

Long Marton School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 112182 |
| Local Authority | Cumbria |
| Inspection number | 325549 |
| Inspection date | 8 May 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | John Heap |

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 61 |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 0 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 0 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Keith Duncan |
| Headteacher | Mrs Rachel Smith |
| Date of previous school inspection | 27 March 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Long Marton Appleby-in-Westmorland Cumbria CA16 6BT |
| Telephone number | 01768 361397 |
| Fax number | 01768 361397 |

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|--------------------------|------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- whether standards and achievement in Key Stage 1 were high enough in reading and writing, and whether boys were making sufficient progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how well assessment, the use of learning targets and marking provide staff and pupils with enough information to challenge and ensure progression in pupils' learning
- the effectiveness of: governance; links with providers; success criteria in the school improvement plan; and monitoring of the school's work.

Inspectors collected evidence from: school documentation; national data on school performance; interviews with pupils, staff and governors; observing lessons and other activities; analysing parents' questionnaires and comments. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This small primary school serves a wholly White British population in a rural area which has relatively low levels of social and economic disadvantage. A very small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority. The area does not have a wide range of facilities and the school makes extended provision. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average, but the number of statements of special educational need is well above average. Children enter the school at Reception in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school has several awards, including Healthy School status. The school benefits from being part of a group of similar-sized establishments. There is a breakfast and an after school club, together with a holiday scheme and full day care. These are run by a private provider and did not form part of this inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's accurate and effective self-evaluation that Long Morton is a good school which provides good value for money. Pupils and their parents are very satisfied with what the school provides and how well learners achieve. A typical parent's view is, 'My children have thrived at this school; they are valued and encouraged continually ... my children are lucky to be taught by such a skilled and dedicated team and I cannot praise them highly enough.'

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is confirmed by their above average attendance. They have an excellent understanding of how to look after their personal safety and say that they feel safe in school, knowing who to turn to for help. Pupils have a clear understanding of the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle. Moral and social development is particularly strong and, as a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent and their attitudes to school and work are very good. Older pupils make a strong contribution to these aspects by successfully taking on responsibilities, such as those of play leaders. Younger pupils appreciate that this role makes their playtimes more interesting and enjoyable. The school council makes a good contribution to the life of the school. The school is improving the way it develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity, but recognises that more needs to be done. Given their good attitudes to learning and their competence with basic skills, pupils are well prepared for their future education and the world beyond school.

Pupils' academic achievement is good and standards are above average. Children's knowledge and abilities on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are below the levels expected for the age group. By the time pupils enter Year 1, standards are still slightly below the national average. Good progress through Key Stage 1 has resulted in a consistent, upward trend in test results at the end of Year 2 since the last inspection. The school's performance in the Year 2 tests is very close to the national average. By the end of Year 6, the trend in test results has been consistently above average. The school's current tracking data show that Year 6 pupils are progressing well and are on course to reach the challenging targets set by the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also progress well from their starting points and in relation to their individual learning targets. The pupils looked after by the local authority make good progress.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, but there is greater challenge and pace in Key Stage 2 lessons. Typically, the strengths are: good classroom management; strong relationships; work that is mostly well matched to pupils' needs; and effective support for pupils with extra learning needs. Pupils learn well by having the confidence to be open in discussion and show that they have trust in the adults who teach them. Work provided for individual pupils is guided by teachers' understanding of their needs. For example, when pupils are doing particularly well, they are moved into a more challenging class with older learners.

The good curriculum promotes academic and personal development well. However, across the school too few opportunities exist for pupils to write extended pieces, particularly in subjects other than English. Enrichment of the curriculum is good with many opportunities for pupils to learn in interesting and challenging ways, such as through visits, meeting visitors and by being involved in the school's extended provision. The school's collaboration with neighbouring small schools has brought about improvements to resources in information and communication

technology. Modifications to the curriculum, such as extra support for learning letters and sounds and reading provision are successful in ensuring that pupils with extra learning needs are catered for well.

This is a very caring school that ensures that pupils settle quickly when they arrive and their individual needs are addressed. Procedures and practices for safeguarding pupils, child protection and eliminating discrimination meet national requirements. The school's tracking of academic progress is robust and leads to above average standards. Pupils are supported well by the links the school sets up with outside agencies, such as learning support, including the specific support for children looked after by the local authority. Occasionally, there is a lack of consistency and sharpness in the way teachers set targets and mark pupils' work. Consequently, pupils are not as secure as they might be about their achievements and what they need to do next.

Leadership, management and governance are good. The highly committed headteacher leads the school very well. She receives good support from staff, particularly in ensuring that pupils benefit equally from what the school has to offer and in setting challenging targets for pupils to improve. School self-evaluation is accurate. Improvement since the previous inspection is good and capacity to improve is strong. The school promotes community cohesion well. The school is a focal point in the local community. The pupils' understanding of global issues is soundly developed, for example, through the study of other faiths, the issue of apartheid in South Africa, and Fairtrade. Governors play an active part in the checking of academic and social development.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Reception class is good. Parents are pleased with the way their children are prepared for the routines of school life. Care, support and welfare are emphasised strongly and parents comment on the kind, caring and warm atmosphere. Children enter Reception with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age, particularly in language and communication. All children make good progress. They learn effectively from adults and learn independently because of the good balance of stimulating activities both indoors and outside. This enables children to be happy, active learners who are eager to get on with their tasks. By the time they reach Year 1, many achieve average standards, with personal development being particularly strong. Children successfully take responsibility and work independently. Staff target groups and individuals during the teacher-led tasks and free-choice activities and provide challenge in the learning. Leadership and management are good and make a positive impact on the quality of provision. Teamwork is good, and communications with parents are very successful, especially through the use of home-school diaries. Although there is a written overview of what is to be taught each week, the learning objective for each session is not always clear enough to easily measure the rate of progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make the setting of learning targets and marking more consistent so that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.
- Extend the opportunities for writing, so that the attainment gap with reading is reduced.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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? | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 2 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 2 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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| 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/or disabilities make progress | 2 |

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good are 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 | 1 |
| The extent to which 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 | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

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|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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 |

Leadership and management

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| 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 eliminated | 2 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 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**

11 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Long Marton School, Cumbria, CA16 6BT

The inspection team thoroughly enjoyed the inspection of your good school. We appreciated very much the warm welcome, courtesy and help that you gave us.

These are the things we really liked:

- the effective start children make to their education in Reception and the good progress they make
- the consistently good progress you make in English, mathematics and science and the above average standards you reach by the end of Year 6
- the helpful support for pupils with extra learning needs and the good progress they make
- your impressive moral and social development that leads to your excellent behaviour, very good attitudes to school and work, and strong relationships
- the way that you thoroughly enjoy school
- the good range of activities that enrich your academic and personal development, including the ones before and after school
- the contribution you all make to an extremely safe and caring ethos in the school, such as the way the play leaders help the less confident in the playground
- the really good leadership of your headteacher and the governing body.

To improve your school further, the staff are going to make sure that you are given more opportunities to use your writing skills in many subjects to help you to achieve as well in writing as you do in reading. We are certain that you will want to be very helpful by continuing to work hard, always doing your best and following the advice of your teachers. The staff will also make sure that your individual learning targets and the marking of your work give you a clear idea of how well you are doing and what else you need to do to improve further.

Good luck and best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

John Heap (lead inspector)