

Morecambe Bay Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119135
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358497
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2011
Reporting inspector	David Byrne

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	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Davies
Headteacher	Mrs Siobhan Collingwood
Date of previous school inspection	10 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspection team visited 12 lessons taught by nine teachers, and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, pupils and the local authority School Improvement Officer. The team observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including records of pupils' progress, the school's improvement plan and policies for securing safeguarding and child protection. The team analysed the questionnaires returned by 56 parents and carers and also those supplied by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. Inspectors looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of teaching to establish the rate of progress of different pupils and whether or not it is fast enough.
- The quality of the curriculum and its impact on pupils' learning.
- Whether assessment is used well enough by staff to guide planning and to inform pupils about how they can improve their work.
- Whether the efforts to support vulnerable pupils and their families benefit pupils' learning.
- The effectiveness of senior leaders in monitoring the school's performance and taking steps to improve it.

Information about the school

This is an average sized school for a community primary. An above average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and a high percentage of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most pupils are of White British heritage; a minority are from other ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The mobility of pupils is much higher than average, reflecting high levels of transience within the local community.

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

This is a good school which makes a significant difference to the lives of its pupils and the community it serves. Pupils' personal development improves rapidly in their time in school. Academically pupils move forward at a good rate, benefiting in particular from the outstanding curriculum. Outstanding care and support, enhanced by excellent partnerships with outside bodies, enable pupils to overcome, what for many, are considerable barriers to learning. The school is popular with pupils, and parents and carers rate it highly.

From low starting points on entry to school, pupils' attainment rises at a good rate to broadly average at Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support and make good progress towards their individual targets. Progress for all is improving strongly and particularly in reading. The improvement is the result of adaptations in recent years to teaching and innovations to the curriculum. A very creative approach to the curriculum inspires teachers and engages pupils by making learning fun. Whilst the use of assessment has improved in recent years, it is not always used by teachers to ensure that activities are closely matched to the needs of all pupils. The process of enabling pupils to participate in their own assessment is becoming embedded, but they are not yet familiar enough about their next steps in learning.

The school is a calm and peaceful place in which pupils say they feel safe and secure. Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to good behaviour and warm relationships. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy, fit and safe and most do their best to live up to this.

The school is effectively led and managed by a dedicated headteacher, a strong management team and a supportive governing body. There is a determination to drive up attainment and improve progress. Whilst the progress of individual pupils is tracked in English and mathematics, the use of the data to compare results of pupil groups to schools nationally and identify areas for improvement is not fully efficient and is rather time consuming. The school identifies its strengths and weaknesses well and has a clear picture of how it can get better. The rising attainment and increased progress in recent years, coupled with the outstanding pastoral support for pupils, demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve. It gives good value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further by:
 - devising systems to monitor and record the progress of pupils working in the cross-curricular themes and topics so that pupils have a clear picture of their own performance and how to improve

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- improving the efficiency of systems to highlight the performance of groups of pupils over time compared to other schools nationally
- strengthening the quality of planning and the use of assessment to ensure that teachers consistently match work and resources to pupils' needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy school and the large majority flourish within the safety and security provided in lessons. They work with motivation and good engagement in response to imaginative teaching and to the school's creative curriculum, which extends their knowledge within new contexts. During a good Year 6 lesson, pupils extended their vocabulary rapidly by focusing on images of an African street and then working in pairs to construct exciting and creative words to describe the scene. Pupils respond particularly positively to practical activities that link different subjects together. This was clearly demonstrated in a good Year 3 lesson where pupils carried out mathematical investigations linked to science and the movement of muscles. The data collected was applied by pupils to extend their knowledge of graphs effectively.

Overall, children start school with skills that are much lower than expected for their age. The high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the high levels of movement into and out of the school during the school year constrain the outcomes for some pupils. Inspection findings show that progress is good and accelerating strongly. The gap between the pupils' attainment and national expectations is narrowing at a good rate. In 2010 attainment was broadly average in English and mathematics. Robust data held by the school and local authority confirm good progress is being sustained. The average attainment and good progress reflect good achievement given the pupils' low starting points to school. Some differences in the performance of boys and girls are identified by the school and effective actions are narrowing the gap considerably. Pupils who speak English as an additional language soon settle and learn rapidly as their confidence in using English increases.

Pupils are well behaved and show good attitudes to learning. Both boys and girls work quietly and sensibly and like to offer opinions and enter into discussions. Pupils take on responsibilities in school and class, and their voice is heard through, for example, the school council which enables them to influence aspects of school life. The pupils' average attainment and good personal development prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

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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	3
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	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

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

How effective is the provision?

Staff work successfully to improve their teaching in order to raise attainment. Teaching often imaginatively exploits the creative features of the curriculum. Innovative approaches to learning are becoming established and teaching is mostly successful in motivating and engaging pupils. Initiatives, such as increasing the frequency of reading across the school, introducing letters and sounds in Key Stage 1 and in lower Key Stage 2, and developing ways to explore ideas through drama, have added to pupils' enjoyment of learning and have accelerated their progress. Relationships are warm and pupils benefit from excellent care and support. The role of teaching assistants in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is very effective and enables good inclusion. Assessment is used to monitor the progress of individual pupils but assessment information is not used consistently to make sure that work and activities match the needs of different pupils. Occasionally, too much teacher talk restricts independent learning.

The outstanding curriculum has many exemplary features that provide a vast array of rich and memorable experiences. These are raising pupils' attainment in the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology, whilst also widening the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world. Topics involving archive films related to Morecambe really captured the imaginations of pupils and fired the enthusiasm of staff. Regular contributions by educational partners such as artists, story tellers and dancers, expose pupils to creative experiences. Support from university

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students and visitors widen learning experiences, for example in Spanish. Educational visits, for example to a museum in Manchester, add to learning experiences and links with other schools promote the development of sport amongst pupils. The strong emphasis given to promoting pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education benefit all pupils enormously by enabling them to have the confidence to take advantage of the learning on offer in the school.

Under the very strong leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, exemplary procedures support vulnerable pupils and help their families. The work of all staff, but in particular the attendance officer, the learning mentors and home school liaison worker, has effectively improved attendance and eliminated exclusions. Excellent partnerships with a very wide range of agencies from services within health, education and welfare, extend the outstanding quality of care within the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers at all levels are successfully driving forward improvement. The headteacher has effectively encouraged staff to introduce initiatives to help to better meet the needs of pupils, and this in turn successfully motivates staff. Whole-school initiatives to boost standards in English and mathematics have proved successful and continue to improve outcomes for pupils. Leaders are making good use of assessment data to track pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Rigorous systems for monitoring pupils' work contribute to improved standards. The quality and pace of learning have been increased by motivating classroom activities emerging from the very creative curriculum. The use of assessment to analyse outcomes for different groups of pupils, to ensure that work consistently matches all pupils' abilities, and to track progress across the curriculum, has still to be fully embedded.

The governing body is supportive and responsive to the challenges facing the school. Governors question and challenge the school and are increasingly involved in evaluating its effectiveness. Effective practice is adopted to maintain good safeguarding procedures. Great care is taken to vet all adults in contact with pupils and procedures for ensuring child protection are exemplary. Excellent partnerships with agencies, such as the neighbourhood children's centre and a variety of social and welfare organisations enable the school to make vital contributions to cohesion within the local community. Pupils' awareness of global issues is promoted well through aspects of the curriculum and strategies are underway to promote pupils' deeper understanding of diversity within society. Equal opportunity is promoted well and racial discrimination is actively

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discouraged. Discrepancies between the achievements of groups of pupils are tackled well. This is exemplified by the narrowing gap in attainment between the performance of boys and girls in writing. The effectiveness with which the school engages with parents and carers is good.

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

The quality of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. A well-managed induction programme enables children to settle quickly and make good progress. Teaching is good and adults understand how children learn. Activities are often based on the children's own interests, such as learning through play as part of 'the doctor's surgery'. This involved 'writing' and developing language as part of children's discussions. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves. These include outdoor activities and access to a very well-organised, indoor, large play area. This choice effectively contributes to the children's good independence. They stay committed to their chosen task for considerable time and they work and play happily and sensibly together. Adults engage with children regularly and positively, sharing what they are discovering, drawing them into conversation and asking well-focused questions that promote their good learning. Daily letters and sounds sessions promote good progress in early literacy. Close attention is paid to children's welfare and they are safe and secure.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a secure picture of the strengths and relative weaknesses of the provision and has made well-considered changes. Assessment is thorough and regular with a good range of strategies to build a comprehensive picture of children's progress. The information gained is used well to plan future learning. Although children start school with low levels of development for their age, good rates of progress

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occur in all areas of development. Despite this good improvement, the attainment of most children at the end of Reception is below average. Many struggle with aspects of language and at times in communicating with others, although the good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage makes a significant contribution to making up the deficit many have when they start school.

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

Views of parents and carers

A relatively small proportion of the school's parents and carers returned their questionnaires. The overwhelming majority expressed happiness with their child's experience at the school. Numerous parents and carers commented that their child is well cared for and that children new to the school are warmly welcomed. Inspectors endorse these positive views. The school has gained some success in engaging some parents and carers even more fully in actively supporting their children's education. However, the school recognises that even more could be done in this area.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Morecambe Bay Community 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 245 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	68	14	25	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	66	18	32	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	46	25	45	3	5	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	70	14	25	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	71	16	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	48	23	41	4	7	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	57	24	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)	33	59	17	30	0	0	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	61	21	38	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	54	22	39	2	4	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	43	29	52	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	57	22	39	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	68	17	30	0	0	1	2

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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



14 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Morecambe Bay Community Primary School, Morecambe, LA4 5JL

Thank you for being so welcoming when I visited your school recently. My inspection colleagues and I really enjoyed meeting you and talking with you. We found that Morecambe Bay is a good school. You benefit from dedicated teachers who care for you extremely well. Your parents and carers like your school very much and praise all that it does.

You make good progress in your work for most of the time and you behave well and get on well together. Teachers usually make lessons as lively and interesting as they can and the school keeps a close eye on how well you are getting on with your learning. Events, such as creating your own Science Fair, and by learning through topics, such as Doctor Who, are really imaginative and make lessons fun. Your teachers mostly give you work that is not too easy or too hard but just right. This is not always the case though, and we have asked that the school finds ways of planning work that is always just right for you. We have also asked your school to find ways of giving you clearer guidance about how you can improve your work.

Your school is well led and managed. The headteacher and her staff work tirelessly to help you but we have asked them to compare more how well you get on with your work with other pupils around the country.

Most of you said in your questionnaires that you like school. That was very obvious to us because so many of you were smiling during lessons and playtime. The school is very much an important part of your local community.

We wish you all luck for your future.

Yours sincerely

David Byrne

Lead inspector

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