

Accrington Huncoat Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119182
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339375
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

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 of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Hayselden
Headteacher	Mr S Grosier
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed all teachers at least once; approximately two thirds of the time spent in school was looking at the learning of pupils. In addition, inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at assessment data and systems for tracking pupils' progress, school policies, the development plan, questionnaires returned from pupils and staff and 69 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well pupils achieve, especially in mathematics and science
- the quality of teaching and learning
- the school's capacity for further improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is about double the national average. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage of whom nearly 10% are from a Traveller background. The number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is above average but, overall, the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with national figures. A children's centre has recently been opened on the school site. It is managed by the headteacher of the school. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark. A new headteacher has been in post since the beginning of January 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. In a commendably short time new leadership has evaluated accurately the effectiveness of the school. It has set the agenda to drive change and improvement while continuing to build on the school's strengths in caring for its pupils and supporting their personal development. Many initiatives to raise attainment and achievement have been put in place. Although it is too early for the impact of these initiatives to be felt fully, evidence of improvement is already apparent. For example: new systems for checking on absences have led to a sharp rise in attendance levels; and the introduction of more rigorous procedures for tracking pupils' progress has led to the identification of underachieving pupils and the introduction of targeted booster classes. Inspection evidence shows that these intensive classes are already having positive impact on attainment in Year 6. The early evidence of impact demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Pupils make satisfactory progress reaching broadly average levels of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in response to satisfactory teaching and a satisfactory curriculum. However, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well because of the well-managed, targeted support they receive.

Attainment in English has improved significantly in recent years following a concerted drive to improve writing skills. However, in mathematics attainment has not risen as strongly because pupils do not apply their mathematical skills well enough to problem solving. In science a lack of resources and too few practical activities are stifling pupils' achievement. Teaching does not routinely match activities closely enough to pupils' needs and abilities with the result that some pupils find lessons far too easy and others far too hard. This is especially the case in Key Stage 2 mixed-age classes.

The school successfully fosters a family atmosphere in which relationships are very strong. Consequently, pupils behave well and feel safe and valued by the adults working with them. The school is a harmonious community where pupils work and play together happily regardless of background. The school also fosters good relationships with the local community. It has forged strong links with outside agencies such as the local authority Traveller support service. Nearly all parents and carers value the school highly, especially the warm and welcoming environment it provides. 'My child loves going to school. I am very pleased with how well all the staff care for the children,' is a typical comment.

New leadership is promoting good teamwork. A very clear vision for the school has been laid out and received positively. Raising attainment and achievement is at the heart of the vision and planning. The new system to track pupils' progress is enabling leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, to hold the school more closely to

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account for its impact on pupils' achievement. Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning takes place but lacks the necessary regularity and rigour to have significant impact on raising the quality of teaching to above satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality and consistency of teaching by:
 - making sure that teaching matches tasks more closely to the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils, especially in Key Stage 2
 - monitoring the quality of teaching and learning more rigorously.
- Raise attainment in science by improving the range of resources and giving more opportunities for pupils to take part in practical work.
- Raise attainment in mathematics by providing pupils with more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to problem solving.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils behave well in lessons and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy working in groups and treat each other with respect. They are keen to learn and enjoy volunteering answers. Pupils enjoy working hard but when tasks are either too difficult or too easy their interest wanes as does their progress. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. They join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills at levels just below those expected for their age and secure broadly average attainment by the end of Key Stage 2. In science, however, attainment is consistently below average. Good leadership and management enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. Teaching assistants are especially effective in supporting the achievement of this group of pupils.

Pupils' satisfactory basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology ensures that they are in a satisfactory position to take advantage of the next steps in their education. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in school. The school council is an active body which has brought about improvements to playground facilities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show genuine respect to each other and the adults working with them. They know the difference between right and wrong. They enjoy time for reflection in assemblies which encourages them to think of others.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching promotes good relationships resulting in adults and pupils working together in a relaxed atmosphere. When teaching is challenging and conducted at a good pace pupils get excited about their learning, but this is the exception rather than the rule. There is no inadequate teaching, but too much is satisfactory, characterised by a lack of urgency and pace. Mixed-age, mixed-ability classes in Key Stage 2 challenge teachers' ability to plan tasks appropriate to pupils' age and ability. Where teaching is good the challenges have been met and overcome. However, much teaching lacks the necessary variety to cater for the needs of all groups.

The curriculum is well organised. Despite the many mixed-age classes, careful planning has minimised any repetition of work from one year to the next. Pupils enjoy topics which stimulate their interest and help improve writing skills across a range of subjects. However, the school misses opportunities to make topic work even more interesting by extending the range of relevant activities. A recent topic on rivers, for example, was completed without any trip to an actual river. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities that are mostly sporting in nature. It was a pleasure to see pupils learning brass instruments in Key Stage 2 and how much they enjoyed it.

Caring for its pupils is at the heart of the school's provision. Pupils say adults working with them are always approachable and help them sort out any problems. Good arrangements for transition ensure that children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage. Older pupils feel confident about their move to secondary school because good links have been forged with local high schools.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

New leadership has been quick to evaluate the school accurately, identify priorities and provide the school with a clear vision for raising attainment and achievement. The range of actions already taken is impressive. However, despite some very early signs of impact, more time will be needed to allow the initiatives to embed fully. This is a school which is good at promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. Pupils who are potentially open to discrimination are fully integrated into the school. The school's desire to break down barriers and provide a good role model for pupils extends to employing adults from the Traveller community in the school.

Pupils feel safe in school because of the good levels of care, guidance and support they receive. The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures is satisfactory. While all procedures are in place, the recording, monitoring, storing and presentation of data relating to safeguarding require more rigour so that information is more readily accessible. The promotion of community cohesion is good. Pupils respect each other in the school's harmonious community. The school is highly regarded and active in its own community. Effective management of the children's centre also brings the school closer into the heart of its local community. Pupils are in the early stages of gaining first-hand knowledge of other cultures and religions through a recently established link with an inner-city, multi-ethnic school. Pupils show themselves knowledgeable about other cultures in discussions.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Satisfactory leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage enable children to make satisfactory progress in most aspects of their learning. Children join the Nursery with skills at levels just below those normally expected for their age and leave Reception with similar levels. However, children make good progress in developing communication and language skills because activities are especially stimulating and teaching is effective in concentrating on these aspects. The curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for children to make their own decisions and choose activities. There is a well-planned and balanced provision between adult-led and child-led activities. Children learn through a stimulating indoor environment in which to work and play. Similarly, the outside area is attractive but the lack of a covered area rules out its use in bad weather. As a result, opportunities for children to engage in physical activities and to explore the physical world around them are not always available. However, planning is already at an advanced stage to provide a covered area for the children. Adult support for children's welfare is good. Children work and play in a safe environment. They are known well as individuals. Their progress is tracked effectively. Solid links with outside agencies enable expertise to be called upon when need is identified.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers who returned the questionnaire were supportive of all aspects of the school's work. Inspectors agree with parents' and carers' positive views on the care, guidance and support that the school provides. However, inspectors judge that attainment and achievement could and should be higher, especially in mathematics

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and science.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Accrington Huncoat Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 178 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	67	23	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	77	16	23	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	33	48	32	46	4	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	49	34	49	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	54	32	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	58	26	38	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	57	30	43	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	36	35	51	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	52	31	45	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	38	34	49	5	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	49	31	45	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	48	35	51	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	58	27	39	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



4 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Accrington Huncoat Primary School, Accrington, BB5 6LR

Thank you for your warm welcome during the recent inspection of your school. Many of you were keen to talk about your school. What you said helped us greatly in reaching our judgements.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. However, the way it cares, guides and supports you is good. Because of this you feel safe in school and feel confident that adults will help you if you have a problem. It was very pleasing to see how well you all get on together and how well you behave in lessons and around school – well done! Your attendance has shot up since Christmas. Again, well done! Make sure you keep this up as attending school regularly is very important if you are to learn well. That you enjoy school is clear. However, school is also about doing well in your learning and making good progress. This is where many of you could do better. In order to make this happen, I am asking your school to do the following things.

Make sure that teaching helps you learn better by:

- providing work to do in lessons that is suitable for your age and your ability
- getting other teachers to watch your lessons more often and in more detail so that your teachers can help one another.

Help you do better in science by improving the range of resources and giving you more opportunities to take part in practical work.

Help you do better in mathematics by providing you with more opportunities to apply your mathematics in solving problems.

I am confident that you will support your teachers and your new headteacher in making sure that these improvements take place to help you learn better and make good progress.

I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Wall

Lead Inspector

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