



# Longcar Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106611  
**LEA** Barnsley  
**Inspection number** 277594  
**Inspection dates** 11 January 2006 to 12 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Stephen Hardwick HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Longcar Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Barnsley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		South Yorkshire S70 6BB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 203387
<b>Number on roll</b>	438	<b>Fax number</b>	01226 244783
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs S Price
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr K Armitage

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 11 January 2006 - 12 January 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277594
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Longcar Primary School serves an area of mixed housing close to the centre of Barnsley. The school is much larger than average, though the number on roll has fallen recently. The pupils are mostly white British but there is a small but increasing number whose families are seeking asylum or have migrated from Europe for economic reasons. About a quarter of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above average and reflects some low incomes in the area. Fifteen per cent of the pupils have additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities; five of these pupils are in the local authority's unit for hearing impairment, which is housed in the school.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could be reasonably expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' standards and progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 in English and mathematics. The school's resources are deployed efficiently but, in the light of pupils' standards and progress, it provides unsatisfactory value for money.

Although there have been variations, the school's results in national tests have been lower than they should be, especially those of the boys, and the progress made by the pupils has been inadequate. Nonetheless, the inconsistencies in the school's performance are being ironed out and staff are meeting the challenges set by the headteacher. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good, as is a significant proportion of the teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 though there is some that is unsatisfactory. The curriculum meets requirements; it rightly focuses on basic skills but is enriched by a range of additional activities.

For their part, the pupils are well behaved. They are sometimes passive in lessons but they are interested and listen well. Their attendance has risen year on year but remains below average and needs to rise further.

The headteacher, who was appointed in 2004, gives a strong lead to the drive for improvement and his vision is shared by staff and governors. The priorities in the school's plans are appropriate and resources and training are well directed towards achieving these goals. There are satisfactory arrangements for checking the school's performance and acting on the findings, though the governors are too dependent on the headteacher in this respect.

Despite gains in some of the areas identified as key issues when the school was inspected in 1999, the major concerns over standards remain. However, there have been steps forward since the arrival of the current headteacher that demonstrate the capacity to improve. Some of the recent initiatives, such as those related to pupils' targets, have yet to be fully implemented but there has been success, for example, in relation to information and communication technology and aspects of teaching.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in English and mathematics at Key Stages 1 and 2, especially for the boys.
- Improve the quality of teaching.
- Continue to raise attendance.
- Extend the governing body's role in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Pupils enter school with standards of achievement that are broadly average or just below. They make good progress during the Foundation Stage and, by the time they join Year 1, most have reached the nationally set Early Learning Goals. However, their overall scores in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 have been persistently below average, and have remained much the same over the last three years. In 2005, four fifths of the pupils gained the basic level expected for their age in reading and writing, and almost all of them reached this standard in mathematics. Around a fifth of the pupils reached the higher Level 3 in mathematics, whereas only a tenth did in reading and writing.

The school's results in the national tests for Year 6 pupils have been similarly below average. Overall, they rose in 2004 when compared with 2003 but fell back in 2005. As in Key Stage 1, the pupils' performance in 2005 in mathematics was considerably better than in English, in both the proportion gaining the basic level and the higher level. Overall around two thirds of the pupils reached the expected level for Year 6, compared with a national proportion of about four fifths. The boys' results were markedly poorer than the girls.

Given their results in the national tests when they were in Year 2, the Year 6 pupils in 2005 made progress that was well below average during Key Stage 2. Their relative gains in English were especially poor. There was no significant difference in the progress made by particular groups of pupils, although the two pupils whose first language is not English fared relatively well.

The school accurately judges that the pupils' overall achievement and standards are inadequate.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils' personal development and well-being are good overall. The school recently achieved a Healthy School's Bronze Award which recognises its work in this area. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good; there have been no exclusions for two years. Pupils mostly work hard and enjoy what they do. They are polite, courteous and have good relationships with each other and the adults in school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The pupils respond well to the opportunities they are given for reflection, thought and the celebration of others' achievements. In assembly, for example, all the pupils responded sensitively to a prayer that was composed and read by a girl from Year 2. In 'circle time' the pupils learn to talk about and understand their feelings, and to listen to different points of view.

The pupils play happily and purposefully at break times, despite the confined yard and limited play equipment. They understand the contribution that vigorous exercise can make to their health and fitness. They also recognise the need for a healthy diet, which

is reflected in the choices available at lunchtime. Older pupils take on responsibilities maturely, such as being playtime 'squaddies'. Lunchtimes are social occasions and younger pupils enjoy the games arranged for them by the older ones.

Pupils understand that they are part of the 'whole-school family' and value having a voice through the recently formed school council. They learn to work productively in groups and are careful not to disturb others, skills that are valuable for their futures. They raise funds for charities, make visits in the community and perform in local events.

The school employs an attendance officer, who has helped to raise attendance from 92.2% to 93.7% but this is still below the national average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school judges the quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory and inspectors agree.

In the Foundation Stage, work is firmly based on the teachers' good understanding of how young children learn. Particular emphasis is given to developing speaking and listening and most pupils in the Foundation Stage make good progress.

In Years 1 to 6, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Across the school there is a balance of strengths and weaknesses; a significant amount of the teaching is good but there is a little that is inadequate. All the lessons were based on well judged learning objectives and the teachers made their expectations clear. Materials were carefully prepared, and in some cases use of the new interactive whiteboards enlivened presentations. In the good lessons there was brisk pace and challenge, which drew high levels of concentration and effort from the pupils. In the few lessons where this was not the case, the pupils' attention was sometimes diverted and progress slowed. In most lessons, the pupils were keen to answer the teachers' questions but there were times when too many pupils were passive and teachers failed to adopt strategies that required all to think and respond. Satisfactory documented assessment systems are used well to help provide work at different levels according to the pupils' attainment. Classroom assistants are very effectively deployed and they make a strong contribution to the teaching and learning, particularly in leading small groups.

The pupils know the routines in each class. They gather their materials quickly, move to each section of the lesson without fuss and are ready to learn.

The pupils' standards and achievement suggest that the quality of teaching in the recent past has not been as good or consistent as that observed during the inspection. This supports the school's view that teaching is improving and that the measures being taken are proving successful.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Inspectors agree with the school that the curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and meets requirements across all year groups, including the Foundation Stage. Proper emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy. The provision for English, mathematics and information and communication technology is satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched with a wide range of out of school activities such as the 'Freddie Fit' aerobics club. Additionally, there are many opportunities provided for pupils to visit, study and work in the locality, such as regular field trips into Barnsley's town centre. External visitors provide further support to the curriculum in areas such as drugs awareness, personal health and also in subjects such as music, drama and art. Appropriate provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In particular, the pupils with impaired hearing are fully drawn into school life; in Year 6 for instance, there are weekly lessons in 'signing' for all the pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall, with some strengths. In particular, the pupils are well cared for and good relationships ensure that they feel secure and safe. They know who to turn to when they have concerns. Bullying is rare and pupils agree that when it does occur it is quickly addressed. Arrangements for child protection are followed.

The school is due to move to new accommodation in 2007. Its current site and buildings are old, difficult to control and manage, and bordered by two busy roads. The school is aware of the issue: there are security locks on the external doors and supervision is deployed accordingly when pupils are on the yard.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, especially those with impaired hearing, are well supported.

A system is being introduced to provide pupils with individual targets in English and mathematics. However, only the oldest pupils are fully aware of these. More generally pupils are uncertain about the level they have reached and what they need to do to move forward. This was also unclear in the sample of reports to parents that was examined.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory although the school judges them to be good, and in some respects this is the case. In particular the headteacher, who was appointed in 2004, gives a strong lead and a drive to raise the quality of provision and standards. His clear vision for the future is shared by the teachers and he has gained the hard-working support of senior staff. The members of the senior team have important responsibilities and their efforts are beginning to make a difference. The

subject leaders too have suitable agendas for their work set out in individual action plans. There is common recognition of the school's shortcomings. The governors fulfil their responsibilities, support the school and are aware of its needs, but they are too dependent on the headteacher for checking its performance and progress.

The school's overall plans are based on well judged and manageable priorities, though they sometimes lack precisely quantified targets. There is a comprehensive programme for monitoring that provides a generally accurate view of what is being achieved. An extended management group regularly evaluates progress and decides what further action is necessary. Resources are deployed efficiently, for example extra books have been bought to support the work in reading and interactive whiteboards to facilitate teaching and enliven lessons.

There are satisfactory links with the community, such as local high schools, and with other agencies. Parents are well informed about school life and most are positive about what is provided for their children, although the turnout at consultation meetings is relatively low.

Some of the issues identified when the school was last inspected in 1999 have been addressed successfully but the critical matters related to low standards, for boys especially, remain. Nonetheless, since the headteacher arrived the school has demonstrated the capacity to improve. This is evident in the better use of information technology, in the consistently clear learning objectives that underpin each lesson, in improved attendance and in higher standards of speaking and listening. An inclusive approach involves additional help on basic skills for a significant number of pupils, and those with hearing impairment are fully integrated into classes. The training for staff has been well directed at the school's needs and each teacher's performance targets are focused on the priorities within the improvement plan. The school's internal assessments suggest that the pupils' progress is faster and more consistent, and that test results in Year 6 should rise, but these will be key measures of success.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school earlier in January. You were polite and ready to talk about your work and life at school.

We were impressed by your behaviour and how well you listen and do as you are asked. You told us that you feel safe at school, and you are benefiting from the changes that are being made, such as the new computers and interactive whiteboards and the extra activities and visits that are arranged. Your attendance at school has improved but there are still a few of you who take too many days off.

Although you work hard, you do not do as well as you should, particularly the boys. This shows in the results when the Year 6 pupils take their national tests.

Mr Armitage and the teachers know this, so they have begun to set you targets, given you reading homework and organised booster classes.

We have asked the school to carry on with this work to make sure that your reading, writing and mathematics improve. To do this, some of your lessons need to be better so everyone in the class learns as they should and reaches the targets that you call 'WALT'. We have also asked the governors to check that your school is succeeding and that your standards rise as they should.

We wish you well in the future, especially when you move into your new school.