

# Northbrook Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131674
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328633
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kathleen McArthur

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	131
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Louise Newton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mark Melling
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Bannister Drive Leyland Lancashire PR25 2GB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 421599
<b>Fax number</b>	01772 422236

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 November 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school is smaller than most and has several mixed-age classes. The locality is affected by social and economic deprivation and about 35% of pupils receive a free school meal which is twice the national average. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage and almost a quarter have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A higher than usual proportion of pupils enter or leave the school part-way through their education. The Lancashire Education Medical Service is based on site, providing short placements for secondary aged pupils.

The school holds various awards including the National Healthy Schools Standard, Lancashire Healthy Schools Level 3 in Physical Activity and Healthy Eating and Pathfinder School for Skills for Life.

## 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 that achieves its aim 'to be a safe, friendly learning community where everyone is valued and can achieve their potential'. The inspection confirmed the school's view of its effectiveness. Pupils enjoy their lessons and make good progress in learning and in the development of personal and social skills. Parents are pleased with the school and say their children are happy. 'My children love going to school,' was a typical comment. The school has successfully developed strong links with the local community through family learning, work with senior citizens and mini-enterprise projects which prepare pupils well for their future as useful citizens.

Achievement is good. There is a broad spread of ability when children start school. The majority demonstrate skills well below those usually seen, most particularly in the areas of language, personal and social development. Pupils make good progress through the school and are confident that 'teachers do their best for us'. Standards at Key Stage 1 have risen since the previous inspection due to better teaching. Key Stage 2 standards have been more variable but, by the time pupils leave, the majority attain broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards in writing are not as high as in reading. Teaching is good, but there are some inconsistencies in quality across the school. Most lessons are interesting, with well planned learning activities that meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive well targeted support so they progress well in relation to their capabilities.

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. While pupils have a good knowledge of world faiths, they have a limited knowledge of the cultural diversity of their own society. Pupils show their enjoyment of school by working hard and making good progress. They willingly accept responsibilities, serving as school councillors or play leaders and the job of toast monitor is very popular. Pupils show care and concern for each other and say, 'We are taught to help others'. A clear, fair structure of rules and rewards, for example Golden Time, promotes good behaviour. Pupils are sure of what they must do to look after their health and have a good awareness of how to be safe.

The good curriculum provides a varied range of learning activities that are extended by visitors and visits, for example studying life in Tudor times at Rufford Old Hall. Enrichment activities include dance and sports. Members of the after-school cookery club were busy making pizzas and looking forward to eating them. Good arrangements for care, guidance and support ensure each pupil gains the confidence to achieve well. Rigorous use of good assessment systems give staff a very clear picture of each pupil's progress and enable them to direct extra help where needed. Pupils appreciate the way teachers mark their work to show them how to improve it.

Leadership is good. Staff and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to be improved. They form a strong effective team to enhance provision and have successfully overcome issues from the previous inspection. This gives the school good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start because they are taught well and benefit from high quality care and welfare arrangements. Language, personal and social skills are well below those usually

seen when children start school. Staff work very hard to ensure children settle quickly and feel safe, secure and ready for learning. Staff use every opportunity to help children acquire and extend language and vocabulary skills, for example talking about their activities, or acting as one of The Three Bears. The children eagerly await the 'Phonic Frog' puppet when he brings them a new letter sound each day. They practice counting as they hop, skip or jump, combining early mathematics with physical activity. Children can choose from a broad range of practical activities but sometimes spend longer on teacher led activities, leaving them with less time to make independent learning choices. Leadership is good, with a clear focus on ensuring children enjoy experiencing all areas of learning, including working outdoors. Although children make good progress, attainment is still below expectations for their age when they move to Year 1.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Extend existing good practice within the school to ensure teaching is consistently good.
- Raise pupils' awareness of different ways of life in Britain and in the wider world.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

From a starting point that is well below that typical for their age, pupils reach broadly average standards by the time they leave. In Key Stage 1, standards have gradually risen, and were just above the national average in 2008. However, few pupils attain the higher levels in writing. In Key Stage 2, standards vary, as the make-up of different year groups' changes. Provisional results for 2008 show that pupils reached broadly average standards. They met their targets in English but just missed them in mathematics. However, standards in writing are not as high as in reading, so improving writing skills is currently a major school focus. Pupils did particularly well in science; they exceeded targets at the expected level and almost one third reached the higher level. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they are provided with good support and suitably adapted work. School data show that pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to meet their targets.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school and behave well, which helps them make good progress in learning. Attendance is in line with national averages. Pupils show good knowledge and understanding of how to look after their health and say there are lots of physical activities that 'keep us healthy'. Pupils feel safe and know staff will listen to their concerns and quickly sort out any problems or bullying. They make a strong contribution to their school and enjoy representing their classmates on the school council, as well as helping outside as play leaders. Involvement with the local community is strong; pupils and senior citizens have worked together to create the school garden. Projects such as Young Enterprise are good preparation for their role as responsible citizens and for their future economic well-being. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Whilst listening to a well known story, younger pupils showed real empathy with an unhappy boy who lost his precious toy dog. The fair code of behaviour ensures pupils fully understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils study world religions but have limited awareness of different cultures and ways of life to prepare them for life in multicultural Britain.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall so pupils achieve well. However, good practice is not fully consistent throughout the school. Pupils always know what they are going to learn and what the teacher is looking for. In the best lessons, they have opportunities to self-assess how well they have done. Lessons are planned carefully to meet the needs of all pupils, and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well. Well displayed prompts provide useful help with literacy, numeracy and science vocabulary and facts. Good resources capture pupils' interest effectively; they particularly enjoy using the interactive whiteboards. Well deployed teaching assistants provide skilled support during group activities but do not always contribute during whole-class sessions. Where the quality of teaching is less consistent, teachers do not build on pupils' answers and pupils can spend too long listening. This limits their opportunities to be fully involved and to extend their learning.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The broad, balanced curriculum enables pupils to acquire essential literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Some teachers make creative links between subjects to make learning more relevant, for example connecting literacy and history by comparing biographies and autobiographies of Queen Victoria. This approach has yet to be introduced in all classes. The good programme for personal and social development helps pupils to consider feelings and take responsibility for their actions, and ensures they know how to be healthy and stay safe. Suitable adaptation of the curriculum and good support give pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities full access to all curricular and additional activities so they progress well. Good enrichment activities include visits out of school and themed weeks and days, such as Art and healthy eating weeks. Popular after-school clubs feature cookery and many sports; some are open to the community, for example Taekwondo, so pupils may attend with their parents.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for. Good relationships between home and school support pupils' good progress and personal development. Staff know pupils and their families well and the school reaches out to parents and the community through family learning courses and projects. Parents say they find the school welcoming and staff friendly, open and approachable. The school works closely with external support agencies to benefit pupils and their families. Safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements, and health and safety and risk assessments are carefully managed. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Good assessment systems monitor and track academic progress closely so staff can step in quickly if any pupils begin to fall behind in their work. Pupils know their targets and enjoy the challenge of working to reach them. A good, clear marking system tells pupils what they have done well and how they can improve their work; pupils say they find this very helpful.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leaders share a firm commitment to improve all aspects of pupils' education and personal development. Good leadership by the headteacher gives a clear direction to the school. He is well-supported by the deputy headteacher and senior leaders. They have a good knowledge of the school and seek to meet the needs of all pupils. Governance is good. Governors challenge and hold the school to account and regularly evaluate the progress of improvement plans. Thorough self-evaluation gives leaders a good understanding of strengths and what needs to be improved. Consequently, plans for further development are well focused on the key areas, supported by careful budget management that ensures the school gives good value for money. Staff performance management and professional development are carefully targeted to ensure staff maintain and build on their individual skills and knowledge. The school is fully inclusive; all pupils can participate in every activity. Arrangements for promoting community cohesion are good overall. The school very successfully achieves the stated aim of working with and meeting the needs of the local community, but pupils are not fully aware of diversity in the wider and global communities.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B**

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

12 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Northbrook Primary School, Lancashire, PR25 2GB

I really enjoyed my visit to your school. I met many of you whilst you were enjoying your meal at lunchtime and talked to members of the school council. You all helped me complete my work and I promised I would let you know what I found out.

Northbrook is a good school. You told me you enjoy school and that the teachers try to make your lessons fun. Your parents are happy with the school, too. You get a good start in the Reception class and make good progress during your time at school. You reach standards that are about right for your age because you are taught well and work hard to reach your targets.

I was very pleased to see that you behave well and understand why there are rules to keep you all safe. You know how to look after your health and enjoy all the sports activities the school provides. Your school works hard to welcome people from the local community; I hope you can continue working on the garden with the senior citizens when the weather gets better.

The curriculum is good with lots of extras like sports and cookery, and I know you will soon be rehearsing for the Christmas show. Your school looks after you well. The teachers show you what is good and how to do better when they mark your work in different colours, and they keep a close eye on how well you are doing.

I have asked the school to make sure all of you are always taught well and to help you learn more about different ways of life in England and around the world.

I am sure you will carry on helping others, working hard and being happy at school.

Best wishes to you all.

Kathleen McArthur

Lead inspector