

# Newton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112194
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	357060
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 January 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sheila Mawer

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	31
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sarah Cooper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gina Brierley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Newton Road Newton-in-Furness, Barrow-in-Furness Cumbria LA13 0LT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed nine lessons and saw three teachers and four teaching assistants. Meetings were also held with staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body. In observing the school's work, a range of documents were examined including the school improvement plan, assessment information, safeguarding procedures, minutes of governors' meeting and records of monitoring and evaluation. The inspector also analysed the 28 questionnaires returned by parents and carers. In addition, questionnaires were received from pupils and staff.

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

- Whether pupils make good progress in writing as they move through the school.
- The extent to which assessment is helping pupils to improve their work.
- How well the curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of all learners, especially pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The effectiveness of support and challenge given by the governing

body to the leadership and management of this very small school.

- How well the school plans and promotes community cohesion beyond the local area in the United Kingdom and globally.

## Information about the school

Newton is a much smaller than average-sized primary school and serves a small village and surrounding area. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as a first language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average.

In 2005 the school federated with a larger school in Ulverston; both schools shared the same headteacher and governing body. This partnership ended in August 2009. In September 2009 a new headteacher was initially appointed at Newton on a temporary part-time basis for two days a week. In June 2010 the position was made permanent for one and a half days a week. The assistant headteacher who is based in Key Stage 2 also shares in the leadership and management of the school.

**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

This is a good school. Significant improvements have been made to key areas of provision since the last inspection and pupils achieve well. Care, guidance and support are now outstanding. Parents, carers, pupils and staff are immensely proud of what has been achieved in this inclusive school. One parent, reflecting the views of many wrote, 'My child was unhappy at a previous school, so I moved him to Newton. He is now the happiest I have ever known him to be. The praise goes to this excellent school.' Ambitious and effective leadership has strengthened the accuracy and rigour of self-evaluation. Priorities for development are sharply focused on raising standards. There is a strong commitment to learn from others through professional support. Leaders know, for example, that the teaching of writing is not good enough and they are ready to seek help. These very positive examples confirm that the school has a good capacity to sustain improvement. Although the governing body has moved towards greater involvement in monitoring the school's performance, a process is not in place to ensure that this is done formally.

Imaginative and sometimes inspirational teaching helps pupils to make good progress from their different starting points. Assessment is good and targets are helping most pupils to improve their work, except in writing. Stimulating displays of pupils' work around the school are used to celebrate good achievement. These displays also reflect an increasingly creative curriculum. The curriculum is skilfully adapted to meet the needs of all ages, including Reception. By the end of Year 6, attainment is well above average in reading and above average in mathematics and science. Pupils do particularly well in reading, as it is taught very successfully. Progress is slower in writing, especially for the most able pupils and attainment in writing is broadly average.

Pupils are exceptionally keen to learn. They say, 'We all arrive early at school as we're keen to get going.' The school has created an exceptionally strong ethos where pupils feel greatly valued and safe. This has a strong impact on their excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, because their needs are effectively met through excellent support and good intervention programmes. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their cultural development is strong in relation to the good contribution they make to the local community. There are fewer opportunities to extend their learning about communities elsewhere in this country and globally.

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

- Improve the teaching of writing so that all pupils, and particularly the most able, make consistently good progress by:

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- teaching the mechanics of writing more systematically through the school, particularly its structure, organisation and grammar
  - teaching different types of writing, using examples of good literature
  - ensuring that pupils act on the guidance given in good marking
  - planning more focus on writing in literacy in Key Stage 2 and increasing the time given for writing strategies throughout the school
  - attending training and seeking external support to improve the teaching of writing.
- Strengthen the role of the governing body by involving them in the formal
  - process of monitoring and evaluating the school's performance.
  - Improve the promotion of community cohesion by developing more opportunities for pupils to experience and understand the cultural, ethnic and social diversity in the United Kingdom and the wider world.

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

Pupils really enjoy coming to school, where relationships are outstanding and attendance is above average. They are keen to succeed and learn as much as they can. They regularly ask to continue working at break times and after school. All groups of learners make good progress overall throughout the school, from starting points in Reception that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. In lessons they respond enthusiastically to the challenges set by adults. These positive qualities were evident in a history lesson in Key Stage 2, when pupils were asked to prepare a presentation about a Roman soldier. Working exceptionally well together in groups, all pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities thoroughly enjoyed planning their own learning and proudly used their critical skills to discover things for themselves. They worked at an optimum pace, knowing what they had to achieve. It became clear during the session how capable pupils were at carrying out research, using their well above average skills in reading and information and communication technology (ICT). However, even the most able are held back from attaining the same high quality work in their writing.

In their responses to the questionnaires all pupils said that they feel safe in school and that bullying is rare. Most pupils adopt active and healthy lifestyles and fully participate in many planned sporting activities. A recent healthy eating workshop for parents and pupils has significantly improved the quality of packed lunches. Pupils willingly take on extra responsibility in school, such as devising their own 'golden rules' for behaviour. When the school decided to improve the outdoor area, many pupils happily helped at weekends. Pupils' well-developed social and workplace skills, their excellent behaviour and good achievement are preparing them well for the future.

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*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>1</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>2</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>	2
<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?**

Teachers generally use assessment well to match tasks closely to the needs of pupils, enabling them to make good progress. Lessons are underpinned by excellent relationships and good opportunities for pupils to engage in their own learning. Teachers are successfully reducing the amount of 'teacher talk' in lessons and encouraging more contributions from pupils. This has been a recent area for development. Teamwork among staff is excellent and teachers and teaching assistants are skilled practitioners. This allows lessons to be planned in a flexible way for the mixed-age classes. Although the subject knowledge of teachers is strong overall, writing is not taught as well as other subjects. At times there is not enough focus on teaching the skills of writing. This is slowing the progress made by all pupils, but particularly the most able. Assessment is effective and pupils know their targets for improvement. Marking is good, with clear pointers for improvement. However, not all pupils are directed to act on the guidance given in writing.

The curriculum has improved considerably in meeting the needs of all learners. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is thorough and is flexible enough to respond to their varying needs. The structure of the curriculum around topics enables key skills to be practised, especially in reading and ICT. There are many opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum but without the emphasis on improving the structure and accuracy of writing. Close partnerships with other schools and different organisations impacts particularly well on the health, fitness and well-being of

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pupils. Good enrichment through clubs, visits and visitors adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment and learning. For example, many local people contributed to a recent topic on 'people who help us'.

Adults place pupils' well-being at the centre of their work and pupils receive outstanding support. Parents and carers appreciate the school's exceptionally caring ethos and the strong individual support that their children receive. Any barriers to learning are quickly identified and actions are put in place, so that pupils can make the very best of the opportunities they are given. There are excellent partnerships with outside agencies to provide additional support for children most at risk. Induction arrangements are good and pupils are well prepared for the transition to a much larger school.

*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 headteacher and assistant headteacher are successfully driving forward improvements, raising attainment and achieving good outcomes for pupils in their personal development. Strong and committed teamwork is at the heart of the school's development and success. Adults ensure that there is no discrimination in the school. Equality of opportunity is generally promoted well, while recognising that the needs of the most able pupils in writing are not fully met. Staff, parents and pupils contribute to the school's well-considered plans for improvement. Through robust monitoring systems, senior staff have improved the quality of teaching and learning. They have also established an accurate view of what needs to be done to build on existing strengths. When the federation ended in August 2009, a new governing body was formed. While some governors are still relatively inexperienced, they are all very supportive of the school and are beginning to hold it to account. They are now ready to begin the formal evaluation of the school's performance. More experienced governors are using a good range of expertise to ensure that all safeguarding procedures are of a good quality and fully meet all statutory requirements. Thorough attention is paid to child protection and risk assessments and staff are well trained in all safeguarding matters.

Good partnerships include links with other schools, local businesses, churches and sporting organisations. These links give pupils valuable experiences that the school alone would find difficult to sustain. Communication with parents and carers is very positive. The school is currently improving its website to keep parents fully up to date with news and events. Community cohesion is promoted well within the school and the local area. However, the headteacher and the governing body recognise the need to extend this

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provision so that pupils can develop a greater understanding of the lives of others in differing communities, both in the United Kingdom and across the world.

*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>3</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Successful teamwork and strong leadership enables children to make good progress from their different starting points. When they enter Year 1 nearly all are working at or above the expected levels for children of this age. Good provision is effectively meeting the needs of Reception in the mixed-age class. This is because staff have a comprehensive understanding of how young children learn and develop. The partnership between home and school is very positive. Parents and carers are kept fully informed of their children's progress and what is being taught.

Children quickly settle into the routines of school life and follow the good examples set by their older classmates. They behave well and feel safe in a very caring environment, which meets all of their welfare requirements. The current topic on 'exploring stories' is giving children good opportunities to learn how to share in imaginative play. It is also a good example of how staff have adapted the curriculum to meet the needs of the Reception children. During the inspection the children worked happily together on dance movements for 'We're going on a bear hunt' and set up a cave for the 'Three bears'. Children quickly become independent and manage daily routines well, such as choosing their own learning on the planning board.

Resources for learning indoors and outside are good and provide appropriate challenge. Good teaching of letter sounds is helping children to gain confidence in their early literacy skills. Thorough assessments are made, so that staff have an accurate picture of children's abilities and learning experiences are well matched to their needs. Staff are very skilled and adaptable and work effectively to provide a good balance between adult-led tasks and



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children initiating their own learning. This can prove challenging when there are only one or two children in Reception.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers, in a very high return of questionnaires, are completely happy with all that the school provides. A very small minority of parents do not consider that the school helps them to support their children's learning, takes account of their suggestions and concerns, or is led and managed effectively. The inspector considered these aspects carefully and, during inspection, found them to be good.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newton 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 inspector received 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 31 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	68	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	17	61	11	39	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	61	11	39	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	61	11	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	50	13	46	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	54	13	46	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)	17	61	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	57	11	39	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	54	10	36	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	54	11	39	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	43	14	50	2	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	68	9	32	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](http://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"><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.**



21 January 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Newton Primary School, Barrow-in-Furness, LA13 0LT**

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I was pleased to be able to talk to nearly all of you during the inspection and I greatly valued your views of the school. The help of Class 2 was very important when you completed the questionnaires. You all agreed that you feel completely safe in school, adults care for you and support you in your work and that you learn a lot in lessons. You are right to be so proud of your school and I agree with your views. You go to a good school that has improved a lot since the last inspection.

These are some of the best things I found out during the inspection.

- Adults provide you with excellent care, guidance and support.
- You all work very hard to make good progress. It was lovely to see the effort Class 2 put into their presentation on the Roman soldier and Class 1 into their work on symmetry.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are very good at making the learning fun and providing a good curriculum, where exciting activities help you to learn a lot of new things. Even though there are different ages in the classes, adults plan work to make you all think hard.
- In Reception you are doing some lovely work and trying very hard to copy the excellent behaviour of the other children in the school.

Your headteacher, assistant headteacher and governors are leading the school well and making it successful. To improve it further I have asked them to change some ways that writing is taught, to help you to make more progress. I am sure you will all try to make your writing better by working very hard. The governors will be helping the school to see how well you are doing with your writing. Although you all know a lot about the area where you live, I have asked the school to give you more opportunities to learn about other communities in the rest of the country and other parts of the world.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sheila Mawer  
Lead Inspector

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