning. Teaching assistants are well managed and their support has been crucial to recent improvement. Marking is helpful. The school provides a good creative curriculum which sometimes links different subjects through themes such as 'the environment'.

Pupils enjoy school and get on well together. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and a reasonable appreciation of the breadth and variety of life in this country and beyond. They eat and exercise sensibly. They say they feel safe in school. However, like many of their parents, they are concerned about the hazards from the large number of vehicles manoeuvring in a confined space while collecting children in the afternoon – and the school has been bringing this to the attention of the appropriate authorities. They value opportunities to contribute to decisions in school through the school council. Pastoral care in the school is very good. Provision for special educational needs is efficiently organised and effective.

The school is under new leadership and management. The headteacher was appointed from September 2006. The senior team has been restructured, but its composition is yet to be stabilised. The last year has been marked by an assiduous determination to raise achievement. Managers have been shrewd in assessing what has needed to be done; they have acted speedily and effectively to bring in improvement. They have the support of staff and governors. Parents are fulsome in their appreciation of improvements. The school deploys resources well and offers good value for money. The recent improvements are impressive; there is strong capacity for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide greater challenge and opportunity for more able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- Refine the system for keeping track of pupils' progress.

- Improve learning by monitoring progress during lessons more carefully and adapting teaching to foster it.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils generally start at the school with skills that are a little below those expected nationally. Children at present in Reception are making good progress. In 2006 the attainment of pupils in Year 2 was a little below national expectations, with very few achieving above these expectations. The attainment of the present Year 2 pupils was particularly low when they joined the school. National test results for these Year 2 pupils are weaker than those of the previous year and again very few achieved the higher levels; there is particular weakness with writing. Achievement in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall but, in lessons seen, the more able pupils sometimes had insufficient opportunity to make good progress. To some extent, this is because the school's approach, for example to developing numeracy, is not flexible enough: it occasionally inhibits the adaptation of teaching to extend the capabilities of the more able.

Pupils in the current Year 6 have made satisfactory progress. With particularly strong teaching in Year 6 this year, standards in literacy and numeracy are now very similar to what is generally found with 11-year-olds. With this class, the pupils have been able to make up for lost time. Standards in some other year groups in Key Stage 2 are a little lower than is typical of their age, and the school is making well focused interventions to raise attainment, especially with those who are below average.

Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well throughout the school. In the main, science is strong and outstanding achievement was seen in one science lesson. Literacy standards in Key Stage 2 are approaching the range of quality that is typical for each age group but writing in subjects other than English tends to be underdeveloped. Some pupils have weaknesses in basic numeracy skills. Achievement is strong in design and technology. Whilst much has been accomplished in countering underachievement, the school recognises that more could be done for any more able pupils who are slipping below their potential. The 2006 Year 6 results for girls were better than those for boys. However, in current classroom work, boys and girls do equally well.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The high priority placed on personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage means that pupils develop independence and a good attitude to school from an early age. Across the school, pupils learn to work productively together and to solve problems through 'talk partners'.

Pupils behave well and become self-confident. They feel safe and secure and say that bullying is almost unheard of. Pupils say they enjoy their learning and want to achieve well 'because lessons are fun and we make lots of good friends'. Attendance is just below average, mostly because of the absence of some pupils who 'travel' for cultural reasons.

Pupils understand the needs of others and express their feelings sensitively about threats to the natural environment. As a result, a relatively high proportion of pupils either walk or cycle to school, rather than arriving by car. Pupils are successfully encouraged to eat well and take regular exercise, which gives them a good understanding of how to live healthily and safely. Pupils take responsibilities seriously. They are willing to help others, for example as helpers in class or as buddies during lunch and playtimes. The pupils' voice is valued through an effective school council, which contributes to the pupils' development of citizenship. Given the good levels of social and moral development and satisfactory academic skills, pupils have a sound preparation for future life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good and it develops good learning. Since last year, some new staff appointments have been made, some teachers have moved to different year groups, and there is some temporary staffing; seven of the nine classrooms have new teachers. There has been a determination to make all teaching effective and improvements have retrieved some of the past underachievement of pupils. Teaching is closely monitored by subject leaders and detailed evaluation notes give advice for refinement. Most of the lessons seen were good, there was some outstanding teaching and none was inadequate.

Relationships are good in all classrooms. Work is generally well matched to pupils' capabilities and it engages their interest. Teaching assistants are often well deployed to give support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in lessons or with groups taken outside the main classroom. They have a clear appreciation of how they are to give support and consequently complement the work of teachers very effectively. Many teachers use information communication technology (ICT) well to improve the quality of lessons. The best lessons had a good variety of activities using carefully assembled resources, whole class discussion which moved on briskly, and crisp questions being posed and directed to well chosen pupils. In some less effective lessons, teachers did not pick up patterns of misunderstanding or a pupil's slow progress because they were not checking up on individuals closely enough. Pupils are positive in attitude and mostly keen to learn. Occasionally attention drifts away when teachers talk for too long. In some lessons with younger classes, there was ample attention to pupils' personal development, but the more able were sometimes not challenged enough. Activities are well organised in the Foundation stage and this promotes good development of the range of skills for young children.

Many pupils' books show conscientious effort but presentation, especially hand writing, is relatively weak. Pupils gain appreciation of what raises the quality of a piece of work by being encouraged in self-assessment. Marking is often good with painstaking comments which congratulate and encourage pupils and give simple advice about how they can make their work better. The correction of spelling errors is pitched at a suitable level for pupils' capabilities. Marking facilitates and encourages improvement across the ability range. For instance, with the work of the most able, incorrect spelling of fairly obscure words is corrected, whilst in work that has several mistakes in simple words, only key words are identified in order to make improvement manageable for the pupil. Thus, most pupils have simple practical targets for improvement, particularly with their writing.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and caters well for mixed age classes. Pupils have appropriate opportunities, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good provision in the Foundation Stage enables children to have a good start to their education. In Key Stages 1 and 2, there is a positive emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but provision is variable. Some teachers provide ample scope for pupils to develop skills, such as writing, through other subjects but such activities are not consistently planned. However, these variations are diminishing with improved and innovative whole school planning. New approaches to the planning of history, geography and design and technology have started to raise standards and improve the pupils' use of literacy and ICT across the curriculum. Pupils say lessons are now more exciting and relevant to their lives. They particularly like the way that design technology is planned so that tasks are started and ended in a week.

The curriculum is enriched well by many interesting visits and visitors linked to class learning; for example, Key Stage 2 visited Manchester Museum to see at first hand an Egyptian mummy. Pupils also benefit from access to a good variety of extra-curricular activities ranging from sport to board games.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Parents are quite right in their view that this is a very caring school which provides good levels of guidance and support. These enhance pupils' achievement and personal development. There are very thorough procedures in place for child protection, health and safety and for safeguarding pupils. All feel highly valued and important and pupils care for each other naturally. The learning mentor provides valuable support to improve pupils' social and emotional development. Adults provide very good role models and pupils are confident to approach them should they have a problem.

Academic support and guidance are good. Pupils' attainment is assessed by reliable means and those that are at a standard that is below normal for their age are given extra help. Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enabling these pupils to make good progress towards their individual targets. The assessment systems however, do not yet identify the more able pupils who are not doing as well as they could.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher was appointed from September 2006, having been deputy head for two years. The senior leadership team was restructured at that time. However, a new deputy head served for two terms only; that position is now gallantly held by another member of the leadership team pending a permanent appointment for next September. A key member of the senior team is the higher level teaching assistant who, amongst other responsibilities, manages classroom support well. Though the senior team is not yet entirely settled, shrewd and decisive action has been put in hand over the last year, leading the school forward to enhanced effectiveness.

The school's self-evaluation is frank, but underestimates how well improvement has been secured. At the start of the year, the senior team had a realistic view of how things stood in the school and what needed to be put right. Opportunities yielded by staff turnover were wisely exploited; besides new appointments, some staff took on different classes or responsibilities. New approaches have been cultivated. There is a shared determination to raise achievement. The Year 6 of 2007 is achieving better standards in literacy and numeracy, and is better prepared for secondary schooling than in the past. Teaching is now good. The work of teachers and teaching assistants is informed by analysis of individual pupils' progress in each year group. As yet, the system lacks refinement, especially with regard to more able pupils who are off-track, but it has been instrumental in targeting classroom support to good effect. Meanwhile, productive curricular innovation has been sustained, while managing the difficulties of a shifting pattern of mixed age classes. The school has continued to uphold good personal development and maintains its commitment to a high quality of pastoral care. For all this, parents are overwhelmingly appreciative.

The governing body has been aware that in the past some pupils' achievement has been disappointing; reasonable steps were taken to head things in the right direction. With the opportunities of new appointments and restructuring, governors have given every encouragement and practical support over the last year to sensible new approaches. A higher than usual budget surplus is being applied to ensure continued headway with the improvement of achievement, for example, by facilitating two small Year 6 classes next year and engaging more classroom support. The school now provides good value for money. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Things are set fair for good further improvement.



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## Annex A

## 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>
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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
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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

5 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grosvenor Park Primary School, Lancashire, LA3 3RY

Thank you for all your help when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit, and found that a great deal of what the school does is good.

Overall, we found that the school is satisfactory at the present time and that it is rapidly improving. Children in Reception get off to a good start. Those in Year 6 are doing about as well as would normally be expected. Results that are starting to come through for Year 6 are better than in the past. The school has made every effort over the last year to boost achievement in literacy and numeracy in all classes in Key Stage 2. Teaching is good. The school organises the subjects and themes that you study very well, making sure that there is proper continuity when some of you are in mixed age classes. You enjoy school and speak highly of the many things that staff do to help and support you. You are well looked after. The school is well run. Senior staff have made some very effective changes recently and these are helping you to make increasingly better progress. Your parents are full of praise for the school.

We have asked the school to focus on some particular things for further improvement.

- Make sure that the cleverer children get plenty of hard things to do.
- Keep an even closer eye on whether each of you is getting on well enough.
- During lessons, check on how well everything is going all the time, and change things a bit if need be.

You are lucky to be in a happy school where you all get on well, and where standards are getting better all the time.

There is just one thing we are a little concerned about, and we know you are too. Be very careful indeed with all those cars that are moving about near the school gates as you leave in the afternoon – never run across the road without looking carefully as you have been taught to.

We trust that the school continues to do well, and wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jim Bennetts

Her Majesty's Inspector