

# Norbreck Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 119247          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Blackpool       |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 301725          |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 12–13 June 2007 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | David Earley    |

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                                    | 581  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mrs Cheryl Tchobanian  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mrs Karen McCarter   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 1 June 2003  |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Norbreck Road<br>Thornton-Cleveleys<br>Lancashire<br>FY5 1PD |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01253 852219   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01253 859868   |

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a much larger than average sized school on the edge of Blackpool. It takes pupils from a wide range of backgrounds, an increasing minority of whom come from socially deprived areas. The number on roll is increasing. High proportions of pupils join and leave the school throughout each year. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is average and most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are no pupils who learn English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with most schools. Children enter the Foundation Stage (Reception) with standards that are generally in line with national expectations 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

This is a good and improving school, which gives good value for money. The headteacher provides very strong leadership. This is a significant factor in the improving achievement, standards and personal development in a school with an increasing school population where many pupils join and leave throughout each year.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards typical for their age. They make a good start and achieve well so that by the time they enter Year 1 standards are above those expected for their age. Good progress and achievement continue in Key Stage 1, although in 2006 standards at the end of Year 2 were average because of the ability of this group of pupils; but given their starting points, they made good progress. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Standards at the end of Year 6 are significantly above average.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have a very good understanding of how to stay healthy. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for in school. They have many opportunities to contribute to the community and are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Lessons are typically lively and interesting. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and mostly provide work that is well suited to pupils' abilities. Teachers and support staff work well together, particularly in support of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In some lessons where the pace is slow and teachers' explanations are not clear, the rate of progress slows. Marking is not consistent throughout the school. This leads to missed opportunities to extend learning.

The curriculum is good and supports the teaching and learning well. Enrichment in learning is excellent and the many visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities help to make learning exciting so that pupils want to learn. The school is at an early stage in providing opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) by using them in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support are good. All procedures for safeguarding and child protection are in place. In this caring school, each pupil is well known and highly valued so that they grow in confidence and self-esteem. Support is very effective for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and leads to good progress. The school has a good system for assessing pupils' attainment. However, the check on individual and group progress at points during the year is not applied consistently across the school, leading to some missed opportunities to extend some pupils' learning.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher shares her clear vision for raising standards with staff and governors so that there is a good commitment to improvement. Many parents comment on the good quality of staff and leadership. The contribution of subject leaders is satisfactory, but at times over reliant on senior leaders to check pupils' achievement because subject leaders have few opportunities to monitor the tracking of pupils' progress in order to identify where improvements are needed. Governors know the school well and play an important role in helping to shape its direction. Self-evaluation is good and leads to a clear school improvement plan.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that in all lessons the pace of learning is brisk, teachers' explanations clear and marking is of a consistently high standard.
- Improve the use that subject leaders and staff make of the tracking of pupils' progress so that they can evaluate rigorously the effectiveness of provision and pupils' performance.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are significantly above average. Most pupils, whatever their background or ability make good progress. This is because pupils have positive attitudes to learning, teaching is generally good and the curriculum is rich and well planned.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards that are usually in line with those expected for their ages. They make good progress so that by the time they enter Year 1, standards are above what would be expected nationally.

The school's results of the 2006 assessments at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly average overall. This represented a dip from the previous two years, when results were significantly above average. This was because there were high levels of pupil mobility in this group and a group of boys did not achieve as well as expected. Throughout the school, boys generally achieve well and the school has taken action to improve the performance of this particular group.

In 2006, the school's national test results at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science were significantly above average, as they have been for the last five years.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good and this is an important element in their good academic progress and achievement. Children in Reception quickly learn class routines and make good progress in laying firm foundations for future learning and life. They learn to work and play together and their confidence in working independently increases. Attendance throughout the school is satisfactory and improving due to strategies implemented by the school. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles because opportunities to eat healthily and take exercise are excellent. Pupils behave well and talk enthusiastically about how they enjoy school and feel safe and secure. Members of the school council are involved in many initiatives to improve life in school; such as, the provision of playground benches. Relationships are very good and good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables pupils to be well prepared for life in a diverse society. It helps new pupils settle quickly, make friends and be ready to learn. Pupils are polite and friendly and show respect towards others. Pupils acquire a good range of interpersonal skills, which aids their learning. They eagerly take on responsibilities to help with the smooth running of the school and to contribute to the wider community.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and result in pupils making good progress. Pupils are confident and committed learners. This is enhanced by the classrooms, which are welcoming and with attractive displays. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and help to establish an atmosphere conducive to learning.

There is a consistent approach to planning lessons and activities are usually interesting, fun and challenging for most pupils. For example, in Year 5, the teacher made good use of humour in work on hyperbole in a literacy lesson. In most classes, assessment is used well to match tasks and learning targets to pupils' differing needs. Teaching and support assistants offer good support to enable pupils with learning and/or disabilities to make good progress.

There are examples of outstanding teaching when everything comes together to ensure rapid learning. When teaching is satisfactory, the pace of learning is not swift enough because pupils are expected to listen to the teacher for too long. Occasionally teachers' explanations of concepts or tasks lack clarity. Some high attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in these lessons.

Pupils are increasingly involved in reviewing their own and others' progress, helping them to understand how to improve. The best marking of pupils' work gives useful guidance on what to improve and what was done well, although this good practice is not yet consistent throughout the school.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and this helps pupils to achieve well. Pupils' personal and academic development is supported by excellent enrichment activities, including additional challenging activities for pupils who have special gifts or talents. A high number of pupils from across the age range enjoy taking part in a very wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils particularly enjoy the themed weeks that involve the whole school in learning about a specific topic such as the Victorians, India or anti-bullying. Pupils benefit from the exciting activities led by outside specialists; for example, in dance, arts and crafts. A good range of local businesses provide interesting activities to help develop awareness of finance and issues; such as, healthy eating.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is well planned and results in pupils' good performance. The use of literacy, numeracy and ICT in a range of subjects is developing. A well planned programme of personal, social and health education supports pupils' personal and emotional development very well.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils and all the required procedures for safeguarding, including child protection, are in place. Pupils say that they feel safe and are well supported by all the staff. There is a good support system for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those who join the school in mid year. Academic guidance is good overall. The school has an efficient system in place for assessing standards. However, the check on

individual and group progress at points during the year is not applied consistently across the school, leading to some missed opportunities to extend pupils' learning. Relationships are good and pupils feel comfortable talking through worries with staff, including the Learning Mentor. They say that bullying is rare and following the anti-bullying week one pupil said: 'It opened our eyes to what could happen and we would now know how to take action'. Year 6 pupils take on responsibilities and are keen to be buddies to help younger children. Good links with outside agencies give extra support to the pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has a clear vision of what the school needs to do in order to improve. The senior management team, governors and staff work well as a team to raise standards and set challenging targets. Their high aspirations and commitment to development lead to pupils' good progress, their very effective personal development and to an inclusive, caring community. The school evaluates its performance well in order to make improvements. This links closely with the good school development plan, which sets a clear agenda for success. Subject leaders have a good understanding of their subjects but have few opportunities to monitor the tracking of pupils' progress in order to make improvements.

Governors know the school well and work closely with staff to monitor performance and help shape the direction of the school. Most parents have positive views of the school and take advantage of the many opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. Standards have improved since the previous inspection and issues from that time have been successfully addressed. Very strong leadership, a shared commitment to improve and realistic self-evaluation give the school good capacity to improve.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | <b>School Overall</b> |
|---|-----------------------|

### 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> | 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

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

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <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   | 1 |
| 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

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <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                     | 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

14 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Norbreck Primary School, Thornton Cleveleys, FY5 1PD.

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we came to visit your school. Your school is good and it is getting better. We were pleased to see how polite and courteous you are and how well you get on with each other. We were really impressed by the way you all try to lead healthy lifestyles by eating sensibly and getting plenty of exercise. We think that the school council is really effective at listening to children's ideas and helping to improve the school. The buddies do a good job and you are all helpful to one another and visitors.

Here are some of the things your school does well.

- You work hard and reach good standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Teachers work well together to help you to improve your work and leadership of the school is strong.
- You work well with others and help people in the local and wider community.
- There are lots of interesting visits, visitors and clubs and special weeks so that you want to learn.
- The adults in the school take good care of you and look after you well.

These are some of the things we have asked your school to improve.

- To make sure that all lessons are the best they can be.
- To improve the way it checks how well you are learning.

Thank you again for making us so welcome.

Yours sincerely

David Earley

Lead Inspector