

Morecambe Bay Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119135
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313194
Inspection dates	10–11 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Yvonne Clare

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Orchard
Headteacher	Mrs Siobhan Collingwood
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2005
School address	Station Road Morecambe Lancashire LA4 5JL
Telephone number	01524 401002
Fax number	01524 413819

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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, serving an area where there is high social and economic deprivation. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well above average. Few pupils have English as an additional language, the majority of pupils being of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average, as is the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational need.

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 school, with outstanding features, where pupils achieve well. The strong ethos within the school and a commitment to making every pupil feel valued, result in outstanding care, support and guidance. This contributes well to pupils' excellent personal development. The school is warm and welcoming, providing a safe and stimulating learning environment in which pupils' relationships with each other and with staff are excellent. Its excellent partnerships with others, through networks and links, enhance pupils' provision well. The strong sense of pride in the school is reflected in the vibrant displays of children's work in corridors and classrooms, which mirror the school's high expectations. The overwhelming majority of the parents feel that school is a happy and caring haven. Many shared the view put forward by one parent who remarked, 'My child absolutely loves the school, I know she's in safe and caring hands and she enjoys every minute she's there.'

The school's assessments and the most recent results indicate that the below average standards are continuing to improve. Pupils' work seen during the inspection confirms that pupils are making good progress. This applies to all groups of pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the few pupils for whom English is an additional language. Their progress is often excellent, as a result of the extensive and intensive support they receive. Children make a secure start to learning in the Foundation Stage from levels well below those typical for their age. This is built upon through Key Stage 1 and, in relation to their starting points, pupils' levels of achievement are good. Attainment in the 2007 Key Stage 2 tests was below average. The most recent tests show that attainment has again improved and pupils have achieved the challenging targets set for them at the beginning of the year.

The personal development of pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and understand the importance of healthy living. School council members take their work seriously and play an important part in the school, choosing and ordering play equipment for the playground. Pupils are open, friendly, well behaved and responsible young people who contribute outstandingly to the local community with their involvement, productions and charitable acts. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Rigorous procedures are in place to promote health and safety, child protection and the safeguarding of pupils and pupils feel safe and secure.

Teaching is good. Staff have good subject knowledge and use an effective variety of activities to engage the pupils. An outstanding creative curriculum has been established that emphasises relevant, first-hand experiences for pupils to bring learning to life. Visitors and a good range of out-of-school activities enhance this provision well. Thorough tracking and accurate assessment are evident but not always used to its full potential. Lesson planning is inconsistent and does not always identify differing pupils' needs or structure learning activities correspondingly. Some pupils have few opportunities for involvement in their own learning.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership, with good support from governors and an able leadership team. Together they focus strongly on the drive for improvement. Very accurate self-evaluation has ensured the school's very strong range of improvements from the time of the last inspection. As a result, the school has excellent capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's skills on entry to Nursery are well below those typical for their age. They make good progress in most areas of learning whilst in the Nursery and Reception classes. A rising proportion of children achieve the expected levels on entry to Year 1. They enjoy their work and play, learn to take account of other children's needs and follow routines well. Staff ensure that children are safe and their care is excellent. Parents are fully involved, kept well informed about their child's progress and consulted about change. Provision is good. Teachers work on a curriculum that is relevant to children's needs, offering role-play and speaking and listening activities to enhance learning and personal development. A recent visit to the beach had resulted in meaningful learning opportunities being set up for children in the indoor hall. The limited outside space gives children few opportunities to access outdoor learning experiences.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that learning activities are sufficiently challenging for all pupils and that opportunities are provided for them to evaluate their own progress.
- Improve the outdoor provision for the youngest children in order to maximise opportunities across learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are rising but remain below average. Pupils' achievement, and the progress they make, in relation to their starting points is good throughout the school. This includes all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Pupils build upon the secure foundations laid in the Foundation Stage and results in national tests and assessments have improved over the last two years, particularly in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and in science at Key Stage 2. Attainment in 2007 was below average. The school's assessments and the most recent results show that standards have risen further. The quality of the work seen during the inspection confirms that pupils are continuing to make good progress. The standard of pupils' writing is the one area where progress has not been as rapid although the school is taking action. There have been improvements in pupils' ability to write accurately but they are now learning to write well for different purposes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, is outstanding. They make excellent progress in developing the personal skills and attributes that help them develop into considerate young people. Relationships are excellent throughout the school and pupils say they feel safe and secure. They enjoy learning because 'lessons are fun and the teachers help you.' Year 6 pupils talk about the exciting time they had during their residential visit when they experienced canoeing, orienteering and rope walking. Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour is outstanding, supporting the very positive relationships they have with each other. They work well together in lessons and playtimes are friendly occasions. Attendance procedures in school are strong and attendance is good. Pupils have a good understanding of what is needed to live healthy lives and an excellent insight into keeping safe.

Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding. They respond positively when asked to take charge, or contribute to school life. This can be seen in the quiet and efficient way they carry out responsibilities and 'buddy' younger children, helping them in many ways. Pupils contribute to the wider community through their support of local and national charities and participation in local events. Pupils feel their views are heard through the school council and are proud to see their suggestions, such as the improvement to playground equipment and involvement in the new curriculum, being implemented.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to do well. They work well collaboratively and independently. They are clear about how well they are doing and how to improve. Targets are displayed in each classroom and are used frequently to guide progress. Such good guidance is not always evident in teachers' marking. Pupils learn best when they are actively involved in finding things out for themselves and solving problems. This was seen to good effect in a lesson with Years 3 and 4, where the teacher used role-play to simulate a planning application for a play park and to act out the likely responses of local residents. Pupils had to weigh the merits of opposing views and come to their own judgements. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are accurate in their assessments of pupils' work. Lesson planning does not always identify the needs of different groups in a class and structure learning activities accordingly. Classrooms are stimulating learning environments and displays of pupils' work testify to their imaginative and artistic talents. Opportunities are being missed to involve pupils in assessing their own work and that of others, particularly at the end of lessons when time is given to consolidating what has been learnt.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent. The school has succeeded in creating a coherent and thematic approach which broadens pupils' understanding of the world around them. It provides extensive opportunities for the use of basic skills and requires pupils to be confident and self-reliant in finding things out for themselves. The result has been greatly improved attitudes to work, excellent behaviour and an improving trend in standards. The visit to the science museum for example, followed by the pupils mounting their own public science exhibition and experiments, called upon a range of skills and personal qualities. This is one reason why science results have risen this year. Excellent provision is made for pupils' personal development through many visitors who speak on health and social issues and a wide range of trips away to broaden horizons and build confidence. The many sporting and cultural clubs are well attended and do much for pupils' enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school's welcoming atmosphere encourages positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents stress that the staff are approachable and pupils are well looked after 'in every sense.' These excellent links with parents, together with a wide range of support agencies, safeguard the needs of the most vulnerable pupils,

including those with learning difficulties. The work of the Learning and Home School Liaison mentors and nurture groups gives exemplary support for pupils experiencing personal difficulties and those new to the school. In particular, this ensures that pupils are able to enjoy friendships more easily along with classroom routines and basic skills. Child protection requirements and health and safety procedures are fully in place to ensure the health and safety of children. Excellent relationships throughout the school help pupils confirm that they feel safe and are very happy to come to school, because they feel valued and supported. Academic guidance is well supported by thorough tracking systems allowing allocation of effective interventions according to pupils' need. The well attended and delightful breakfast club provides additional support for families and children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Staff work enthusiastically, ensuring that pupils are happy, do their best and have equal access to all activities. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and presents an excellent role model within school. Her innovative approaches to the curriculum have resulted in the engagement of pupils and their accelerated rate of progress. A shared vision and strong teamwork underpins the drive for improvement throughout the school. Subject leaders monitor their subjects regularly and in a variety of ways, so the school knows its strengths and where there is a need for improvement. External support for subject leaders newer in post ensures on-going support for staff in school in key areas. The school's self-evaluation is good and judgements are accurate. School development planning correctly identifies priorities for the school and very effective action has been taken to ensure improvements in pupils' attitudes and standards. Frequent changes in personnel on the governing body limits their overall effectiveness as a whole, however, the core group of governors are involved in the school, well-informed, supportive and readily take on the role of 'critical friends'.

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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	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	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Morecambe Bay Community Primary School, Lancashire,

LA4 5JL

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome in your school and for your help during the recent inspection. We loved seeing all your beautiful art work and thought how hard you had worked on them.

We thought you were really well behaved, polite and treated each other well. We enjoyed talking to you and listening to what you had to say about your school. You told us that you liked your school and enjoy your lessons as well as the clubs, visits and visitors. You enjoy your new curriculum, involving lots of visits and trips, and you told us how much you enjoy learning and that lessons are fun.

You amazed us with how much you know about staying safe. You also care for each other very well and enjoy all the jobs and responsibilities adults ask you to do. Your school council has worked hard to make your playground better, even ordering the equipment themselves.

We think your school is a good school.

All the staff work very hard to help you do your best and all of you work as a team to make your school the good school that it is.

We have asked the staff to help you to do better in your lessons by giving you things to do to really make you think hard. You should have more opportunities to share your learning and show how well you think you have done in the lesson. We think that the younger children in school need an outside area where they can set up things to do to help them with their lessons.

It was a pleasure to visit your school. We really enjoyed the summer fair on the last afternoon and I particularly liked the singers on the stage.

Well done, keep working hard and come to school every day, so that you continue to do well.

Best wishes

Yvonne Clare

Lead inspector