

Montreal C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132170
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	293970
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Arthur Allison

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 on roll	
School	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Rachael Davis
Headteacher	Mrs Brenda Holden
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2003
School address	Ennerdale Road Cleator Moor Cumbria CA25 5LW
Telephone number	01946 855005
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school serving a very small town and some surrounding villages. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and none is at the early stages of learning English. The number of looked after pupils is very small. Levels of social deprivation are higher than in most areas. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is well below that which is typical of children of their age and even lower in language skills.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Montreal is a good and improving school. It provides good value for money. The vast majority of parents have every confidence in the school. One wrote, 'My child really enjoys school and has never once said he doesn't want to go. This is a real reflection on the teachers and staff of the school'.

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and good progress thereafter to reach standards that are broadly average at the end of Year 6 but above average in information and communication technology (ICT). This is due to determined, perceptive leadership and good teaching that identifies what individual pupils need to learn to reach challenging targets, for example in writing, which has been identified as an area for improvement based on the school's analysis of test results. Teachers ensure pupils are aware of what they should know and be able to do by the end of the lesson. Marking, though satisfactory, does not inform pupils frequently enough about what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve further. The good curriculum is enriched well and contributes considerably to pupils' achievement and enjoyment, notably through the very many opportunities to use ICT to extend learning and to participate in residential visits. Some links between subjects are made to ensure learning is more purposeful. The good level of pastoral care and support encourages pupils to work hard, although they are not always sure about what they have to do to reach the next level.

Good personal development and sound basic skills prepare pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and beyond. Pupils are polite, very well behaved and know how to stay safe. They enjoy coming to school because they know that staff want to help them do their best. They have a good understanding of the need for a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider communities through the school council and in performing for parents and others. Older pupils take their responsibilities, for example as buddies, very seriously.

Leadership and management are good. The school's self-evaluation is very clear about what it should do to raise standards further. Successfully competing for additional funding and using this to the benefit of the pupils is an outstanding feature of the leadership and management. The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. Given the purposeful leadership, the rising standards and the commitment of the staff, it is evident that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, particularly in writing.
- Ensure that marking and other guidance helps pupils to know what they have to do to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils of all abilities achieve well. The school's thorough assessments show that attainment on entry is well below that typical of children of their age and is particularly low in language skills. The attainment on entry of boys is below that of girls. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage to reach standards that are typical of children of their age in personal development; well below expected levels in all areas of language, knowledge and understanding

of the world and creative development; and below expected levels in all other areas. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school to reach standards that are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards have risen since the previous inspection.

In 2006, results in the Key Stage 1 assessments were broadly average. The results of the Year 6 national tests were also broadly average. This represents good achievement as these pupils had been generally below average at the end of Key Stage 1. The school has identified writing as an issue across the school and action is being taken to raise standards. Boys did not do as well as girls in the tests because of their lower starting points and because a higher proportion of boys had learning difficulties. The school exceeded its challenging targets. Standards in ICT are above those expected nationally because of the many opportunities provided to acquire and use these skills.

The school's records for the current year and inspection evidence of progress in lessons indicate that pupils are making good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the very few looked after pupils make similar progress to their peers. This is because their learning and pastoral needs are identified and supported effectively as soon as they arrive at school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In the Reception class, staff plan stimulating activities to foster the children's personal and social development and to help them become good learners. Attendance has improved and is broadly average. Most pupils attend well and the school is working with parents and the Education Welfare Service to improve attendance and punctuality further. Pupils enjoy coming to school; some say that during the summer holiday they would prefer to be at school because it is more fun. They enjoy lessons, concentrate well and persevere when work proves to be difficult. Their behaviour is very good. They are adamant that rare incidents of bullying are tackled quickly and effectively. Pupils are well aware of how to stay safe. If they have any worries or concerns they know there is always an adult to turn to. Their understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles is good. They have a say in decision making through the effective school council; one suggestion resulted in improvements to the play areas. They care for younger pupils by acting as buddies and play leaders. They are proud of these roles and take them very seriously.

Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider communities. The drummer group is eagerly anticipating joining with others to perform during the Tall Ships visit to Whitehaven. Satisfactory literacy and numeracy skills and good ICT skills provide a sound basis for the next stage of education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise; they ensure that pupils are aware of what they should know and be able to do by the end of the lesson. Planning takes account of previous learning. The management of pupils is good as is the choice and use of resources, particularly the interactive whiteboards which are used well

in all classes to stimulate and maintain the interest of pupils. The school provides many opportunities to use ICT to enhance learning in other subjects. Careful questioning by teachers and the 'talking partners' strategy foster pupils' thinking, speaking and listening skills and so contribute to their good progress. Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning because they are deployed well to provide guidance and support for those who need it. There is some good marking which informs pupils of what they have achieved and gives suggestions for what they should do to improve further. This is not a consistent feature across the school and the school recognises this.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum meets the pupils' different needs. The emphasis on personal development from the day they start school underpins the curriculum and helps all pupils to become good learners. A very strong feature of the curriculum is the use of ICT by staff and pupils to promote learning in a range of subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 used their ICT skills very effectively in their study of Ancient Greece. The curriculum is enriched well; pupils enjoy learning French and drumming, for example. They take an active part in the wide range of sporting and other extra-curricular provision such as the dramatic dance club. Pupils are very excited by the residential trips and say that these are not just for fun but are valuable learning experiences. The school has achieved an award for its very varied and well planned study support programme. Links between subjects help pupils to understand why the basic skills are so important. The school recognises the need to develop this further in a more formalised way to support pupils' learning. The school has good links with other schools and organisations to enhance its provision.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and contribute well to pupils' progress and enjoyment. Staff know their pupils well and the inclusive ethos ensures that they feel welcome and cared for. Looked after pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress. Many of the individual education plans for these pupils have precise and measurable targets but this is not consistently the case. The school identifies gifted and talented pupils and makes good provision for them. Procedures for child protection and risk assessments are in place. Good guidance is given on living safely and healthily. The 'Sunshine Room', where skilled staff provide opportunities for pupils to discuss feelings and develop self-confidence, makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. The assessment and tracking procedures are being developed to ensure that teachers, pupils and parents have a more informed view of academic and personal progress. Pupils know their targets but they are not always sufficiently aware of what they need to do to attain them. The school works very well with parents and other agencies so helping all pupils to make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sets very high standards for herself and others. She provides good leadership through her drive and vision, so much so that she is cautious when judging the effectiveness of the school. She is very perceptive about what is needed to raise standards and determined that the school will succeed because every child

matters. The senior management team fully support her and all staff are strongly committed to raising standards.

An outstanding feature of the leadership is the success in bidding for additional funds from national and local sources. Most of this is used to employ and deploy well trained teaching assistants who make an effective contribution to the good progress made by all groups of pupils. Subject leaders have clearly defined responsibilities for assessing the quality of provision and progress of pupils in their subjects. However, subject leaders in the non-core subjects have not yet had the opportunity to observe lessons.

Through its self-evaluation, the school has an accurate, though sometimes modest, view of how well it is doing. Strategies are in place to improve provision and so raise standards, particularly in writing. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. All issues identified then have been successfully addressed, notably standards in English, mathematics and science. Attendance has improved, as have procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress. Provision and resources for ICT are better, leading to standards that are higher than expected nationally.

The views of parents and pupils are valued and acted on appropriately, such as parents' requests for more frequent meetings to discuss the progress of their children. The governors fulfil their responsibilities well, particularly with regard to financial management. They support and challenge the school's management appropriately and make constructive suggestions.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Montreal CofE Primary School, Cumbria, CA25 5LW

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school and for your help during the recent inspection. We thought you were very well behaved, polite, courteous, and worked hard in your lessons.

We enjoyed talking to you and listening to what you had to say about the school. You are in a good school where all staff work hard to help you to do your best. You told us that you liked your school and enjoy your lessons as well as the clubs and visits, particularly the residential visits, drumming and drama. We were impressed by the very confident way you use ICT to help you learn in different subjects. The movies the older children make are very fascinating as are the Powerpoint presentations. You know a lot about staying safe and being healthy.

You take part in a range of exciting activities which help you to learn about the world. You also care for each other and take on responsibilities so helping you to become good citizens as you get older.

The teachers have the right ideas about what to do to improve. We have asked the school to help you to do better in your writing and to ensure that you know what to do to improve your work.

It was a pleasure to visit your school. Keep working hard so that you continue to do well.

Yours sincerely

Mr Allison and Mrs Tetik

The Inspection Team