

Newton Bluecoat Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119805
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358631
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Eileen Mulgrew HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Darren Clayton
Headteacher	Mr James Bird
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2009
School address	School Lane Newton-With-Scales, Preston Lancashire PR4 3RT
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Seven lessons led by six teachers and one higher level teaching assistant were observed. Inspectors made several visits to the Early Years Foundation Stage to observe provision. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, senior leaders and managers, and a local authority officer. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding, information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's improvement plans and pupils' books. They considered the responses to questionnaires from staff, pupils and 72 parents and carers.

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

- Levels of attainment and pupils' progress and whether the recent rise in attainment is being sustained consistently across the school.
- The current quality of teaching and learning and, in particular, whether the challenge and pace in classes, especially across Key Stage 2, are good enough to ensure sufficiently rapid progress.
- The use of assessment and whether targets for progress are sufficiently challenging.
- The extent to which leaders and managers at all levels have driven improvement with sufficient pace.

Information about the school

Newton Bluecoat Church of England Primary School is a slightly smaller than average sized school which admits pupils from beyond its immediate locality. The vast majority of pupils are from White British heritage. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is half that of the national figure, while those with a statement of special educational needs is well below. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The school has a Church of England foundation and has close links with the parish church. There is a breakfast and after-school club which is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection. The school has received awards including Activemark and Green Flag Eco Status.

At the last inspection, in November 2009, the school was issued with a notice to improve. A monitoring visit in June 2010 stated that the school was making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement. Since then, two teachers have left the school; two teachers have returned from long term absence; a temporary teacher has been appointed to assistant headteacher and a teacher is on maternity leave.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Newton Bluecoat School is satisfactory. It has some good and outstanding features. Leaders and managers responded well to the last inspection. Improvements have been achieved in the quality of pupils' learning and their progress, the quality of teaching and the use of assessment; while successfully sustaining the overall good quality of pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 has been restored to a satisfactory level for all groups. Achievement is stronger in English than in mathematics. Pupils' understanding of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle has risen to outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is good and, on occasions, outstanding. During the inspection, pupils sensibly and orderly evacuated the building in response to the fire alarm. Attendance levels, judged to be outstanding at the last inspection, have been maintained.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There were examples of good lessons and no inadequate lessons were observed. Good relationships lead to a positive learning environment in which pupils' feel safe and supported to learn. Lessons are conscientiously planned with clear objectives and teachers' explanations enable pupils to know what to do and what is expected of them. To increase teachers' understanding of the expected progress pupils should make in each class, the school has developed a system to check pupils' progress throughout the school based on half termly assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, teachers are planning activities which take account of pupils' prior learning and meet their needs and interests. However, this practice is not yet consistently good across all subjects and in all classes.

The school has taken relevant steps to successfully adapt the curriculum to make it more enjoyable for pupils. It effectively provides for pupils' personal development through a range of interesting activities. However, the lack of planned progression in the skills and knowledge pupils will learn does not consistently support accelerated progress.

The school has satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement. With the return of the deputy headteacher and the temporary appointment of an assistant headteacher, senior leadership has been strengthened. Through a variety of activities senior leaders are monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Leaders and managers know the strengths of the school and have identified accurately what needs to improve. Although action plans identify the correct priorities, they do not describe intended outcomes in sufficient detail to enable meaningful evaluation.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on recent improvements so that achievement for all groups of pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is consistently and securely good by:
 - providing teaching and learning that is consistently of good or better quality
 - ensuring that the curriculum is planned progressively so that pupils acquire knowledge and skills systematically across all subjects.
- Further strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring improvement planning is focused on specific action to be completed and clear targets are linked to a measurable uplift in pupils' achievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils work with good effort and concentration and enjoy their lessons. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, there was healthy competition as pupils eagerly gave answers to a bingo game based on number sequences. Year 6 pupils enthusiastically talked about their research on the artist Lowry prior to sketching in his style. Many pupils expressed enjoyment in the background music. Such activities support pupils' confidence, interest and creativity.

Pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory and improving. In 2010, progress in Key Stage 2 overall recovered from a two-year dip. Good progress in English resulted in well above average attainment in English with the number of pupils reaching a high level for their age, an increase since the last inspection. Work in lessons, in books and the school's own information on pupils' progress show that pupils are making satisfactory, and some good, progress. However, it is not yet consistently good in all classes or all subjects. Intervention programmes are used effectively to support pupils who are not making expected progress or pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, there is little difference in the achievement of different groups of pupils.

Membership of the school council, acting as buddies to younger pupils and a willingness to raise funds for charity are just some examples of the way pupils learn about their role in the community. Pupils say they feel safe and consider any behaviour issues are dealt with fairly. They are confident, articulate and well able to express their views. They talk confidently and knowledgeably about the need to eat a balanced diet, take regular exercise and the risks associated with smoking, using alcohol and mismanagement of drugs.

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

Good relationships result in pupils' feeling safe and confident to 'have a go'. Teachers' questioning skills are effective and almost all pupils are eager to respond. Teaching and learning is generally better in English where the school has directed significant effort over the past year. The local authority supported the school in enhancing new and returning teachers' knowledge of the systems for checking pupils' progress. As a result, teachers use comprehensive assessment information on individual and groups of pupils. In the best lessons, activities are well prepared using this information to match work specifically to the particular needs and interests of the pupils. Likewise, marking affirms pupils' efforts and there are some good examples of comments consistently informing pupils of the next steps they need to take to improve their work and pupils' responding appropriately. Teaching assistants are well directed to support pupils' in their learning. However, the school acknowledges that it still has a little way to go to ensure consistency across subjects and classes to enable more rapid progress.

The school has successfully introduced a curriculum which links different subjects together to make it more enjoyable for pupils. Pupils' experiences are enriched by the wide and varied extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. However, there is an opportunity to plan the progression of activities more precisely to support the exact needs of individual pupils. Care, guidance and support are high priority for the school. Good use is made of

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external expertise, such as colleagues from the local authority and a nearby special school, to develop staff's understanding and to support pupils effectively.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has resolutely led the school in tackling the issues from the last inspection while managing staffing instability. Systems for monitoring the work of the school have been reviewed and strengthened. Information from lesson observations, book scrutinies and evaluation of pupil progress data, enable senior leaders to evaluate the quality of teaching. Work done by the senior leaders and managers to develop techniques for checking on pupils' progress in lessons has had a positive and sound impact. Although it has only been in place a short time, confidence of the senior team has grown. Middle leaders have received professional development in developing skills to monitor the achievement of pupils in all subjects and produced action plans to support further improvements. However, improvement planning lacks the sharpness necessary to enable a rapid uplift in pupils' progress.

Members of the governing body support and challenge decisions taken by senior leaders to enable them to monitor the performance of the school. They demonstrate a determination to bring about further improvement and discharge their statutory duties well. Parents and carers support the school and appreciate the easily accessible website and weekly electronic newsletter. Safeguarding procedures are good and the school adopts practices which are shared and known to staff. Although pupils' achievement in English is better than in mathematics, the school promotes good opportunities for all pupils to develop well and there is no evidence of discrimination. Recent improvement in monitoring the progress made by all pupils has enabled the school to address any inequality between different groups.

The school has formed productive partnerships with a range of agencies to support and enhance pupils' learning, for example, they have established links with schools in the local area and another country to enable pupils to develop their understanding of diversity and discrimination. Due to these effective relationships, the school's provision for community cohesion is good.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children join the Early Years Foundation Stage what they know and what they can do is generally above expected levels for their age. Children make satisfactory progress so that by the time they leave Reception they are working at above expected levels for their age. Good arrangements for starting Nursery, and later Reception, give parents and carers confidence that their children will be well cared for and safe. For example, the pre-start lunch enables parents, carers and children to get to know the staff. Children spend time in the classrooms and meet the Year 6 pupils who will act as their 'buddies' to help them in the first few weeks of school life. As a result, children are familiar with the setting and settle well into the routines of the school. Good, trusting relationships result in good behaviour. Teachers and teaching assistants work as a team to plan activities which meet the needs and interests of all children. Observations of children's learning are used to inform planning and to check the progress they are making. Children willingly take part in activities and take delight in their achievements. However, the organisation and accessibility of resources, inside and outside the classroom, do not always support independent learning opportunities for all children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation	3

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

Stage	
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Views of parents and carers

Of the number of parental questionnaires returned, most parents and carers are happy with their children's overall experience of school and the vast majority consider their children are kept safe. Most consider their children are happy at school and that teaching is good. Parents and carers were supportive of other aspects of the school's work. A few were not so content with the manner in which unacceptable behaviour is dealt with, the effectiveness of the way in which the school is led and managed and the progress of their children. Inspectors looked at these concerns carefully. From talking to pupils and scrutinising the responses to the questionnaires, the vast majority of pupils feel unacceptable behaviour is dealt with fairly and feel safe in the school. Inspectors found that the leadership and management of the school has improved and is satisfactory. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress. However, inspectors found that, although there are examples of good teaching, evidence shows that it is satisfactory overall.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newton Bluecoat Church of England 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 182 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	60	26	36	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	56	31	43	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	40	39	54	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	38	31	43	9	13	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	28	39	37	51	3	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	36	40	56	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	39	38	53	3	4	1	1
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)	28	39	32	44	3	4	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	35	36	50	5	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	33	27	38	10	14	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	33	35	49	5	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	22	31	29	40	10	14	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	43	34	47	2	3	2	3

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.



21 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newton Bluecoat Church of England Primary School, Preston, PR4 3RT

Thank you for your warm welcome when your school was recently inspected. It was a pleasure to talk with you and listen to your very supportive opinions of your school. You told me how much you like school and gave it 10 out of 10! This accounts for your outstanding attendance. Most pupils at Newton Bluecoat achieve at least what is expected for their age and sometimes better.

Your school is satisfactory. Your good personal qualities are evident through your good attitudes to work, good behaviour, perseverance and interest in all the activities that you do. I was most impressed by the manner in which you left the building during the fire alert. Your understanding of the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle is outstanding.

The headteacher, governors and staff have worked hard to successfully improve the school but more can be done to help you to make more rapid progress. Your attainment and progress have improved because teaching has improved. But your achievement could be even better if teaching and learning was consistently and securely at least good in all classes. Your curriculum is interesting but your achievement could be better if the skills and knowledge you need in subjects were planned progressively. Improvement plans identify the correct aspects your school needs to do to improve and your headteacher recognises that planned actions could be linked more sharply to an improvement in your achievement.

I know with such positive personal qualities you will help your teachers to further improve the school. My very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Eileen Mulgrew

Her Majesty's Inspector

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