

Anchorsholme Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119249
Local Authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	339389
Inspection dates	23–24 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Jean Kendall HMI

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	619
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Millington
Headteacher	Mr Graeme Dow
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 26 lessons, and held meetings with staff, governors and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self evaluation and development planning, internal and external monitoring, policies and safeguarding procedures. Inspectors also took account of the 163 questionnaire returns from parents, 25 returns from staff and 90 returns from pupils.

How well pupils of all ability, particularly the more able, make progress in their learning.
How effectively writing skills are developed and how well pupils apply these skills across the curriculum.

Pupils personal development, including their social development, behaviour and opportunities to engage with others from diverse backgrounds.

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the extent to which children make progress from their starting points.

Improvement since the last inspection and the school's capacity to sustain further improvement.

Information about the school

Anchorsholme is much larger than the average primary school. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals and there is a lower than average proportion with special education needs and/or disabilities. The school supports a breakfast club and two after school clubs. One is managed by the governing body and provides for children aged four to eight years, the other is privately run and provides for children aged eight to 11. This latter provision did not form a part of the inspection. The school has a number of external awards, including 'Healthy Schools' status, Silver Flag Eco School Award, Activemark and Children's University status.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Anchorsholme Primary is a good school. It has some outstanding features. Under the good leadership of the headteacher and senior leadership team, aspects of provision have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' high level of attainment and their outstanding personal development have been sustained. The headteacher provides a strong steer in promoting pupils' enjoyment, and places pupils' all round development at the heart of the school. Parents and pupils are highly appreciative of this and have a high level of confidence in his leadership. All staff and governors are fully committed to enriching the pupils' experience and share leaders' ambitions to continuously improve provision. The school provides good value for money and has good capacity for sustained improvement.

Central to the school's success is the caring and supportive environment in which all pupils feel valued as individuals and secure in their abilities and skills. Pupils receive excellent care, guidance and support and feel extremely safe. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress in their learning and social development because support is effectively tailored to meet their particular needs. All groups of pupils grow in confidence, are happy and healthy and achieve highly in all areas of learning. They have excellent social skills and a keen sense of right and wrong. These aspects are enhanced by their good spiritual development and knowledge and understanding of the world beyond school. Pupils have a developing sense of the cultural diversity in the United Kingdom, although their opportunities to engage with others from different ethnic and religious backgrounds are limited. These well developed skills mean that pupils are very well prepared for secondary education and well placed to achieve their ambitions and aspirations.

Pupils want to come to school and are enthusiastic about what it offers. The above average attendance of the vast majority of pupils is evidence of their enjoyment of school. As well as being effectively guided and supported by staff, the pupils themselves make an excellent contribution to their school community. They are proud of their work and keen to help and support others in the school. They are excellent ambassadors for their school; being extremely articulate and welcoming to visitors and displaying exemplary behaviour around the school and in the grounds.

Pupils attain consistently high academic standards and make good progress because teaching is mostly good, with some being outstanding, and the curriculum is generally well matched to the needs of all pupils. The varied opportunities for enrichment, creative and personal development both within the curriculum and in the after-school clubs and activities, greatly enhance pupils' experience and all round development. Pupils' desire to succeed, their highly cooperative approach in lessons and the pride they

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take in their work are also key factors. In the most effective lessons, activities build on what pupils know already, stretch their thinking and enable them to learn at a good pace. However a minority of lessons and some aspects of curriculum organisation are less effective in engaging pupils' interest because activities are pitched at too low a level and do not add to pupils' understanding. In these lessons, pupils' progress slows and they can occasionally become restless and distracted. This was evident in some phonics teaching across the school and in the Year 1 curriculum, where activities to promote independent learning were not at a sufficiently challenging level.

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The care with which staff welcome children into the school, helps them settle quickly and approach their learning with confidence. Their enjoyment is evident in their happy and self-assured interactions with each other and their very good behaviour. Children make satisfactory progress in all areas of their learning and good progress in some. However the pace of learning is sometimes slower than it might be because activities provided to help children learn independently do not effectively extend their learning. Some of the adult-led whole group teaching sessions are too long and are not well matched to the level of knowledge and skills children have on entry to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - - sharing best practice
 - - ensuring that lessons consistently build on pupils' knowledge and skills and secure good progress for all pupils
 - - rigorously monitoring the impact of initiatives and the quality of teaching and adapting practice or providing support as necessary.
- Improve the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - - ensuring that activities provided to help children learn independently extend their learning and that adults are effectively deployed to support them in this
 - - ensuring that teacher-led sessions are sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able.
- Help pupils to develop their understanding of the wide range of cultural influences in the United Kingdom by seeking opportunities for them to interact with others from diverse backgrounds.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enjoy learning; they have high aspirations, are highly motivated to succeed and take pride in their work. They enjoy learning most in the lessons where they are encouraged to think creatively and apply their knowledge and skills to challenging activities. In the most effective lessons they show excellent levels of concentration and perseverance. Sometimes they can become restless and distracted because the lessons are not sufficiently stimulating and the activities do not challenge them at a suitably high level. Nevertheless, their positive attitudes to learning generally help them to make good

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progress across the range of subjects and attain very high standards in national tests. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because they receive excellent support which takes full account of their particular needs. Many reach or exceed the expected levels for their age.

Pupils begin the national curriculum in Year 1 with levels of attainment that are mostly above average. They make good progress and attain well above average levels in standardised tests at the end of Year 6. Performance at the higher level 5 has been consistently well above average in mathematics and science. Following a dip in higher level performance in English in 2008, the school is back on track with 80% of pupils attaining level 5 in the 2009 test. School data, lesson observations and pupils' work indicate that pupils are continuing to make good progress and these high standards are being sustained.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their school. Their behaviour around the school, and the care and consideration they show for each other are exemplary. Older pupils eagerly and capably take responsibility as prefects, PALS (supporting play at break-times) and buddies to younger or vulnerable pupils. The 'tour guides' and all pupils who spoke to inspectors were excellent ambassadors for their school, being polite, articulate and very keen to share their good experiences. Pupils feel able to contribute to decision making and make a difference through the well established pupil council and various 'pupil voice' activities. In this supportive and encouraging environment they feel very safe and well cared for. Bullying is very rare and pupils know that they can seek support if they have any concerns and they will be dealt with. Their involvement in a wide range of community activities and contributions to local and national charities greatly enhance their experience and understanding of broader issues, as does their involvement in various activities encouraging enterprise skills. Pupils' high level of basic skills and their well developed personal and social skills equip them outstandingly well to succeed in the next phase of their education and in life beyond school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1

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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The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The majority of lessons observed by inspectors were good and some were outstanding. This core of good and better teaching enables pupils to make good progress across the whole school. Constructive and encouraging relationships are a significant strength in all lessons. The school's recently revised presentation policy is being effectively applied and the feedback to pupils through marking is generally of a high quality. However the overall quality of teaching is variable and some of the lessons observed were less effective in securing pupils' good progress and engaging their interest. In these lessons, pupils easily completed the given tasks and did not fully understand their purpose. Where teaching is good or better, teachers use a range of styles to provide interesting activities that are well matched to pupils' ability and learning needs. Assessment is very effectively used to ensure that teaching builds on pupils' prior knowledge and skills. Pupils enthusiastically contribute their ideas and diligently apply their knowledge to challenging tasks. Where teaching is less effective, the planned activities do not take enough account of pupils' prior learning and provide insufficient challenge, particularly for the more able pupils.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' all round learning and development. Basic skills are well promoted across all subjects and the drive to improve writing across the school is showing its impact in improved results in English assessments. The increased opportunities for pupils to participate in enterprise and creative activities are popular with pupils and have enhanced their experience. They are particularly enthusiastic about the range of activities they can engage in on 'Funky Fridays' and the many and varied extra-curricular and enrichment activities including sport, languages, media and performing arts. The strong focus on pupils' health and their personal and social development makes a significant contribution to their outstanding development in these aspects. The school's international links similarly enhance their knowledge and understanding of the world.

The excellent quality of care, guidance and support is another significant factor in securing the good and outstanding outcomes for pupils. Staff are fully committed to ensuring the academic and personal success of all pupils. The school's focus on all round

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achievement helps pupils to grow and develop as happy, capable individuals who look forward to future successes with confidence. The support in place for vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is tailored exceptionally well to meet their individual needs and enable them to take a full part in all the school offers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors have high aspirations for the pupils and are fully committed to the continuous development of provision. Staff share their ambitions and have worked hard to improve aspects of the school's work and sustain the high outcomes achieved by pupils. The success of their collective drive to enrich pupils' experiences, for example by making lessons more exciting and including more opportunities for pupils' to develop their personal and creative skills, is evident in pupils' love of school. Parents also have a high level of confidence in school leaders and the school remains a popular choice in the area. Governors' high level of commitment and range of skills provides the school with good challenge and support in securing improvement.

There are good systems in place to monitor the school's overall performance. The increasingly active role played by middle leaders is proving effective in monitoring the quality of provision and enabling the headteacher to take a more strategic role. The process for identifying pupils who need additional support is very effective and its impact is seen in the good and outstanding outcomes for all pupils. However, monitoring is not sufficiently focused on identifying the aspects of teaching that need to improve and identifying actions to bring about improvements.

Safeguarding procedures are good. Appropriate checks are carried out on staff and visitors and all staff and nominated governors are trained in safeguarding and child protection procedures. Risk assessments and policies reflect the school's drive to give children a secure environment. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the school's own community and understanding of the needs of different groups. Their strong commitment to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and support those in need, helps all pupils to succeed. Consequently, the school is a harmonious and happy place where pupils feel safe, secure and valued as individuals. The school works very effectively with outside agencies to provide support for vulnerable pupils. Its strong links with community groups, the parish church, local schools, businesses and Higher

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Education establishments enrich the experiences of pupils further. Pupils also gain much in terms of understanding their own and other cultures, from the school's extensive international partnerships in Jamaica and New York.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception class from a range of pre-school provisions with knowledge and skills that are mostly above those expected for their age. Adults provide a caring, secure environment and all welfare and safeguarding requirements are fully met. Partnerships with parents and the range of pre-school settings are strong and transition is well managed so that children have the best possible start. The good induction procedures help children settle quickly and feel happy, safe and secure. This is underpinned by the strong teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants and the supportive and encouraging relationships they develop with the children. However, although staff and school leaders evaluate teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage, these systems are not rigorous enough to ensure that all children are fully challenged and excited by their learning.

Children are enthusiastic and confident learners and thoroughly enjoy opportunities to explore, investigate and create. Teachers provide a range of opportunities for children to play purposefully both indoors and outdoors. However the activities provided to promote their independent learning do not always provide them with sufficient challenge to develop their skills and add to their knowledge. Adults are not deployed as effectively as they could be to enhance children's learning during these activities. Teacher-led sessions also, do not always take enough account of the extent of children's ability and level of

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development.

Children make steady progress in all areas of learning and good progress in some. Their personal and social development is promoted particularly well and consequently their behaviour is consistently good and they cooperate extremely well together. By the time they begin year 1 the vast majority have achieved levels that are above average in all areas of learning and they are well prepared to begin the national curriculum.

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

The vast majority of parents who returned questionnaires say that they are happy with the quality of education and care their child receives and feel that their child enjoys school. There is a high level of confidence in the school's leadership and satisfaction with the quality of provision, with parents stating, for example, 'Excellent leadership from the headteacher, good values and teaching methods', 'We are thrilled with this fabulous school.' Parents feel the school generally deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour although a very small minority feel more could be done in this respect. A few also feel that they could be better informed about their child's progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Anchorsholme 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 163 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 619 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	243	71	95	28	1	0	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	253	74	85	25	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	152	45	160	47	25	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	176	52	144	42	10	3	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	187	55	144	42	6	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	152	45	160	47	16	5	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	190	56	142	42	3	1	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)	156	47	151	45	15	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	173	51	147	43	9	3	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	131	40	165	50	21	6	6	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	115	35	182	56	11	3	4	1
The school is led and managed effectively	213	62	118	35	2	1	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	204	60	122	36	6	2	1	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.



Inspection of Anchorsholme Primary School, Thornton-Cleveleys, FY5 3RX

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We enjoyed talking with you, observing your lessons and looking at your work. We found that Anchorsholme is a good school with some outstanding features. Well done!

You can be proud of the way you represented your school. Your enthusiasm for learning is evident in all you do and this helps you to achieve highly. We were particularly impressed with your caring and mature behaviour as you move around school and in the grounds. In fact, we think your contribution to your school is outstanding in many respects. You told us that you feel safe and well cared for by the adults at school. We found the quality of their care, guidance and support to be excellent. They are very committed to making sure you all achieve to the best of your ability. As a result, many aspects of your personal development are excellent, including your social development, your knowledge of how to keep safe and maintain a healthy lifestyle and the development of skills to help you progress well when you move to secondary school.

You told us that you enjoy your lessons and particularly those in which your thinking is challenged and you are provided with exciting activities. We know that your teachers work hard to provide you with memorable and enjoyable experiences. Your headteacher and the governors provide the school with good leadership and are keen to continue to improve the school. We have asked them to:

- improve teaching by ensuring that all lessons build on your knowledge and skills and help you all make consistently good progress and
- help you to develop your understanding of the wide range of cultural influences by giving you opportunities to interact with others from diverse backgrounds

For children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, we have asked teachers to

- ensure that all activities extend your learning and build on your skills, knowledge and understanding

You are very well placed to achieve your goals and ambitions and we wish you every success in the future,

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