

# Newton Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110976
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	356842
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kevin Johnson

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>	356
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mark Griffiths
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Kingsway West Newton, Chester Cheshire CH2 2LA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01244 981155
<b>Fax number</b>	0
<b>Email address</b>	admin@newtonprimary.cheshire.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 March 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	356842

---

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 123 4234, 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 123 4234

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 2011

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 17 lessons and saw 14 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, parents and carers, members of the governing body and staff. Also taken into account were 91 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those completed by staff and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including national test data and the school's assessments, policies, minutes of governing body meetings, curriculum documents and those related to safeguarding as well as samples of pupils' work.

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

- Does the school sufficiently promote the progress of all pupils especially those who face the greatest barriers to learning on account of their vulnerability?
- How has teaching improved since the last inspection, what strengths are there and what is their impact on pupils' learning?
- Does monitoring and evaluation of the schools work, by leaders at all levels. focus strongly on improvement?

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school in which the very large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A very small minority have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is pre-school provision on site. This is run separately from the school and is not managed by the governing body, as such, it did not form a part of this inspection. Since the last inspection the number of pupils has increased significantly due the closure of a neighbouring primary school. The school has achieved several awards in recognition of its work. Among the most recent are the Eco Friendly silver award, the 'Bike-It' bronze award and Activemark gold status.

**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

This is a satisfactory school. Leaders have steered the school through an unsettled period which has seen an influx of new pupils, extensive building work and changes in teaching staff. The school is now more settled and leaders and managers are suitably placed to build on the improvements which have taken place since the last inspection.

The school provides a good start for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Levels of development on entering Reception vary from year to year but broadly meet expectations in most areas of learning, though communication, language and literacy skills are frequently lower than expected for their age.

Pupils are polite, well-mannered and behave well. The contribution they make to the life of the school and their awareness of what it means to maintain a healthy lifestyle, are both outstanding. The school provides good care, guidance and support for pupils and its partnerships with local sports clubs are used well to promote the good development of pupils' personal qualities.

Attainment at the end of Year 6 has been broadly average over the past three years, but shows a rising trend. Attainment at the end of Year 2, as indicated by the school's current assessments, is also rising. Nevertheless, the school recognises that attainment needs to be raised further. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils' current work in some classes indicates good progress for those of average and higher abilities but there is also some uneven progress due to inconsistent teaching and learning.

The quality of teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. Although good teaching is increasing, and there is some which is outstanding, leaders agree that the best practice needs to be distributed more widely and monitored more closely, in order to raise attainment and accelerate progress. Improved systems for checking progress are accessible to teachers but good use of assessment information is not fully embedded in day-to-day practice to ensure that all pupils are fully challenged. There are good features to the curriculum, for example, the opportunities for pupils to nurture their particular interests in after-school clubs. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' acquisition and application of basic skills. This is more advanced in literacy and numeracy than in information and communication technology (ICT). Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving due to more effective systems for checking and recording pupils' progress and the wide range of support available to teachers.

The effectiveness of the governing body has strengthened since the last inspection, as have leaders' communications with parents and carers, most of whom hold positive views about the school. Leaders have satisfactorily tackled previous weaknesses, for example by putting in place better assessment systems and increasing the proportion of pupils who

**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

attain higher than the expected level in national tests. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

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

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

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by making sure that work planned for all pupils is suitably challenging and appropriately meets their needs.
- Improve the consistency of good and better teaching by:
  - fully embedding effective practice in the use of assessment, including marking
  - ensuring that there is a clearer focus on pupils' learning and progress by teachers in all lessons and by senior leaders who monitor lesson quality.
- Ensure that curriculum planning identifies how pupils' skills, particularly those in ICT, can be applied and developed across a wider range of subjects.

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

**3**

Most pupils learn effectively when given suitable challenges, and generally try their best. In lessons, their good behaviour and attentiveness are a positive influence on their learning and help them to make expected progress. Some pupils say that writing, mathematics and science are among their favourites, but that they have few opportunities to use computers during the normal course of lessons. Pupils get on noticeably well with one another in the classroom and enjoy working with partners, for example, to discuss problems and clarify their thinking. In some lessons pupils are beginning to be involved in assessing their own progress but in others, learning is hindered because pupils do not always have a clear understanding of the teacher's expectations.

Attainment shows steady improvement at Key Stage 2 most recently in mathematics where it was previously below average. At Key Stage 1, attainment in mathematics in the past has not matched that in reading and writing. The evidence of the inspection, however, suggests that the picture is improving. No group underachieves. The difference between girls' and boys' attainment identified previously is no longer evident. The progress of all groups and individuals is reviewed regularly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from work which is tailored to their individual needs so that they can achieve satisfactorily alongside others.

Pupils are extremely willing to take on responsibilities and are proud of what they can contribute. The school council gives all pupils a say in school matters. Pupils are keen to take on caring roles in the playground and live up to their 'Eco' status by recycling paper and monitoring energy consumption. They help with local community developments such as planning for new playgrounds. The thriving allotment and health promoting activities such as cycling to school are a great boost to pupils' sense of achievement and enthusiasm for school. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that bullying and racist behaviour are rare. Pupils' attendance is above average and with their well-tuned social skills and improving attainment; this contributes to their good preparation for future economic well-being.

**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

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<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>1</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>	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?

Lessons are generally planned thoughtfully to take account of pupils varying abilities. Teachers use electronic whiteboards effectively to help focus pupils' attention, and their learning, but there are few opportunities for pupils to use ICT in lessons. Other learning resources such as those for practical mathematics are used well to aid pupils understanding. Relationships in lessons are good. Teachers are beginning to use assessment strategies more effectively in lessons but there are inconsistencies in the quality, helpfulness and impact of their marking. Teaching assistants provide valuable support in classrooms when working with small groups and individuals. They are sensitive to pupils' needs and provide the additional care that pupils value. Where teaching is most effective there is a lively pace to learning throughout the lesson. Continuous challenge, through open questioning, makes pupils think for themselves. Engaging activity and clear expectation of the progress pupils will make in these lessons results in outstanding learning. This is not shared across the whole school and in some lessons there is insufficient time for pupils to engage in independent learning because teachers talk too much. Occasionally, expectations are not made clear because they do not focus sharply enough on what pupils will be expected to have learned by the end of the lesson in order to meet objectives.

**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

Enrichment activities which promote pupils' health, safety, personal development and enjoyment are good. Learning is enhanced by some proactive links with partner schools. Other aspects of the curriculum are satisfactory. There has been appropriate focus on improving literacy and numeracy but the promotion of ICT has lagged behind.

A strength of provision is the good care, guidance and support for pupils which results in the good development of their personal skills. Attendance is closely checked and positive action taken by the school has resulted in it being above average. Pupils, parents and carers are supported well when children are first introduced to the school and when they move on to the next stages. They are happy with the information they receive about their children's progress. The school has worked successfully to promote good behaviour and attitudes. Positive links with a range of agencies are established and ensure good support for vulnerable pupils. Parents and carers endorse pupils' views that they are cared for well in school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders have harnessed the intervention and support from the local authority well over the past year and increased their focus on raising attainment in English and mathematics. A major initiative has been the monitoring, assessing and recording of pupils' progress. The benefits of this are seen in the increased accountability among staff and their awareness of their roles in driving the school forward.

The leadership and management of teaching and learning are effective. Astute appointments have added quality and strength to the teaching team and resulted in improved teaching. However, the monitoring of the quality of teaching has tended to focus more on what teachers do than what pupils learn. This is a factor in pupils' uneven progress across the school. The governing body is very focused on school improvement. Members have responded well to the challenges of monitoring and evaluating the school's work and have gained a sound understanding of data, strongly holding the school to account for its progress. All forms of discrimination are challenged vigorously. A measure of the school's good promotion of community cohesion is the harmonious ethos of the school and the tolerance and understanding pupils from different backgrounds show for each other. Leaders are ambitious for every pupil and work hard to ensure that gaps in attainment are closing and that pupils have equality of opportunity to achieve. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are robust. The checking of adults' suitability to work with children is a model of good practice. All staff are aware of their

**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

responsibilities and the school is quick to respond to any safeguarding needs that are identified.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress, which leads to most of them reaching the expected levels of learning for their age by the end of Reception and a few being more advanced. Good management ensures that resources are used imaginatively to set up exciting choices of activity both indoors and in the outside area. A good example, which kept children engrossed was their construction of stands and plastic guttering so they could roll balls down a series of ramps into a dish. Well-planned opportunities to develop early literacy and numeracy skills boost children's confidence and encourage them to work independently. For example, a child decided to make a register and set about confidently writing a list of names. Children's personal, social and emotional development progresses particularly well because of the good provision for their well-being. Teachers and assistants are very watchful to ensure children's physical and pastoral needs are met. This results in trusting relationships and feelings of security, which foster independence and curiosity. All staff share the responsibility of observing and recording children's progress and effectively planning next steps in their learning. Very good relationships with parents and carers ensure that they are well informed and contribute to the progress their children make.



**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

*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

A small minority of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Most were entirely positive. A few raised concerns largely relating to the management of pupils' behaviour and communications with the school. Inspectors looked into these issues. They scrutinised policies, talked to groups of parents, carers and pupils and observed pupils' behaviour around the school. They found that the school has focused well on addressing this aspect and that pupils' behaviour has improved as a result. In addition, there is evidence that a good range of opportunities is available to parents and carers who wish to gain more information about the school and their children's progress. A few parents and carers also commented positively about how happy they are with their children' progress and how settled and happy they are in school.

## 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 inspection team received 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 356 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	53	41	44	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	51	40	43	3	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	22	60	64	10	11	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	27	57	61	10	11	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	31	33	56	60	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	33	52	55	6	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	32	61	65	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)	22	23	57	61	5	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	28	56	60	8	9	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	17	57	61	11	12	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	19	56	60	9	10	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	29	31	44	47	7	7	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	38	50	53	5	5	2	2

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.**



10 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Newton Primary School, Chester, CH2 2LA**

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave my colleagues and me when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you about your school, and found your manners and politeness delightful. You are well behaved and contribute significantly to the life of your school in so many ways. You certainly have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. Importantly, your attendance is above average, so do keep that up.

Newton is a satisfactory school because you make satisfactory progress and the standards you achieve in English and mathematics are average. Your teachers work hard to make lessons fun but you do not always make the best progress you could in some lessons. The grown-ups in school take good care of you and that helps you to enjoy school and take good care of one another.

We know you are proud of your school and so are your parents, carers, teachers and school governors. Everyone would like to it become even better. To help that to happen we have asked your school leaders to do a few things. First, we have asked them to help you reach higher standards in English and mathematics by making sure that the work you are given really challenges you. Next, we have asked that more of your lessons can be as good as the very best ones and that your learning and progress is checked regularly and thoroughly every day in each lesson. Finally, we have asked that when teachers plan what you will learn, they will also plan how you can use all of your skills, especially your ICT skills, in as many subjects as possible.

Keep up your good behaviour and attendance and continue to enjoy school as much as you do at present.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Johnson

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 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**