

Morland Area C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112324
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	310855
Inspection dates	27–28 September 2007
Reporting inspector	David Earley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Shirley Austin
Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Wade
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2003
School address	Morland Penrith Cumbria CA10 3AT
Telephone number	01931 714668
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school serving a rural community. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. All pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. A small number of pupils are cared for outside the family. Pupils are taught in three mixed age classes and year groups are very small. Although standards fluctuate from year-to-year when children enter the Foundation Stage (Reception) standards are generally in line with what is typical for children of this age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which gives good value for money. An important factor in the improving standards and provision is the strong leadership provided by the headteacher who has a clear vision for improvement which is shared with staff and governors.

Achievement is good. In the Reception class children make good progress from starting points which are generally typical for their ages so that by the time they enter Year 1 most exceed the goals set nationally. Disruptions to the life of the school which caused standards to dip in 2005 and 2006 at both Key Stages have been remedied. Pupils at both Key Stages make good progress and achieve well so that by the end of Year 6 standards are above average.

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils have a good awareness of how to lead healthy lifestyles and play a full role in the life of the local and wider communities. They are well prepared for their future economic well-being and their awareness of their own and other cultures is excellent. Through the school council and many other initiatives pupils contribute well to the life of the school. They say that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. They behave well and attendance is good.

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are usually taught at a brisk pace and are interesting so that pupils want to learn. Teachers make good use of assessment to plan work suited to different abilities but marking does not always help pupils to know what they need to do to improve. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to support pupils of all abilities, including children looked after outside the family, so that they make good progress. The curriculum is broad and rich. It is well planned so that skills in literacy, numeracy and information communication technology (ICT) are extended by use in other subjects. It is enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors and by an interesting programme of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is further enhanced by the teaching of French and Spanish, by strong links with outside agencies and links with schools in other countries and other parts of this country.

Care, support and guidance are good. This is an extremely caring school where all pupils and their families are well known and well supported so that they make good progress in both academic and personal development. A parent commented that she is impressed, 'at the care that is put into planning for individuals' learning especially for pupils with special needs'. Government recommendations for safeguarding children are carefully followed. There are effective systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress leading to challenging targets for improvement.

Leadership and management are good. Effective self-evaluation leads to a clear school improvement plan and has enabled the school to remedy a dip in standards and return to the school's previously above average standards by Year 6. Governance is good. Subject coordinators have a clear overview of what is happening in their subjects but have insufficient opportunities to check on what is happening in lessons in order to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children make good progress. The quality of teaching is good and the school ensures that in the mixed age class the Foundation Stage curriculum is exciting and stimulating so that children want to learn. Relationships are very good and children settle in very quickly. The school is very careful to check progress and teachers

and teaching assistants know the children very well and work well together. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed so that children are prepared well for the next stage in their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the marking of their work shows pupils how to improve.
- Provide more opportunities for subject co-ordinators to check what is happening in lessons in order to make improvements.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Most pupils, whatever their ability or background, make good progress. Good teaching and learning, effective use of assessment and tracking, and a wide and stimulating curriculum lead to above average standards at the end of Year 6.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. By the time they enter Year 1 most children reach beyond the goals set for their learning.

The 2006 teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were significantly below average overall. One reason for this was the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in this group. In 2007 teachers' assessments showed standards had improved and were average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represented good progress for most of these pupils, including the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Inspection evidence and school data indicate that in the current Year 2, pupils are making good progress, achieving well and the school expects most to reach above average standards.

The results of the 2006 national tests at the end of Year 6 were below average in English, mathematics and science. Most pupils, whatever their ability, did not make the expected progress and the school did not meet its targets. The 2007 results improved and most pupils, including a high proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, made good progress and standards were above average. Inspection evidence and school data indicate that good progress and achievement are being maintained in the current Year 6 and standards exceed the level expected for their age.

High levels of pupil mobility, rapid increases in class sizes, a major building programme and disruptions to staffing were important factors in the dip in standards in 2005 and 2006 at both key stages. The situation is now stable and with strong leadership and management the school has implemented a range of strategies for improvement so that pupils make good progress and achieve well at both Key Stages. They exceed the challenging targets set for them and standards are improving.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools award and pupils have a very good awareness of the importance of a healthy diet and exercise. They say that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school because everyone is friendly and there are lots of interesting things to do. Attendance and behaviour are good. Pupils are polite and courteous and very helpful to visitors and each

other. The school council makes a significant contribution to life in the school and pupils play a central role in the life of the village and parish. Pupils have an excellent understanding of cultural diversity, through involvement in their own culture and through awareness engendered by numerous visitors from other cultures such as those in Ghana, India, the Caribbean and South Africa. Because pupils are involved in devising their own rules of conduct and adults provide good role models, they have a very good understanding of right and wrong. Strong links with the local church help to enhance their spiritual development. Relationships are very good and pupils thrive in the strong family atmosphere. This helps to enhance their confidence and self-esteem.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this helps them to ask challenging questions in order to deepen understanding. Lessons are typically well paced and interesting so that pupils work hard and are eager to learn. For example, in one class pupils used a large model rocket and computers to extend their knowledge of planets and space. Teachers make good use of assessment and work well suited to the wide range of abilities in their classes. This is further enhanced by the organisation of classes according to ability in English, mathematics and science. There is good co-operation between teachers and support assistants so that pupils of all abilities are well supported. Although there are examples of good marking which helps pupils to know what they need to do to improve, this is not consistent throughout the school and results in some missed opportunities to extend learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is very carefully planned to ensure that pupils in mixed age classes make good progress. The curriculum is rich and this helps to make learning irresistible and to extend personal development. Pupils go on a wide range of visits, including residential, and the school welcomes many visitors who share their expertise with pupils. For example, when they visit a lifeboat station or take part in Afro-Caribbean dance workshops, their horizons are widened and learning is extended. An extensive programme of personal, social and health education gives pupils a very good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. There is a close focus on the skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT and pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being. The curriculum is further extended by links with several schools in other countries and by the use the school makes of its extensive outdoor areas.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care guidance and support are good. Links between home and school are strong and this helps to create a caring, family atmosphere. An important factor in the good progress and excellent personal development made by most pupils is the high level of support provided for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, gifted and talented pupils and those children looked after outside the family. This is further enhanced by excellent links with outside agencies. Child protection systems, risk assessments and procedures for safeguarding children are in place. Pupils know that they have someone to go to if they feel worried. Most

parents feel confident about approaching the school and are happy with the care given to their children.

There are very effective systems for assessing work and tracking progress. This enables teachers and pupils to know clearly what needs to be done in order to raise standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and shares a clear vision for raising standards with staff and governors. This is based on a firm belief that pupils should enjoy learning and do well in both their academic and personal development. This is the driving force that enables the school to meet the needs of its pupils and community well.

Staff and governors work well together as a team to raise standards and set challenging targets. They share high aspirations and are committed to improving the school, leading to good progress and strong personal development. The school evaluates its performance well in order to make improvements. For example, a thorough analysis of performance during a recent period of disruption when standards dipped enabled the school to take decisive action and raise standards to match the previous, above average levels. The school improvement plan is clearly focused on raising standards and improving provision. Subject leaders have a clear view of what is happening in their subjects but have insufficient opportunities to check on what is happening in lessons in order to make more improvements. Governors know the school well and are very supportive. They play an important role in the life of the school and work closely with staff to hold the school to account for its performance and to help shape its development. Most parents have positive views of the school and take advantage of opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. A parent commented that she is extremely happy with the school and that, 'Staff are always available if we need to speak to them and listen to what we have to say.'

The budget is well managed to support raising standards and school improvements. There were no significant areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Since then there have been significant improvements to the building and outdoor area and in the provision for ICT and modern foreign languages leading to improving standards. Strong leadership, a shared commitment to improve and clear self-evaluation give the school good capacity to improve.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	2
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

1 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Morland Area C of E Primary School, Cumbria, CA103AT

I really enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for making me so welcome.

I was very impressed by your politeness and courtesy and by the way you all know about how to keep healthy. You were all very kind in the way you answered my questions at lunchtime and around school. You clearly enjoy coming to school because, as you told me, everyone is so friendly and there are lots of interesting things to do. There certainly are! You make a lot of visits and interesting people come in to talk and work with you; you have links with other countries; and you have an interesting wildlife area and outdoor classroom. The list seems endless.

Here are some of the things your school does well:

- The teaching is good and you make good progress in your work.
- The school cares for you really well and school is like a big family.
- You have lots of opportunities to take responsibility and help around school.
- You learn extremely well about your own traditions and customs and those of others in Britain and abroad.

These are some of the things I would like the school to do even better:

- When they mark your work I would like all your teachers to tell you what you need to do in order to improve.
- I would like your teachers to have more opportunities to check how well you are doing in the different subjects.

Thank you once again for making me so welcome.

Yours sincerely

David Earley

Lead inspector