

Lindale C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112286
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	310838
Inspection dates	14–15 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Sheila Mawer

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	65
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Michael Barclay
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Leonard
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2003
School address	School Hill Lindale Grange-over-Sands Cumbria LA11 6LE
Telephone number	015395 33480
Fax number	015395 33480

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school takes pupils from the local village and surrounding areas. Pupils generally come from relatively advantaged backgrounds and very few of them are eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.

The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average: the proportion with statements of special educational needs is significantly above average. Indoor facilities for physical education are restricted as two classes share the accommodation in the hall. Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a good education for its pupils. It also has some outstanding features and has improved well since the last inspection. Parents are overwhelmingly happy with the quality of education. The comments of one parent echo those of others: 'The school is well led by a headteacher who is very approachable and responsive. Innovative ideas are always in the best interests of the pupils'. The

headteacher is very ably supported by other staff and governors who together provide a strong lead for the school's future development. The school is well placed to improve further.

The pastoral care and support that pupils receive is outstanding and reflects the school's Christian values. Consequently, pupils are happy and thoughtful learners. Relationships are excellent and older pupils play an important part in supporting younger children and helping them to stay safe and healthy. The school has Healthy Schools status and safety procedures are robust and consistently carried out. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are clear about the expectations of their conduct because they helped to review the behaviour policy. They are confident and keen to be involved in all that the school offers. The school council in particular is a good example of how well pupils work together to make decisions and take extra responsibility. Pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school. The award of 'Eco School' status has given pupils a wide understanding of international issues such as recycling and water saving, and this knowledge is preparing them well as young adults.

Good quality teaching aids pupils' good achievement. Their learning is enriched through an exciting curriculum and excellent links with other providers. This enables the school to meet pupils' differing needs. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average. Skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are high and a strength of the school. By the end of Year 2, overall standards are average with strengths in science and mathematics. Although English is the weaker subject, new initiatives are beginning to impact positively on pupils' progress in reading and writing. However, handwriting in the infant class is weak and too few opportunities are given for pupils to improve their writing across the curriculum. A recent focus on the use of assessment and target setting is having a beneficial effect on standards in many subjects. It involves pupils in assessing their learning and helps to make sure that different groups are challenged sufficiently in the teaching. Assessment and target setting are not used enough yet in group reading in the infant class and, as a result, progress is slower than in other subjects.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in all areas of learning. They make rapid progress in the morning sessions when they are taught together as a small group. Teaching is good and meticulous records are kept of the progress children make. This ensures that work is set at the correct levels and challenges them all well. They are all extremely happy and settled in school, and enjoy opportunities to work independently. The curriculum provides a good balance of teacher-led activities and some free choice for children to encourage their independence. However, there is a shortage of resources for imaginative play, especially to promote speaking and listening. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing including handwriting in the infant class.
- Extend assessment and target-setting arrangements to reading in the infant class to help standards rise.
- Improve resources for imaginative role play in Foundation Stage to extend opportunities for speaking and listening.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are above average by Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, as their needs are met well through effective levels of support. More able pupils and those who are gifted and talented also make good progress and reach the targets set for them through challenging work. Children start school with standards that are mostly typical for their age, although language skills are sometimes weaker. Pupils make good progress in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and most start Year 1 working beyond the goals expected of five year olds, apart from their skills in communication, language and literacy, which are at levels expected at this stage. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average and progress is satisfactory. At the end of Year 6, trends in tests, school data and current work show that standards are above average in English, mathematics and science and progress is good. For the very small group who took the tests in 2007 there was a decline in standards and progress. This was due to a very high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs and their special circumstances. High standards in ICT have been maintained since the last inspection through improved resources and skilful teaching.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and talk very positively about feeling safe. They value the warmth of relationships around them and say, 'Our teachers are pretty special'. Pupils are extremely courteous, friendly and mature. They behave impeccably. Pupils have excellent attitudes to their work and their keenness to learn is seen in the way they arrive punctually for lessons and quickly settle to their tasks. Despite the best efforts of the school, attendance is slightly below average because a high proportion of families take holidays during term time. Pupils know how to keep healthy through the school's strong focus on health and fitness. Many pupils support the 'walking bus'; lunchboxes are healthy and pupils keenly attend extra sporting activities. The school council is influential in introducing games at break times and monitoring their success. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils thrive on the responsibilities they are given and proudly act as 'Problem Busters' to sort out minor disagreements in the playground. They are actively involved in the local community through fund raising, joining in local events and contributing their ideas. Various initiatives help pupils to understand the diversity of other cultures, for example, by writing to pen pals in Tanzania. Pupils are being well equipped for later life through good basic skills and high levels of competence in ICT.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Strong teamwork and support among staff enable new initiatives to embed successfully into practice. These have allowed writing to improve in the junior classes and developed marking to provide useful guidance for pupils throughout the school. Teachers in the Reception and infant class follow a structured approach to teaching letter sounds and its good teaching is gradually leading to better progress. However, many pupils are not forming their letters properly because handwriting is not taught regularly enough.

Typically, the teaching is well planned and takes into account the mixed-age classes. Pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn and encouraged to participate in lessons through probing questions. Lessons are exciting and keep pupils fully attentive, even in the hall where two classes are taught. Computer technology is used very effectively to explain new learning; for example, to examine paintings by Jackson Pollock before pupils created their own designs. The independent activities provide good levels of challenge for more able pupils, who thrive on the opportunities to carry out their own investigations. For example, older pupils successfully designed an experiment to prove that seeds need the right conditions to germinate. Good support is given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The endings of lessons are used particularly well to help pupils reflect on how well they are doing and to reinforce the learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and has improved since the last inspection, as it now meets the needs of more able pupils. It contributes very effectively to pupils' personal development and takes their interests into account. It successfully meets the needs of the larger than average number of boys in the school. Successful intervention programmes enable slower learners to make good progress. Pupils study a broad range of subjects although there are insufficient opportunities for pupils in the infant class to practise their writing across the curriculum. Partnerships with other schools and agencies provide considerable enrichment. Spanish and French, for example, are taught and older pupils have the chance to learn a variety of musical instruments. Pupils with particular gifts and talents have access to specialist coaching in physical education and art tuition.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes outstanding care of its pupils and works in close partnership with outside agencies to ensure pupils' welfare has the highest priority. In this small school, adults know every pupil exceptionally well and this creates a strong sense of security that is very much appreciated by pupils and parents. Pupils are given increasing responsibility to work independently and, as a result, they grow and flourish. Their views are sought regularly and acted upon, so they feel valued and part of the school's development. Arrangements for health and safety including child protection and risk assessment are in place.

Academic guidance is becoming increasingly effective through the phased introduction of targets that pupils help to set and review. Many pupils know exactly what they need to do to

improve their work, although this good practice has yet to include group reading in the infant class. The school has excellent partnerships with parents, particularly in working together on homework agreements and supporting the reading programme of younger pupils. The parents of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities help to prepare their children's individual education programmes and provide valuable support with their learning at home.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sets a clear vision and positive direction for the school. Teamwork is strong between staff and governors, who together have made good improvements since the last inspection. For example, the needs of more able pupils are met, writing has improved in the junior classes and pupils' skills in investigating science are better. As a result, more able pupils are making good rather than satisfactory progress in all subjects and standards in science and writing have risen by the end of Year 6. Targets were met this year and future targets are more challenging.

The school improvement plan is based securely on an accurate self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It is effective because it is written in close consultation with staff, governors, pupils, parents and the village, promoting a strong sense of unity and involvement. Through good training and support, all staff are developing their management skills well to tackle areas for improvement.

The governing body is effective and supportive. An agreed programme for monitoring the work of the school has increased governors' knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their skills have also ensured a much healthier budget in recent times, with plans to refurbish parts of the school to provide more classroom space and facilities for indoor physical activities. The school gives good value for money.

Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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.

Annex A**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

16 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lindale CE Primary School, Cumbria, LA11 6LE

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to your school and have gone away with very happy memories. Thank you for talking to me and giving me such a lot of positive information about your school. A special thanks to the school council who helped me so much with my work and were extremely mature and thoughtful. I know that you and your parents think that Lindale is a good school and I agree. There are some aspects of your school that are even outstanding.

Here are the things that are so good about your school.

- How well you are doing in your work through good teaching.
- You do particularly well in ICT and this is a strength of the school.
- How well you all really enjoy your education.
- Your outstanding behaviour and the excellent relationships you have with each other.
- The way you thrive on extra responsibility and are able to work independently in a very mature way.
- The good curriculum that makes the learning fun.
- The excellent care and support you all receive from the staff.
- How well the headteacher, staff and governors lead and manage the school.

Even in such a good school as yours, there is always something that could be better. For your school it is to improve standards in reading and writing in the infant classes.

In the Nursery and Reception class there is too little equipment for you to use when you make up stories or play together. I know you will all continue to work hard in your lovely school and always do your best.

Good luck and best wishes to you all for the future.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Mawer

Lead inspector