

Morecambe Bay Community Primary School

Station Road, Morecambe, Lancashire LA45JL

Inspection dates 1–3 March 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders are successfully committed to improving the life chances of all pupils. Strong, caring relationships are at the heart of the school.
- Despite the many potential barriers to learning that have to be overcome, most pupils make good progress in their reading, writing and mathematics as they move through the school.
- Pupils' social and moral development is promoted very well and is central to many aspects of the school's work.
- Governors provide good and effective strategic leadership and support.
- Well-focused, quality teaching ensures that pupils develop the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and this prepares them well for future learning.
- The welfare of pupils, many of whom have complex social and emotional needs, is very well managed and is very effective in meeting their individual needs.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school; they are very well behaved, feel safe and show care and consideration to others.
- A high priority is placed on ensuring that pupils are well prepared for life as citizens in modern Britain.
- Attendance has steadily improved and is continuing to improve further.
- The leadership of the early years is good. Over time, this has ensured that the provision has led to increasingly better outcomes for the children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Despite the good progress pupils are making, attainment is not yet high enough.
- Weak spelling, punctuation and grammar is holding pupils back from further improvement, especially in their writing.
- Progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is patchy and is dependent on the expertise of subject leaders. This varies from subject to subject.
- Currently, too few children reach a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, continue to increase the number of children who reach a good level of development in order that the progress they make throughout the school can be built on and sustained.
- Build on the existing good rates of progress across the school to ensure that:
 - more pupils reach standards in reading, writing and especially mathematics, which are at least as good as, or better than, the national average
 - pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar improves and does not hinder the quality of their writing.
- Develop the role of subject leaders to ensure that:
 - their skills and knowledge of their subject continues to be well informed and enables them to monitor their subjects effectively
 - they are able to provide relevant advice and support to enable teachers to teach the full range of subjects, including religious education, with increasing confidence and effectiveness.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leadership is clearly committed to improving the life chances of all the pupils in their care. This philosophy is firmly rooted in a culture of teamwork and mutual respect. Adults put children first and strong, very caring relationships have been established.
- Good relationships have been fostered with the local community and the greater majority of parents hold the school in high esteem. As one parent commented, 'I consider the school contributes greatly to the betterment of my child's education and general social awareness. The teachers, assistants and staff all appear to truly care about each pupil.'
- There is an improving trend in outcomes for pupils, despite the explained decline last year. There are many barriers to learning for many of the pupils and to compensate for this there is a relentless pursuit to raise the aspirations and improve pupils' life chances.
- There is a clear understanding that despite the progress being made, that standards need to rise further, not only to prepare pupils for entry into secondary school, but also into their next class. There is a good understanding of strengths as well as weaknesses. School improvement priorities accurately address these.
- The headteacher receives very effective support from the senior leadership team. Management tasks are shared and carried out well. The management of performance of staff, including teaching assistants, is rT
- The process of checking the progress of pupils is being embedded and adapted to meet new requirements. Moderation is carried out with local cluster schools and with the local authority to ensure its accuracy. Monitoring of standards in writing and mathematics is conducted on a regular basis through scrutiny of pupils' work in their books, and teachers' planning, as well as lesson observations. However, the monitoring of the quality of work across other subjects is less effective and has failed to identify and put right gaps in provision.
- Pupil premium funding is spent mainly on providing targeted additional support for disadvantaged pupils. This is being used effectively, as seen in the ongoing improvement in the progress of these pupils.
- Additional primary sports funding has been used to provide specialist coaching as well as involvement in off-site activities such as swimming, kayaking and climbing. This has been re-evaluated this current year. New staff appointments have been made to ensure there is in-house expertise which can continue to upskill staff. There has been some limited improvement in pupils' involvement in inter-school sport, mainly football and netball.
- The school prides itself on ensuring that pupils become confident and responsible individuals. Their social and moral attitudes and values are strongly developed through a values education programme which is embedded in many aspects of the work of the school. Last term the focus was on tolerance and this term on determination. This programme promotes British values very well and is evidenced by the way the large number of pupils from Eastern Europe (especially Poland) have settled into the school and become a part of the school community.
- Pupils' spiritual development, although promoted through relevant assemblies and focus days, is less well supported through the teaching of religious education as the programme currently lacks cohesion and rigour.
- The school makes good use of visits to the theatre, museums and places of interest as well as visitors to the school to provide opportunities for pupils to experience life and opportunities outside their immediate environment. Parents and pupils spoke highly of these opportunities.
- Equality of opportunity is central to much of the work of the school and it is always looking at ways in which all pupils can be provided with opportunities to develop their individual skills and talents. For example, the school runs regular art classes for those pupils who have been specifically identified as gifted in this subject, and these are not necessarily pupils who are also academically gifted.
- Although the school attempts to teach a broad curriculum, subjects such as history, geography and Spanish, as well as science and religious education, are not always taught in sufficient depth. This reflects the varying quality of subject leaders. Some, such as art, support their subject very well with advice, resources and ideas which enable teachers to develop their expertise and become more confident in teaching the subject. Other subject leaders are having less impact and are not sufficiently up to date or aware of weaknesses to be able to support and develop teachers effectively.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body provides good and effective strategic leadership. It has recently been reconstituted with a quarter of governors relatively new to post. With due foresight, new governors

have been recruited to fill specific skill and experience gaps. This ensures that the governing body is a well-balanced team.

- Governors are kept well informed and are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They hold school leaders to account especially by carefully checking the data and the progress of different groups of pupils. They regularly seek relevant training and external advice to strengthen their work.
- Finances are well managed and governors have ensured a well-balanced budget; something which has not always been possible in the past.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a culture of vigilance which is proactive rather than reactive. As a result, there are few pupils on the child protection register because of strong prior pastoral and multi-agency work. The deployment of key personnel (social worker/home-school leader), all of whom have the authority to act, provides concerted support to vulnerable pupils and their families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- Good-quality teaching ensures that pupils continue to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy. There is a greater level of challenge in Key Stage 2 and pupils make slightly better progress than in Key Stage 1, where learning opportunities are sometimes missed. Inspectors observed timely interventions in Key Stage 2 which enabled pupils to improve their work and learn from others.
- There is a positive atmosphere in classrooms and teachers expect pupils to work hard. Pupils have frequent opportunities to write and literacy is well promoted across the curriculum. Opportunities to apply their numeracy skills are less frequent, especially in data handling.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) was a concern at the start of this academic year. This has improved and inspectors observed clear explanations and modelling by class teachers which supported learning well. Adults worked effectively with their small groups of pupils to ensure that pupils were fully occupied in developing their recognition of words and sounds. Teachers new to Key Stage 1 and teaching assistants are being provided with an ongoing programme of training to ensure that teaching becomes consistently good.
- Pupils develop a love of reading. During the inspection, pupils participated enthusiastically in World Book Day. Many dressed up as their favourite characters. Inspectors were able to talk to Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*, and several Harry Potters as well as Alices from Wonderland, among others, about what they enjoyed reading. Parents who were interviewed also spoke positively about how their children were expected to bring books home and read regularly every week. Girls generally enjoy reading more than the boys.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils. They work effectively in small-group and intervention work. Inspectors observed joint planning with teachers at the start of the day to ensure that there was clarity in their approach.
- Marking is more rigorous in English and mathematics than across other subjects. There is also some variation across classes. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and identify errors in written work and mathematics. Pupils are able to see how to correct their spelling or, for example, when prompted, were able to make more regular and effective use of adverbs in future work.
- The teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics is not always of a good quality and, at times, lacks depth and challenge.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is outstanding**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding
- Pupils identified that they felt very safe in the school and very well cared for. Many pupils have complex social and emotional needs and their well-being and welfare is central to the work of the school.
- Regular weekly meetings between key personnel and senior leaders ensure the welfare and progress of pupils is constantly updated. Consequently, leaders have a keen understanding of where the greatest needs lie, and what issues need to be addressed. The school has well-established links with a range of outside agencies which provide additional specialist support when this is required.
- The school reviews the needs of vulnerable pupils on a daily basis. A range of information is used well, enabling staff to focus on pupils with the most need, including those at risk of low attendance.
- Both the SENCo (special educational needs coordinator) and her assistant are knowledgeable and have

undertaken the SENCo award training through the University of Cumbria. Staff training is also up to date and includes female genital mutilation and 'Prevent' training against radicalisation. Teaching assistants receive regular updates which enable them to work with, and support, children confidently.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is evident from the fact that transient pupils tend to settle in the school, or if leaving, are likely to return and stay at a later date. Those pupils who were interviewed, and who had experiences of other schools, preferred this one.
- Pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, both in and out of school. They understand the dangers that the internet can pose. Parents interviewed were all very positive about how well the school looks after their children.
- Parents said that they are well informed about the progress of their children. Improved home-school relationships are evidenced by high turnouts for parents' evenings.
- Pupils are encouraged not only to be tolerant and respectful but to develop skills which will help them in later life. All pupils regularly participate in food technology lessons. No child is excluded as the school funds the ingredients and pupils, for the small sum of 50 pence, can take their culinary efforts home should they so wish.
- Pupils are encouraged to make informed decisions through their involvement with the school council, which is becoming established as part of the everyday life of the school. For example, pupils' growing maturity and even-mindedness was reflected in their acceptance of sound logistical reasons, explained by the school cook, why it would be impractical for pupils who have school lunches to sit among those who had packed lunches.
- The school's philosophy of tolerance, equality and respect supports pupils' understanding of British values and sense of 'fair play'. This was evidenced when pupils discussed their work about the sinking of the *Titanic*. They felt a sense of injustice that the first class passengers were more likely to receive help and survive than those in other parts of the ship.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils get on very well with each other and there is a wonderful sense of community. Pupils are considerate and respect each other. They behave very well during playtimes and lunchtime and when moving around the school between lessons.
- They were keen to talk to inspectors and were extremely positive about the school and the support and help they received. Older pupils felt that behaviour had improved significantly over their time at school. They were adamant that racist and homophobic incidents do not occur. This was exemplified by how well pupils from other cultures and ethnic backgrounds felt at home in the school.
- Pupils also identified that bullying is rare and that, should it occur, they have every confidence in the adults in the school to deal with any incidents.
- Attitudes to learning are very positive. Any lack of engagement in lessons was not because pupils did not want to learn but because the choice of activity was not engaging enough. If finished, they will wait patiently for an adult to set a further task. Lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Attendance has steadily improved and is now at the national average. Persistent absenteeism has also been reduced.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Inspectors took into account the many complexities of the school which skewed nationally published information about the attainment of the pupils last year. A large number of pupils enter school at different times of the year and into different year groups. Also, some year groups have greater percentages of pupils with cognitive and learning difficulties than others.
- The school is aware that fluctuations in attainment between year groups need to be ironed out to enable pupils to sustain progress as they move through the school.
- Information about pupils currently in the school, discussions with them about what they had learned and scrutiny of work in books indicates that, from their various starting points, they make good progress in reading, writing and to a slightly lesser extent in mathematics. There is an overall improving trend.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making progress as well as other pupils and current data show that the gap between these pupils and others nationally is beginning to close.
- Boys, generally, attain less well than the girls. However, this does vary from class to class and frequently reflects the fact that more boys than girls have special educational needs.

- 'Pupil Passport' files show that pupils with disability and those with special educational needs make good progress, especially in their intervention sessions. Targets set for these pupils are specific, evaluative and progressive and there is little hint of repetition.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, the majority of whom are of Polish heritage, receive very good bilingual support and master the basics of English very quickly. Those interviewed identified that they were able to participate in lessons very quickly, and these pupils also make good progress.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level in the Year 1 phonics check remains below the national average. The school is aware that this aspect needs to be improved and is addressing this issue through intensive training, especially for new staff and teaching assistants. Current data suggest that this will lead to an improvement this year.
- Progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is patchy and is dependent on how well the subject is managed, what resources are available and how well teachers are supported. In subjects such as religious education, history, geography and, to a certain extent, science, some pupils do not make the sustained progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding that they should. In reality, topics may be covered but learning can be shallow and there is often little evidence of building on previous learning.
- The school recognises that the spelling, punctuation and grammar of some pupils is still not as strong as it should be. Improving this aspect is a high priority since weaknesses in this area are holding back further improvements in writing. There is clear guidance in place and spellings are provided for each year group. As a result, current in-school information is showing improvement in this area.

Early years provision

is good

- Children enter the early years provision with skills and abilities in all areas of learning and development that are well below those typically found.
- The assessments of children on entry, in year, and at the end of Reception are accurate and have been confirmed by the local authority. Assessments are based on a range of evidence including well-targeted photographs of children at work and play, for example developing their motor skills through manipulating locks, keys and bolts. They also include summative termly assessments which are used to inform individual action plans.
- Transience in and out of the early years is high. Around three in 10 children enter the early years at times other than usual. In recent years, an increasing proportion of children have entered Reception having had no previous early years experience.
- The proportion of children attaining a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has increased year on year; however, at 47% in 2015, the figure is below average and the gap between the school and the national average is not closing sufficiently quickly. Nevertheless, of the 53% of children who did not attain a good level of development in 2015, all made good progress in each of the areas of learning and progress. This means that, in general, all children enter Year 1 with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. From these low starting points, and given the complex social needs of many children, this represents good progress.
- The leadership of the early years is good. The new leader, appointed in September 2015, liaises closely with her predecessor, who is now deputy headteacher. Over time, leadership has ensured that the provision has led to increasingly better outcomes for the children with year-on-year improvement in the numbers of children who reach a good level of development. Adult-child ratios provide high levels of supervision at all times. Leaders have ensured the early years provision is bright, safe and stimulating.
- Leaders are not complacent. They recognise that the gap between the school and national figures regarding a good level of development remains wide. They agree that children could be challenged to do more, in their writing for example, in order to attain better standards. Leaders also recognise that boys in general do less well than girls.
- Children benefit from good teaching which, like elsewhere in the school, is based on a secure understanding of the children's needs and on strong relations with parents and families. Adults involve children in a good range of activity which promotes good learning and social development. Children enjoy, for example, taking off in an imaginary hot air balloon and flying to India then using ingredients to make a traditional dish. They also enjoy sounding out letters and words and writing their own increasingly recognisable sentences, about, for example, the hat Guy Fawkes wore.
- Children get on well very together and the foundations for pupils' excellent behaviour throughout the school begin here.

School details

Unique reference number	119135
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10003751

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	334
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Davies
Headteacher	Siobhan Collingwood
Telephone number	01524 401002
Website	http://www.morecambebay.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	office@morecambe.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	January 2011

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils – those who are supported by the pupil premium funding – is more than double the national average. The pupil premium is funding for pupils who are, have been, eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are White British. However, an increasing proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language, and this figure is currently close to the national average. This reflects an increasing influx of pupils from Eastern Europe (notably Poland) who now make up a sizeable minority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above the national average.
- Inward mobility is well above average with a significant percentage of pupils joining the school late and at different times of the year. Outward mobility, however, is below average and once enrolled, pupils tend to stay.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes in the school. They looked at phonics teaching, listened to a several groups of pupils read and observed pupils at break, lunchtime and around the school.
- On the first day, Her Majesty's Inspector conducted two learning walks through the school, accompanied by the headteacher, looking at outcomes and engagement in lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised and evaluated pupils' work across a range of subjects, especially English, mathematics and topic work, which included religious education, science, history and geography.
- A wide range of documentation was looked at including school policies, local authority reports, monitoring files on the quality of teaching, self-evaluation and procedures to safeguard pupils. Documentation from the school website was also considered.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, staff, and three governors, and held a discussion with a representative from the local authority.
- Meetings were held with seven different groups of pupils to discuss their work, how safe they felt and what they thought about the school. Inspectors also talked to many other pupils during lessons and around the school.
- Eleven responses from the online questionnaire 'Parent View' were considered. Her Majesty's Inspector also talked briefly to a small number of parents who were collecting their children from school at the end of the first day.

Inspection team

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