

Montreal CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132170
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	341299
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Reporting inspector	David Law

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr K Melville
Headteacher	Mrs Shelagh Hughes
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fourteen lessons were seen and ten teachers were observed teaching. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the improvement plan, school policies and evidence from the school's self-evaluation. Account was taken of teachers' curriculum planning and their assessment of pupils' progress. Samples of pupils' books were also reviewed. Inspectors evaluated the views of parents and carers and of pupils by analysing questionnaires from 72 parents and carers and 86 pupils. Twenty three staff questionnaires were also evaluated.

- the learning and progress pupils are currently making in English and mathematics
- the effectiveness of assessment in matching learning to pupils' needs and showing them how they can improve
- the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation and the impact of measures put in place to raise achievement.

Information about the school

This is a school of below average size. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average although an average proportion has a statement of special educational needs. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. The school has achieved a national award for its provision for gifted and talented pupils and a number of other awards including the Healthy Schools Award and Active Mark. The number on roll has fallen by about one fifth since the last inspection in 2007. A new headteacher took up her post in September 2009 and there have been a significant number of new governors appointed in the last year.

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

Montreal CofE Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. They are happy in school, behave well and feel safe. Procedures for keeping them safe are good. Good partnerships within the local community promote learning and personal development. There is good care, guidance and support for all pupils but it is particularly helpful to the most vulnerable. Pupils are keen to take responsibility. They enjoy being members of the school council and play leaders at break times.

Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below those expected for their age. The good provision there enables them to progress well throughout the Reception year but this brisk start is not maintained. Pupils' learning, progress and achievement are satisfactory thereafter. Satisfactory teaching enables pupils to make the expected progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, in English and mathematics pupils are not sufficiently challenged because not enough is expected of them and they have too little opportunity to explain their thinking. This slows the rate of learning and there is too little good or better teaching that quickens it. School leaders have put appropriate strategies in place to turn around the below average results seen in the 2009 end of Key Stage 2 national tests. As a result, most Year 6 pupils are now working at broadly average levels. The use of assessment to support learning, including marking, is inadequate because work is not matched effectively to pupils' individual needs. Pupils work cooperatively and enjoy using computers. This, together with average attendance, enables a satisfactory preparation for their future economic well-being. The satisfactory curriculum includes a wide range of activities to enrich pupils' experience and promote personal development. It helps pupils to have a good understanding of healthy living and they enjoy taking part in sport.

The headteacher's high expectations provides a clear lead and she works tirelessly to improve learning. She is well supported by enthusiastic governors who have been tenacious in tackling a deficit budget. They are now keen to support and challenge the headteacher in tackling underachievement. All staff work well together. Leaders at all levels are keen to contribute to improving standards. The capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory. The realistic and relevant development plan has a sharp focus on raising achievement. This is based on accurate monitoring and evaluation so the school knows its strengths, and current leaders and governors are tackling the weaknesses identified. The school has a welcoming ethos and makes a satisfactory contribution to promoting community cohesion. It has good relations with parents and carers and engages them well.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in English and mathematics by:
 - matching learning more effectively to pupils' individual needs
 - challenging pupils with learning that stretches them to reach their best
 - providing opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking and develop their speaking and listening skills
 - helping pupils to use and apply their key literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Improve the use of assessment to plan learning by:
 - regularly checking pupils' work to evaluate the levels they are reaching and using this information to set specific objectives for what they need to do next
 - ensuring the marking of pupils' work is of consistent quality in helping them to know how they can improve
- Improve the quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 so more of it is good or better by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving
 - providing more practical learning where pupils are actively engaged.
- 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 show positive attitudes to learning and this, together with their good behaviour, helps them to make satisfactory progress in their lessons. They work cooperatively in groups and often show good levels of enjoyment particularly when there are practical activities. For example, in Year 3 pupils thoroughly enjoyed making electrical circuits in science and were able to explain what worked and why. There has been some improvement over the past year in Year 6 pupils' attainment in English and mathematics, and all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are now making satisfactory progress. Similarly, more pupils in Year 2 are reaching average levels in reading and mathematics. Few pupils in either key stage reach above expected levels. The most vulnerable make good progress with the learning mentor in the Sunshine Room because they are able to develop their speaking and listening skills and acquire self-esteem. An emphasis on improving literacy for all pupils is enabling them to acquire a reasonable repertoire of skills for writing, such as accurate punctuation. However, although handwriting is broadly satisfactory too few pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work. Pupils' basic number skills are sound but they find it difficult to use and apply what they know to solve mathematical problems. They are eager to use computers.

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Pupils have a good knowledge of how to live healthily and inspectors saw how much they relished the sports day. They are keen to help each other and often take responsibility. Pupils are tolerant, treat each other respectfully and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Their satisfactory achievement, good behaviour and positive attitudes provide a sound platform for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	3
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	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is of satisfactory quality and relationships between pupils and teachers are good. Where teaching is at its best, practical activity is used well to stimulate interest and lessons are broken into smaller parts to engage pupils. However, too often pupils are not challenged sufficiently and not enough is expected of them with the result that the rate of learning is not brisk enough. This is because teachers' use of assessment to inform their planning and pupils' learning is inadequate and work is not matched well enough to pupils' personal needs. Marking is completed regularly but does not consistently show pupils what they should improve. The satisfactory curriculum helps

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 to make the expected progress and there is good provision for enriching pupils' wider experience. This includes numerous visits and opportunities to participate in a range of sport and music. For example, pupils very much enjoy their 'adventure learning' where they use the outdoor environment. Good quality care, guidance and support makes effective provision for vulnerable pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures they participate well in learning and develop well personally. Links with external support agencies are strong. There are good procedures to ensure a smooth transition into the Reception class and on to secondary education. Systems are securely in place to ensure regular attendance and punctuality.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
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?

Since her appointment last September, the headteacher has given a strong lead by making the raising of achievement a key priority for improvement. Effective systems have been established to manage the performance of staff and hold them to account for the progress of the pupils they teach. There has been significant professional development. Strategies for improvement, and methods to monitor and evaluate their impact, are robust and realistic. All staff show a commitment to promoting pupils' achievement and well-being and teachers readily take on responsibility for leading aspects of the curriculum. There are many new governors and the governing body is well led by the chairperson. They have taken difficult decisions to rectify a deficit budget and have been instrumental in ensuring that safeguarding procedures are good. They are now strengthening their role in relation to the improvement of pupils' achievement. Links with parents are good and they are supportive of the school. They appreciate recent innovations to develop family learning. Strong partnerships include those with local churches and community police. The school's satisfactory promotion of community cohesion is founded on a secure knowledge of the local context. Opportunities to learn about the range of cultures in Britain and elsewhere are satisfactory and developing. All pupils have an equal opportunity to learn and there is no discrimination. The budget is now managed efficiently and, taking account of the satisfactory outcomes for pupils, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. In most years, most children enter Reception with skills well below those expected at this age. All children make good progress in their learning and enjoy everything they do so that by the time they enter Year 1, attainment for most is below, rather than well below, average. Children quickly acquire confidence and learn how to be independent. They feel entirely safe and know adults will listen carefully to them. Good teaching is evident and learning is well planned. Good assessment ensures that provision is matched to individual needs. Children learn to listen carefully and have good opportunities to develop their speaking skills as they take part in activities such as role play. Good leadership ensures adults work together and have a secure knowledge of young children's learning and development. Good induction procedures including strong links with the local nursery ensure a smooth transition into the Reception year. Transition into Year 1 is satisfactory and the school is seeking to develop this. Links with parents and carers are good and this statement is typical: 'I am delighted with my child's first year in school and he loves adventure learning days.'

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers feel that their children enjoy school. The vast majority are happy with their child's experience and feel they are kept safe in school and are helped to live a healthy lifestyle. Almost all feel they are well informed about their child's progress and most feel that they are helped to support the child's learning. Inspectors endorse these views. Although most parents feel the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour, a few do not agree that it does. Inspectors saw that pupils' behaviour is good and is managed well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Montreal CoFE 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 165 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	60	29	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	60	27	38	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	36	50	35	49	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	53	28	39	4	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	45	63	25	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	51	31	43	3	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	44	38	53	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)	27	38	37	51	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	53	27	38	5	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	49	29	40	6	8	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	40	36	50	4	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	39	54	31	43	0	0	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	63	23	32	1	1	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



Dear Children

The other inspectors and I enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for making us welcome. You contributed well to the inspection by being eager to talk to us. We found that your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. We saw that you enjoy being at school and these are some of the things we think you do well:

- you are helpful to each other and your behaviour is good
- there are good partnerships – for example with the community police
- adults take good care of you and you say you feel safe in school
- you have a good understanding of how to live a healthy life and we saw how enthusiastic you were when taking part in sports day
- you are keen to take responsibility – for example by being play leaders and members of the school council.

We have three recommendations to help the school improve further and these are:

- we have asked your teachers to help you achieve more in English and mathematics by, for example, giving you more opportunities to use your literacy and numeracy skills
- we have also asked your teachers to check more closely how well you are doing and use the information to help them plan work that matches your needs
- finally, we have asked your teachers to have higher expectations of what you can do and to provide you with more of the practical activities which we saw that you enjoy.

I hope you will work hard to help your teachers bring about these improvements. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

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