

# Newtown Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113083
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	357256
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alexander Baxter

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

---

<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	130
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Su Aves
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caren Brooks
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 November 2010
<b>School address</b>	Clifton Road Exeter EX1 2ES
<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 255540
<b>Fax number</b>	01392 424661
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:cbrooks@newtown.devon.sch.uk">cbrooks@newtown.devon.sch.uk</a>

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 November 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	357256

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and observed seven teachers. They also attended two assemblies, observed break and lunchtime activities, and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils, and parents and carers. They looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. The provision and planning for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including in the Centre speech and therapy unit, were evaluated. In addition, questionnaires completed by 46 parents and carers, 23 pupils and six staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- The effectiveness of teaching and learning in enabling all groups to make good progress and, in particular, the degree to which pupils with speech and language needs in the Centre, are included in mainstream classes and have their needs met.
- Pupils' achievements in writing, especially in Years 1 and 2.
- The degree to which leaders and managers evaluate the impact of their work to bring about and sustain continuous improvements in pupils' achievements.

## Information about the school

This is a small inner city primary school. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies across the year groups and is well above average. ♦ The school hosts a speech and therapy unit for eight pupils, from Reception age to Year 3, known as 'The Centre'. ♦ These pupils are fully included into mainstream classes and are withdrawn to the unit for specialist small group support. All of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs. ♦ The main groups of needs are related to speech and language, and behaviour and emotional difficulties. ♦ Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed-age, but mostly Reception-age, class. A privately run pre-school operates on the school site and shares some of the school's outdoor facilities.

**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

- Newtown is a good and improving school with some outstanding features. This is because the staff team provides excellent care, guidance and support and is successful in meeting the needs of individual pupils. The promotion of equality of opportunity for all pupils, whether they have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are linked with the speech and language centre, or have above average ability, is another exemplary feature. These elements, in combination with good teaching and learning, enable pupils to achieve well.
- The driving force behind the school's success is the shared commitment to improvement, underpinned by the headteacher's determination to promote a team approach to leadership and management. She has also embedded an effective and accurate system of self-evaluation. Governors and staff collaborate well and have contributed to the good improvement in the quality of teaching and in pupils' achievements since the last inspection. Excellent provision in Reception and in the speech and language centre, and the strong empowerment of pupils as independent learners in Years 5 and 6, further demonstrate the school's good capacity to sustain further improvement.
- Throughout the school, there is an established culture of staff continually emphasising and encouraging the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills, as exemplified in the speech and language centre. This is accomplished through focused questioning, which draws new learning from the pupils' own ideas. Consequently, children make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and most pupils make good progress during their time in the school.
- By the end of Year 6, attainment is above average overall, but in response to more consistent teaching, an increasing number of pupils are reaching the higher National Curriculum levels across the range of subjects. However, the development of pupils' basic handwriting skill through Years 1, 2 and 3 is not always emphasised enough and this contributes to inconsistency in the presentation of pupils' work through the school.
- The curriculum is relevant, interesting and makes a strong contribution in developing pupils as independent learners, particularly in Reception and in Years 5 and 6. As a result, pupils contribute extremely well to school and community activities. For example, members of the school council undertake their duties diligently and respectfully, handing out achievement certificates during their weekly 'Council Assembly'. Pupils behave well, share very warm relationships and greatly enjoy school. They say: 'We have lots of friends and our school is like a happy family.' The way older pupils willingly volunteer to assist in helping younger pupils and

**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

respectfully appreciate the efforts of Reception children in assembly further illustrate the highly inclusive ethos of the school.

- The school has worked hard over the last year to improve the rate of attendance which is broadly average, significantly decreasing the number of absences due to lateness, but has been less effective in discouraging term-time holidays, especially by families new to the school.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

Over the next two terms:

- Improve pupils' progress and attainment in writing, particularly in Years 1, 2 and 3, by teaching a more consistent style of handwriting and raising expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' work.
- Raise pupils' attendance by:
  - working with parents and carers, especially of those pupils new to the school, to reduce the number of holidays taken in school term time
  - developing further strategies to reward and encourage good attendance.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Observations of mostly good, and occasionally excellent, teaching, which includes accurate and helpful marking of pupils' work and effective use of assessment procedures, together with other inspection evidence, clearly indicate that progress across the school is good. This applies equally to all groups, including pupils supported by the speech and language centre and others with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Visits to lessons, assemblies and small group out-of-class support sessions also showed that pupils really enjoy learning at school. From broadly average starting points, pupils achieve well and levels of attainment are above average by the end of Year 6. ♦

Outstanding provision helps Reception children achieve exceptionally well, especially in learning how to work independently and with others. Daily practice at sounding out letters and spelling simple words in Years 1 and 2 is developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and their understanding of words well. This good progress continues through Years 3 to 6. In particular, pupils in Years 5 and 6 respond well to the teacher's high expectations and exhibit a mature capacity to work reflectively and purposefully together or on their own. This was seen when a group of more-able pupils examined artefacts brought in by a visitor from a museum and discussed the difference between first- and second-hand evidence. Given pupils' starting points, an increasing number are reaching the higher National Curriculum levels by the end of Year 6. This is because their positive attitudes and investigative skills help them to respond to the challenges set for them, for example when pupils were observed using laptop and other computers to develop more complex sentences and learn independently.

Pupils behave well and say they feel safe because adults know and treat them well. The pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seen in the respectful way that they play and work with each other, including those new to the school and several from minority ethnic backgrounds. ♦ The pupils' excellent contributions to school activities

**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

and to various charities also reflect their love of school and respect for others. ♦ Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles well and enjoy physical activity. Some members of the school council expressed the wish to extend their skills further through competitive team games with other schools. ♦ Most pupils attend well, but overall, attendance is broadly average because a few families new to the school do not ensure that their children attend as regularly as they should. ♦ Even so, by the time pupils leave the school, their social awareness, willingness to learn together, and good achievement prepare them well for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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 consistently good teaching and learning and excellent care, guidance and support are evident in the very close relationships and high-quality oral interaction between adults and pupils, which means that all pupils are known and valued as unique individuals. ♦ Staff, including capable teaching assistants, gain even more information through careful questioning and accurate assessments of the pupils' work. They then use the information collected to plan work that is matched well to the differing needs of individual pupils, thereby promoting good learning. This was evident, for example, in a Years 4 and 5 science lesson where pupils' understanding of habitats was developed effectively through

**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

the use of flow charts. Because of the additional specialist attention, pupils with complex needs, especially those supported by the speech and language centre, receive particularly well-targeted support. This enables them to make very good gains in relation to their difficulties. ◆◆◆◆◆

Pupils make good progress in their writing as they move through Years 4, 5 and 6, as seen in the way they express their ideas imaginatively when writing about Lady Macbeth. The quality of pupils' handwriting and of their recorded work in books shows lack of precision in spelling and punctuation. This is because teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of written work and do not develop pupils' handwriting skills well enough, especially in Years 1, 2 and 3.

The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activity, which includes clubs such as the drama group, and by good opportunities to learn by using computers. Assemblies enable pupils to share their findings with the rest of the school, for example, as seen when Reception children presented their ideas about 'bonfire night', and these further enthuse pupils in their learning. Staff are currently adapting the curriculum to tackle pupils' needs, to promote their enthusiasm for learning and to advance their basic literacy and numeracy skills. In English lessons in Years 1 and 2, the introduction of daily phonics work, concentrating on the sounds that letters make, is having a beneficial effect on pupils' understanding and use of words. In mathematics in Years 2 and 3, again, the use of number lines is advancing the pupils' understanding of addition and subtraction. Across the school, a focus on developing topics to raise pupils' interest, especially for boys, for example, by researching minibeasts on the internet, is having a positive effect, but this is relatively new and is not consistent across all classes.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The strong impact of leadership is seen in how effectively the headteacher has lifted staff morale and with her senior management team is embedding ambition and driving improvement. Adults have a clear understanding of what the school does well. Senior managers are increasingly effective at monitoring the progress of pupils within their areas of responsibility. The governing body is well organised and steadfast in supporting the headteacher in her efforts to move the school forward. Leadership in Reception and of the speech and language centre are excellent, but a few other coordinators are new to their responsibilities and have not had sufficient time to develop their roles to the full.

**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

The headteacher is well supported by senior staff and governors in sustaining a highly inclusive ethos. By welcoming and getting to know and respect all pupils as individuals with unique talents as well as needs, staff ensure full equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination for all who work in the school. This commitment is evident in the way that pupils across a breadth of needs and abilities achieve equally successfully.

The school evaluates its effectiveness accurately and identifies the right priorities for development. This is seen in the good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and in the pupils' achievements since the last inspection. Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are of good quality and that all statutory requirements, including child protection and risk assessment, are regularly reviewed and approved. Excellent links with the local community and with wider national and international groups enable the school to promote community cohesion extremely well. Pupils make notable, self-initiated contributions to various charities such as the Haitian Earthquake Appeal. Other activities include, for example, very supportive links with local schools, those with less diversity in the United Kingdom and with educational establishments in Spain and Japan.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a successful start to their school life in the Reception class. Excellent relationships with staff lift the aspirations of both children and their parents and carers about what can be achieved. Leadership and management are outstanding, with the high-quality collaborative support from speech and language staff being equally exemplary features. Excellent teaching and learning, and encouragement, enable the children, including those attached to the speech and language centre, to make exceptional progress, especially in becoming independent and cooperative participants in all areas of learning. ♦ The very caring staff give excellent attention to the children's welfare by



**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

making sure that their needs are quickly assessed so that well-considered interventions are successful in meeting their differing needs. Very well-planned and resourced activities throughout the spacious indoor and outdoor areas reflect the high-quality curriculum, which enhances children's enjoyable learning. For example, focused adult-led teaching of words is beautifully complemented by the equally successful development of children's new learning during activities chosen by the children themselves. These include role play and dressing up in 'The Office', expressing interesting words as ribbon movements, and children responding to supportive adult questioning as they enthusiastically pedal or 'repair' large wheeled toys.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who returned their questionnaires are very happy and have full confidence in the work of the school. There were many written comments praising the school. One parent or carer, representing the views of many, wrote, 'My child enjoys and looks forward to going to school and comes home enthused with what he has learnt and the social events of the day.' ♦ All of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire expressed full agreement that the school keeps their children safe. A few parents and carers expressed concerns, mainly about their children's progress and readiness for the next stage of their education. Evidence at the time of the inspection shows that pupils are making good progress and are well prepared for the future.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newtown Primary School 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 130 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	65	14	30	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	63	17	37	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	48	19	41	5	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	35	24	52	4	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	48	23	50	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	46	20	43	5	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	33	25	54	5	11	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)	13	28	25	54	5	11	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	41	21	46	4	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	26	25	54	4	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	39	20	43	3	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	24	52	20	43	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	52	19	41	2	4	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



5 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Newtown Primary School, Exeter EX1 2ES**

We really enjoyed visiting your school and would like to thank you for welcoming us so warmly. Special thanks must go to the members of the school council who gave of their time to talk with me. We were very impressed by many things, but especially by the way you contribute so wholeheartedly to school and community events. We agree with your headteacher that Newtown is a good school that continues to improve.

These are the other main things we found.

- You make good progress because the teachers are skilled at using your ideas to help you learn new things. As a result, your attainment is above average.
- You really enjoy school and benefit from a good range of learning activities.
- You behave well and the way you look after each other reflects the high-quality care provided for each and every one of you by all the adults who work in the school.
- ♦♦ Your headteacher, senior staff and governors lead and manage the school well and know what needs to be done to keep the school improving.

To help your school to improve, we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to work together to improve two things.

- The quality of your handwriting and the presentation of your work.
- The attendance of those pupils who do not come to school regularly enough.

Each of you can play your part in making this school even better by continuing to work hard to meet the targets teachers set you.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**