

Newton's Walk

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	136071
Local Authority	Derby
Inspection number	360795
Inspection dates	15–16 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Andrew Cook HMI

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	24
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Cole
Headteacher	Shally Saleri-Palmer (Primary Coordinator)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and an additional inspector. A total of eight lessons were observed and seven teachers seen. Meetings were held with senior staff, the chair of the management committee and a local headteacher who had a pupil from his school on part-time placement at the unit. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised school improvement documents, stakeholder evaluations and safeguarding documentation. Pupil, staff and three questionnaires from parents and carers were also scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are the standards of pupils' work improving rapidly while they are at Newton's Walk?
- Is the curriculum meeting the needs of individual pupils and giving them a broad range of learning opportunities and experiences?
- Are leadership and management roles being delegated to middle leaders and how effectively is the impact of their work being evaluated?

Information about the school

Newton's Walk comprises the Primary Behaviour Services and Provision for Derby City local authority. The specialist provision provides full-time education for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils who have been permanently excluded from mainstream education or have had an alternative to permanent exclusion agreed. All moves onto the unit roll are identified through the Primary Behaviour Panel. Full-time respite provision is also offered to schools when a placement for a pupil is rapidly breaking down as an alternative to exclusion. All full-time pupils have 25 hours of education per week. Pupils attend from across the city; they are of mixed ability and 62% are entitled to free school meals.

In January 2010, a Key Stage 1 nurture group was established within the school to cater for Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils at high risk of permanent exclusion. The outreach provision provides shared placements for pupils with a mainstream placement who are on the special educational needs register for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and are at high risk of exclusion. This provision also provides outreach in-school support. A Complex Case Team offers a multi-agency support to pupils and their families. This includes individual home support, parenting courses and early preventative support to city-wide schools through referrals to a primary behaviour panel.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The outstanding care and support given to pupils while they are at Newton's Walk underpins the good progress they make in lessons. When pupils arrive they have low levels of attainment and have experienced a very unsettled time at school. They quickly respond to good teaching which is carefully tailored to meet their individual needs. Teaching assistants work alongside teachers and together they ensure that pupils are encouraged and supported. This combination of good teaching and outstanding care leads to pupils rapidly improving their behaviour and attitudes. In lessons, pupils are often keen to work and their behaviour is good. There are times when pupils' behaviour deteriorates because of their very complex needs. When this happens, staff are skilled at intervening and pupils quickly get back to work.

The unit has excellent working relationships with other schools and with other agencies. Staff from the unit are heavily involved in supporting schools with pupils whose behaviour is a concern. There is a rigorous process for indentifying pupils who would benefit from a placement at Newton's Walk and when a part-time placement is agreed there is ongoing work with the school and with parents and carers. The unit's work to engage parents and carers in decisions about their children together with the support given to parents and carers, often at very stressful times, is outstanding. The Complex Case Team (CCT) heads up most of this work and plays a key role in building positive relationships with parents and carers. The CCT offers, for example, a range of parenting courses that are well received and often seen as a lifeline for parents and carers who find themselves needing extra support.

Pupils' attendance varies considerably. Some pupils' attendance is good and there is evidence that this improves dramatically while at the unit. However, there remains a very small number who miss out on good teaching because their attendance is very low. While pupils benefit from eating healthily at school, they have a limited understanding of how to stay healthy. They mostly enjoy activities to promote their health, like swimming and football, but they have not had any opportunities to really get involved in general health promotion activities. Throughout the day pupils do not have many opportunities to take on responsibilities or do 'jobs' that would help other pupils and adults.

The unit and the outreach work from the unit are all well managed and run smoothly. The Primary Coordinator's good leadership has ensured that the unit has focused on helping pupils to learn. She has confidently led the successful work to improve teaching, the effectiveness of other senior leaders, the role of the teaching assistants and generally the buildings and environment. The senior leadership team and the management committee have an accurate understanding of the work of the unit. Evidence shows that teaching has improved and, as a result, pupils' progress is good. The good work of the unit and the way it has improved demonstrates that it has good capacity to improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Contribute to pupils' personal development by giving them more opportunities to:
 - take on responsibilities to help out in the classroom and around the unit
 - engage more in some of the decision-making about what happens at Newton's Walk.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to adopt healthy physical, mental and emotional lifestyles.
- Raise the level of attendance to at least average by:
 - promoting good attendance
 - tackling any issues that cause low attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The vast majority of pupils who join the unit have attained very low standards, often because of a turbulent time at school. Although their attainment remains low overall, the good and sometimes outstanding progress they make means the standards they achieve rise rapidly. Assessment data confirms that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress with some making outstanding progress.

In virtually all of the lessons observed pupils made at least good progress. In some lessons it was obvious that pupils made significant jumps in their understanding, knowledge or level of skills. For example, in one lesson pupils quickly understood that a more efficient way to add on nine was to add ten and take away one. In another lesson pupils grew in confidence in using adjectives to describe what Gruffalo the bear liked to eat or drink.

In all of the lessons visited by the HMI pupils' behaviour was generally good. Pupils' good behaviour meant that they were keen to work, answer questions and complete the task they had been given. In lessons, at breakfast and dinner and out on the playground pupils are generally very considerate towards each other. Occasionally, pupils get very upset and their behaviour quickly deteriorates. When this happened in one lesson the teaching assistant skilfully supported the pupil and quickly got them back to work. Pupils develop good social skills and a better understanding of their own behaviour and its impact on others. They enjoy learning about other cultures, often through finding out about the different religious and cultural backgrounds of staff.

Pupils say they feel safe. They know that they can turn to adults when they are upset or worried. There are opportunities for pupils to contribute to the wider community, for example, they have presented their art work at the Quad Arts centre in the city and raised money for charities.

Attendance needs to improve. For some pupils attendance is good but there are many who miss occasional days and a few whose attendance is very low. However, the significant improvements in their attitudes to work and behaviour means that they are better equipped, when they leave the unit, to return to school.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good. In lessons observed teachers and teaching assistants worked as teams. Teaching was good because:

Staff had an in-depth knowledge and understanding of pupils' emotional and learning needs.

Staff were very effective in using praise and encouragement to motivate pupils to learn.

Staff often intervened just at the right time, for example, when pupils began to really struggle with their work and to get upset.

Teachers made it very clear about what it was that pupils were learning about.

Teachers adapted their teaching when they realised that a task was too easy or too difficult.

Teachers constantly gave pupils feedback on how well they were doing.

Teaching was also good because it often captured the imagination of pupils. For example, in the Year 1 and 2 class pupils were very enthusiastic about the topic of Super Heroes. Building on their enthusiasm they went outside and were delighted when they had to shoot mini rockets (with Super Hero pictures on) across the playground so that they could measure with strides the distance the rocket went. The teacher managed this lesson superbly and, as a result, the pupils enjoyed their learning.

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The curriculum is well organised and managed to meet the specific needs of the pupils. There is a great deal of flexibility within the curriculum with one-to-one sessions, a focus on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and an emphasis on activities to promote their personal development.

The care and support pupils are given is outstanding because each pupil is so well known that everything is done to ensure they feel safe, make progress and enjoy learning. There are very effective links with other professionals, for example from the health and social services, which means that care and support is well coordinated and covers the full range of pupils needs. There are excellent arrangements between schools and the unit to ensure that everything is covered when pupils join the unit and when they return to school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Over the last two years much has been done to improve the provision at Newton's Walk. This work has been very effectively led and driven by the Primary Coordinator. Her high expectations and determination to focus all work on how well pupils learn has successfully brought about improvements in the quality of teaching. The work of the senior leadership team has become more influential in strategic decision making because more responsibility is being delegated to them. Senior leaders produce action plans that outline improvement work although these plans sometimes lack clear measurable success criteria.

The work of the Complex Case Team (CCT) is very effective. This team offers a multi-agency support to pupils at the unit and their families as well as others across the city of Derby. As a result, the unit has a highly positive relationship with all groups of parents and carers. Effective support is given to parents, carers and schools if for any reason a permanent exclusion of a pupil is anticipated.

The management committee provides satisfactory challenge and support and recognises the good work of the current senior leadership team. The minutes of committee meetings show that there is an emphasis on the quality of learning and teaching as well as a scrutiny of how well the unit is meeting the needs of all pupils. Realistic plans have been drawn up for the future development of the provision at Newton's Walk and the committee and senior leaders are in a strong position to manage any change.

The work of the unit is very much about meeting the specific needs of each pupil and, as a result, the promotion of equality of opportunity is good. Work with other organisations, for example the Community Safety Partnership, has contributed to the satisfactory

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promotion of community cohesion. All safeguarding procedures are in place. The unit is very proactive in working with other key agencies to reduce the risk of harm to pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

There were only a small number of questionnaires from parents and carers returned. Responses were, on the whole, very positive.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newton's Walk to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 3 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 24 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	1	33	1	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	1	33	1	33	1	33	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	2	67	0	0	1	33	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	2	67	0	0	1	33	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	1	33	2	67	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	1	33	1	33	1	33	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	1	33	1	33	1	33	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	3	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	2	67	0	0	1	33	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



17 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newton's Walk, Derby, DE22 1HL

Thank you for making me feel very welcomed when I visited Newton's Walk. I enjoyed talking with you and seeing what you were doing in lessons. It was good to share dinner with some of you and get the chance to find out how much you enjoy going to Newton's Walk. It was great to watch the Super Hero Rockets fly across the playground and I really enjoyed playing cars just after breakfast on Wednesday.

I think Newton's Walk is a good place to be in because:

The teachers are good at teaching you new things to learn.

Your behaviour is mostly good in lessons because you get so much help from adults.

You feel safe in Newton's' Walk.

The staff work as a team and Mrs SP is good at making decisions about what to do.

At Newton's Walk you are helped to get ready to go back to school or even a new school.

I hope you continue to enjoy being at Newton's Walk. I think it would be good if the staff helped you to do the following three things:

Turn up every day when Newton's Walk is open so that you can go to lessons and learn.

Do some jobs in class, in the dining room and in the playground to help others.

Learn more about how to be healthy and take up some healthy exercises.

I hope that when the time is right you go back to school ready to carry on learning.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Cook

Her Majesty's Inspector

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