

Lindal and Marton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112193
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	301747
Inspection dates	21–22 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Oglesby

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	75
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tom Dalziel
Headteacher	Mr David G Barlow
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2003
School address	Pitt Lane Lindal-in-Furness Ulverston Cumbria LA12 0NB
Telephone number	01229 462710
Fax number	01229 462710

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	21–22 June 2007
Inspection number	301747

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school serves a mixed but relatively advantaged rural community. Some families choose to travel from other areas. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much lower than most schools, as is the proportion known to be entitled to free school meals. Almost all pupils are of White British origin. The attainment of children starting school in Reception is above that which is typical for children of their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This school provides an outstanding quality of education for its pupils. This is widely recognised by parents. 'We feel privileged that both our children have had such a solid and enjoyable experience throughout their primary years.' Such comments are typical of those made by many parents. They particularly appreciate that their children thoroughly enjoy school and are 'coming on in leaps and bounds', both academically and socially. The pupils themselves are just as positive. They say they feel happy, safe and well-cared for in school because everyone is friendly and all the staff listen to them. Both parents and pupils are aware that the range of activities offered is exceptional.

Achievement is outstanding. After starting school in Reception with skills that are above those expected for their age, good teaching in the Foundation Stage challenges the children and as a result, they make good progress. By the end of Reception most children's attainment exceeds national expectations. In Years 1 to 6, high quality teaching successfully results in pupils making excellent progress and they reach very high standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and exceptionally high standards by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. The school's success is partly made possible by the excellent team of support staff who contribute well to the pupils' learning.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils respect each other and form very strong relationships. One parent's view that 'they leave as confident individuals, well equipped in all areas to continue their studies and social development' is totally accurate. The school has gained two Healthy Schools awards which are reflected in the pupils' good understanding of what is needed to be healthy and safe. They take responsibility well, for example through the effective school council or by acting as play leaders for younger children. Despite the pupils' maturity, they do not always take enough responsibility for their own learning as they do not always receive sufficient guidance on how to improve their work.

The breadth and quality of the curriculum is a major strength of the school and inspires learning. As one boy put it, 'there's always something happening here'. The school works very closely with the local community to enrich learning and provides an exceptional range of extra-curricular activities. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop skills in a modern foreign language, the arts and music for example all learn to play a musical instrument and to speak French. The ActiveMark award gained by the school shows the good quality of sporting provision.

Excellent leadership and management at all levels, including the school administration and governance, means that staff work together extremely well. The headteacher leads from the front, inspiring others by his commitment and determination to provide the best possible education and care for all pupils. It is constantly striving to improve its provision. Rigorous systems for monitoring and self-evaluation accurately highlight areas where the school can do even better. As a result, the school has improved since the last inspection and has an outstanding capacity to do so in the future. It gives excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Encourage pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning by providing more detailed guidance on how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are significantly above average and the pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 is outstanding. The children start school with attainment which is generally above that usually seen. They make a good start in the Reception year and most exceed national expectations for children of their age. Thereafter, pupils make excellent progress. Standards by Year 2 are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics and by Year 6 standards are significantly above average in English, mathematics and science. The most recent national tests show that nearly all pupils reached the highest level in mathematics and most did in English and science. This is much better than in most schools nationally. Despite the small cohorts, which can make the interpretation of test results unreliable, the school has achieved these high standards consistently for the last five years. The pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress and usually reach age-related expectations by the time they leave.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their obvious love of school is reflected in the above average attendance, and the way everyone gets on well together. Excellent relationships are evident everywhere, as some pupils put it, 'We have great teachers, they treat us with politeness and respect.' Pupils feel that the school is a safe and welcoming place to learn and that bullying is unknown. Pupils develop excellent social skills and self-confidence, demonstrated by the way that the older pupils organise mathematics games or act as reading buddies. Their grasp of cultural diversity has been strengthened by much enjoyed visits from African and Indian performers.

Pupils understand very well the importance of diet and exercise in leading a healthy lifestyle and make good use of the many clubs and sporting events on offer. They make a very significant contribution to the school community, for example through the busy school council. Locally, pupils learn how to take on responsible roles in many events. Their excellent levels of personal development and outstanding academic achievement prepare them extremely well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Common strengths lie in the warm relationships that adults have with their classes, challenging activities and the encouragement and support pupils receive so that even the most able pupil is stretched. Pupils gain a great deal from the very effective team of assistants, part-time teachers and volunteers who bring to school a wide range of skills and expertise. They were described by a parent as 'Dedicated people and such a lovely manner with the children'. Pupils like their teachers and work hard to please them. They think that staff explain things clearly and that help is never far away. Teachers plan, prepare and manage lessons very well, making sensible and flexible arrangements for the mixed-age classes. In fact, pupils say that learning alongside younger or older classmates is never a problem and has lots of advantages. In a very small number of lessons, teachers do not provide enough chances for pupils to work independently. Occasionally explanations are too

long, which reduces the scope for pupils to get deeply involved in a task. Usually, however, pupils are expected to use their initiative well, for example in preparing multimedia presentations in French. Whilst marking is usually prompt and accurate, it does not do enough to involve pupils in their own assessment.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent. It ensures that pupils reach high standards but also allows them to be creative and enjoy their education. A very wide range of exciting activities inspires learning. There is a rigorous focus on developing the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and technology, but teachers skilfully develop these skills through tasks which capture pupils' interests. For example, the older pupils wrote forceful letters defending the village green against development proposals.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is well matched to the needs of young children. This is made possible by the enthusiastic contribution of teaching assistants, who often teach the youngest children separately. Across the school the range of activities offered, both in lessons and out of school, is impressive. Many parents commented on this. There are excellent opportunities for creative activities, such as music, dance and drama and every pupil learns French and a musical instrument. Many visitors, events, workshops, clubs and visits enrich the curriculum by supporting pupils' academic and personal development. A recent example is a series of visits from actors, dancers and musicians which has inspired pupils to prepare for an ambitious public performance.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's excellent care, guidance and support of pupils contribute to their outstanding personal development and achievement. One parent summed up the views of many in noting that, 'The staff are absolutely reliable. We know that when our son is in school he is safe and well cared for.' The procedures for safeguarding and health and safety are in place and meet national guidelines. Pupils feel that their individual progress and needs are recognised and that help is always there when needed.

There are very good systems to keep an eye on each pupil's progress and to spot where help is needed. Pupils know how well they are doing but they are not yet fully involved in assessing their own work and analysing exactly what is needed to make it better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. High quality leadership is a key factor in the success of this school. The headteacher provides clear and calm leadership which enthuses and unites all the staff. He knows the school's strengths and weaknesses very well. This is evident in the very good quality of the school's self-evaluation. Excellent systems are in place to check the school's effectiveness of all that goes on. The improvement planning systems take account of the views of pupils and parents and sets realistic targets for the school's development. The headteacher is ably supported by experienced staff and well informed governors who are closely involved in the life of the school. Relationships and communication with parents are excellent.

The school has a very good local reputation and a consistent record of success. Despite this, leaders are far from complacent and are always looking to improve further and seeking ways of getting the best value from its budget.

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

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	1
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

25 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lindal and Marton Primary School, Lindal-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA12 0NB.

As you know, I visited your school recently for two days. I am writing to thank you for being so helpful, welcoming and polite. I enjoyed my visit very much, what a pity that I will miss the big performance in Kendal.

I think that you are all very lucky to be at Lamps. It is an excellent school in every way. You are making terrific progress because you work hard and concentrate. Everyone seems to get along exceptionally well, one of you told me that this is a great school to make friends, I'm sure he is right. I enjoyed the lessons, as you do, and the way teachers work so hard to make the work interesting.

I ran out of paper in making a list of all the things you do here. There are so many chances for you to try sports, drama, and music. I'm glad you make the most of them. For such a small school you have a lot of talented adults working with you, this is one of the reasons why you are doing so well. I know you appreciate all the clubs, visits, visitors and special events in school. So do your parents. I especially liked your wonderful garden and the way you look after it.

There is only one thing that I feel your school could improve. I talked a lot with you about what you thought might make your work even better. Your answers were usually on the lines of 'improve the spelling' or 'work a bit faster'. That's fine, but it would be useful if you had some more precise guidance to help you to judge the quality of your work and set your own targets for improvement.

My best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Oglesby

Lead Inspector