

Northwood Broom Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123995
Local Authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	359559
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Joanne Harvey HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Helen Cooke
Headteacher	Mrs Stephanie Moran
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors. Eighteen lessons were observed and eight teachers seen. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, groups of pupils, parents, leaders at all levels, the special educational needs coordinator and Early Years Foundation Stage leaders. They observed the school's work, looked at the school development plan, assessment information, school and local authority monitoring information, lesson plans and school policies. They analysed 130 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with questionnaires from staff and a representative sample from pupils.

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

- Are all pupils making at least satisfactory progress and are they on track for average attainment?
- Are all teachers planning and delivering work which meets the diverse needs of all pupils?
- Have senior leaders ensured that systems are now in place to bring about rapid improvement to outcomes for all pupils?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible to claim free school meals is larger than average. An above average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic heritages and speak a first language other than English. The largest of these groups has a Pakistani heritage. A similar proportion to that found in most schools has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.

The school was formed in January 2009 when neighbouring infant and nursery schools formally amalgamated after a period of informal federation. A period of significant staffing changes followed, including the long term absence of the previous headteacher, the acting headship of an assistant headteacher in partnership with the headteacher of another local school and leadership by two local authority officers until the appointment of the current permanent headteacher took place in October 2010. An acting deputy headship continues.

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

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education and a positive and welcoming environment. Staff form strong and trusting relationships with pupils. Therefore pupils feel safe, develop good attitudes to learning and behave well. They are pleased to take on responsibilities, such as membership of the school council or as playground buddies. They show empathy and are thoughtful of others, for example in singing for senior members of the local community. Pupils say they enjoy school and demonstrate this through their average but improved levels of attendance.

The new senior leadership team has quickly established a strong vision and ethos. This is rightly focused on driving improvements, including raising attainment and accelerating pupils' progress by improving the quality of teaching and learning. As a consequence, a recent decline in attainment has been reversed and pupils' attainment is once again on track to be broadly average in English and mathematics by the time they leave Year 2. This represents satisfactory achievement. Furthermore, evidence confirms that progress is quickening and attainment rising in younger age groups so that, for example, pupils currently in Year 1 are on track to attain above average standards. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the early stages of learning English make good progress.

Whilst teaching is satisfactory and some good teaching was seen, there is not enough of this good practice to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. The proportion of good teaching has been improving steadily but inconsistencies remain, for example in how effectively teachers plan work to ensure the right level of challenge for pupils of all abilities or adapt the curriculum to appeal to different needs and interests. The learning environment has undergone a transformation but is still not rich and varied enough, particularly in how well it promotes high quality literacy. Tightly structured systems to teach pupils about the sounds that letters make are successfully underpinning improvements in early reading and writing development. However, this level of success has not yet been enjoyed in developing speaking and listening skills. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children settle quickly and happily. The rate at which they progress with their learning varies however, because of inconsistencies in the teaching of a curriculum which promotes early independence and includes meaningful opportunities to learn through play.

Since the last inspection, a period of uncertainty in leadership and management slowed school improvement. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties but its skills in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, and therefore its ability to hold leaders to account remains underdeveloped. Leadership is being restructured and the role of middle leaders has yet to be fully established. Nevertheless, self-evaluation is accurate and plans reflect what needs to be done to improve further. Systems to check on pupils'

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progress are now a strength, such that the decline in attainment has been reversed and progress is beginning to accelerate. Therefore, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and increase and bring consistency to the rate at which all pupils make progress by:
 - introducing a structured approach to ensure the rapid development of pupils' speaking and listening skills
 - consistently matching work to pupils' needs so that all are suitably challenged
 - ensuring pupils' misconceptions are picked up and dealt with
 - ensuring pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve
 - ensuring the pace of learning is quick enough and pupils have time to apply their skills and solve problems for themselves
 - ensuring all teachers are equally skilled in adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils
 - improving presentation skills and celebrating writing in a literacy rich environment.
- Improve the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring the good knowledge and application of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework across the setting
 - quickly promoting children's independence and allowing them time to learn independently and do things for themselves
 - ensuring meaningful opportunities for play are planned indoors and outdoors with objectives focused on specific learning outcomes.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills of middle leaders and the governing body in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Observations by inspectors and evidence presented by the school show that pupils enter the school with a range of levels of attainment but they are often lower than expected, particularly in their communication, language and literacy skills. Attainment dipped sharply from broadly average to low at the end of Year 2 in 2010. However, school data and pupils' work confirm that attainment is currently broadly average. Pupils were seen to be making satisfactory progress in the majority of lessons and in some lessons the progress was good. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 2, pupils made satisfactory progress in their ability to understand symmetry. The teacher made the objective of the lesson clear and used appropriate resources to illustrate this. However, all pupils were

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then given a similar task which was not challenging enough for some to allow their learning to move on at a good pace. In contrast, in a Year 1 lesson, learning about patterns and shapes moved on at a good pace because of the teacher's ongoing targeted questioning to check the understanding of individuals and extend thinking, giving them the opportunity to explain their ideas, solve problems and even assess their own understanding.

Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the early stages of learning English as an additional language receive well targeted support within lessons and make good progress through their clearly identified small steps of learning. The tracking system is now able to identify potential gaps in the performance of individuals and groups so that interventions are put in to place swiftly to address them. This tracking also confirms that the progress pupils make is uneven as they move through the school and is often at its best in Year 1 and is showing some improvements in Reception.

Pupils' show curiosity and interest in their activities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall with some strengths, for example in their good understanding of right and wrong, the respect they show for others and the way good manners predominate. They have a suitable knowledge of how to keep healthy and safe and enjoy the range of physical activities on offer. Pupils' ability to apply their satisfactory basic skills in a range of contexts ensures they are prepared suitably for the next stage of their education and lives.

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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

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How effective is the provision?

Teachers manage pupils well and engender a good work ethic. The best lessons are lively and move at a brisk pace. These lessons are well planned, using good subject knowledge to build small steps of learning, with staff responding to pupils' learning needs throughout. Open and challenging questions are asked that make pupils think and work things out. However, these features are not evident across all classes and, as a consequence, the rate at which pupils learn is inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers talk for too long without giving pupils the time and opportunity to test their own ideas or find things out for themselves. Opportunities are missed to check understanding and avoid misconceptions arising. Additional adults are occasionally underused. Some good examples of marking were seen which help pupils to improve but, elsewhere, feedback to pupils reinforces mistakes and pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve. Good presentation is not consistently encouraged.

The curriculum is being revised and subjects are beginning to be taught through topic themes, with an emphasis on drama and role play. It is too soon to judge the impact of this change. The curriculum is extended by a variety of out-of-school activities, including sports and creative arts. A particularly innovative link with a local school enhances pupils' development, with the exchange of expertise regarding the support of bi-lingual learners and the teaching of early reading and writing skills. The curriculum has yet to be modified suitably by all teachers to fully meet the needs and interest of all pupils so that everyone can progress equally well.

Most parents and carers appreciate the 'open-door' policy in the school and the way that care is taken to ensure a smooth transition for pupils through the year groups and on to their next school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable are cared for suitably, often in partnership with other agencies. The effectiveness of home-school liaison and additional nurture support to overcome significant barriers to learning is monitored closely and school data show its good impact on the performance of these pupils.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher and acting deputy headteacher have quickly set about establishing an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and brought a renewed vigour to the leadership focus on the key priorities for improvement. Expectations have risen. However, a new leadership structure has yet to be established to fully devolve

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responsibilities to other leaders. Staff have a much better understanding of assessment and the data which is used to hold them to account for the performance of pupils. Leaders have a clear picture of where teaching is less effective and where to focus additional interventions and set more challenging targets for pupils' attainment. The governing body does not yet have sufficient knowledge to play their full part in ensuring and measuring the school's success. However, it fulfils its duty to ensure health and safety satisfactorily, so that at the time of the inspection requirements for safeguarding were met. Some improvements to the quality of teaching have been secured. Good practice in teaching, which secures good progress for pupils, is being shared, though not all staff are equally secure in their understanding of what this should look like in classrooms and do not focus enough on the quality of learning taking place.

Leaders demonstrate a satisfactory commitment to promoting equality and tackling discrimination, though data presented do not always make it clear how well pupils from different groups are performing relative to their peers. The school is a harmonious community and promotes links within its immediate locality well. There is more work to be done to enable pupils to explore contrasting communities both nationally and internationally.

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children, settle quickly, behave well and feel secure because staff are kind and supportive in the safe environment provided. Progress varies between key worker groups and Nursery and Reception classes but is satisfactory overall. By the time children enter Year 1, their levels of knowledge and skill are still generally below most children of a similar age but an increasing number are on track to develop acquire the expected levels and all are prepared suitably for the next stage of school.

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Progress is at its best when children work at tasks modelled by adults but which are quickly followed with related play activities, and where adults are on hand to intervene with well directed questions and prompts to encourage children to think and solve problems for themselves. Progress slows when pupils spend too long at activities directed by adults or waiting in large groups to take their turn. There are not enough opportunities for children to initiate their own meaningful activities using rich and varied resources. Play activities are not planned carefully enough with a focus on specific learning needs. Sometimes adults miss opportunities to promote discussion to extend learning because they are too closely focused on one activity. Engaging topic themes are planned which children enjoy. For example, in Nursery, children enjoyed acting out the story of Jack and the Beanstalk, planting beans and painting flowers after examining them through a magnifying glass. Similarly, a lively theme in Reception involved collecting mini-beasts from the park and building a giant caterpillar out of recycled materials.

Information is conscientiously collected about how well children are achieving. This information is collated, analysed and is clearly presented, and is ensuring that where gaps in learning are identified these can be addressed swiftly when pupils enter Year 1. A rigorous system to teach children the sounds that letters make is showing positive results. Nevertheless, children enter with particularly poor speaking skills and this is not addressed early or systematically enough. Leaders are working hard to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to achieve continuity for children across both phases. However, not all adults share and apply a secure understanding of the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage and this slows the progress of improvements.

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 Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers responding to the questionnaire was well above the average for primary schools nationally. The very large majority of parents and carers are happy with their children's experience of school and express positive views on all aspects of the school. A significant minority of parents expressed the view that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour but inspectors looked at behaviour in lessons and around school and found that it was good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Northwood Broom Community 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 130 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 227 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	78	60	46	35	0	0	3	2
The school keeps my child safe	77	59	48	37	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	65	50	60	46	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	69	53	60	46	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	71	55	54	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	58	45	65	50	6	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	52	60	46	2	2	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)	55	42	68	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	46	66	51	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	35	69	53	7	5	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	42	64	49	6	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	61	47	59	45	4	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	73	56	52	40	1	1	1	1

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.



4 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Northwood Broom Community School, Stoke-on-Trent,
ST1 6QU**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. I also wish to thank those of you who took time to talk with us and tell us about your school. These are some of the things we have found out.

- Yours is a satisfactory school. You make satisfactory progress and reach the same standards in English and mathematics as that of other children your age.
- Pupils who sometimes find learning difficult make good progress.
- Your school takes care to keep you safe.
- There are many things planned for you to do which make your learning more interesting and fun.
- You behave well in school, say you feel safe and know how to stay healthy.
- Teaching and the way your school is led and managed are both satisfactory.
- The new senior leadership team is doing a good job in making sure your school improves quickly.

We have asked the school to make lessons better by making sure that:

- your speaking and listening skills are improved
- your work is not too hard or too easy and that you work at a good pace
- teachers notice and correct your mistakes and misunderstandings and that you are clear about what you need to do to improve your work
- you have more chances to work on your own and do things for yourselves
- the way you present your work improves
- everyone who works with you in the Early Years Foundation Stage is able to plan your learning and teach you in the best way for your age
- all of the adults who lead your school play their part in helping it to improve.

You can help your school by continuing to behave well, coming to school every day and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey

Her Majesty's Inspector

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