

Newberries Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117303
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	379390
Inspection dates	4–5 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Tusha Chakraborti

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gaenor Morris
Headteacher	Ness Peters
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons taught by seven different teachers in the seven classes. Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, pupils and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's improvement plans, policy documents, pupils' work, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, minutes of the governing body's meetings and safeguarding documentation. They also scrutinised responses to the inspection questionnaires from 97 parents and carers, 113 pupils and 13 staff.

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

- What are the current rates of attainment and progress made by all groups of pupils, especially in Key Stage 1?
- How effectively do staff use assessment information to track pupils' progress and to set challenging targets?
- How rigorous and effective is the school's self-evaluation in identifying the quality of leadership and management at all levels and the further steps for improvement?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. The large majority of pupils are White British. The proportions of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are below average. The proportion of those who speak English as an additional language is well below average. There are no pupils at the early stages of learning English. The school does not have its own nursery. Children enter the school from a wide range of nursery providers and are taught in the Reception class. The school holds Healthy School 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It provides a harmonious and welcoming learning environment where pupils enjoy learning and feel very safe and secure. Pupils develop good personal and social skills and grow up as confident learners in response to the excellent systems for care, guidance and support. The leaders, teachers and support staff work effectively in close liaison with outside agencies to support all pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Parents and carers recognise the school's hard work in its commitment to maintaining a good quality of education and this is reflected in their comments. For example, one parent stated, 'I am extremely happy with the holistic approach the school takes to my children's development which is clearly reflected in my children's social, emotional and academic progress.' Pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes to learning and all aspects of school life are positive. This is reflected in their consistently high rate of attendance and in the responsible manner they display in their learning and their support for the smooth running of the school. They develop excellent literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. As a result, they are very well prepared for their future education.

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Their attainment is high and has been sustained at that level over the past five years. Pupils across the school make good progress in all areas of the curriculum. Children enter the Reception class with skills and experiences that are above those expected for their age. They make good progress and, by the time they reach Year 1, most achieve standards that are above average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress as a result of the consistent and well-targeted support they receive from all staff.

Staff have good relationships with pupils and have high expectations of their behaviour and work. They make good use of interactive whiteboards and other resources and engage pupils successfully in paired and whole-class discussions that support their learning well. In the best lessons, teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and how this will be achieved, matching work well to individual needs. Teachers assess pupils' progress during lessons well through skilful questioning. Nonetheless, assessment information is not always used effectively enough to plan activities to meet the varying needs of all pupils. As a result, in a minority of lessons, pupils do not achieve as well as they can. A revised assessment system for tracking pupils' learning is beginning to address this issue, but has yet to be fully embedded. Marking is encouraging but does not consistently provide enough guidance to pupils about how to improve.

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The school has a good capacity for sustained improvement, as is illustrated by its commitment to sustaining the high standards of attainment that pupils achieve. The expertise, ambition and focus provided by the leadership team have ensured that the staff, governors, parents and carers share a common vision for the good of the pupils. Leaders have recently strengthened the assessment procedures to track pupils' progress more effectively and to promote a more rigorous self- and peer-assessment system. This is being implemented successfully. Senior leaders' self-evaluation is analytical and accurate, and this successfully informs the school's priorities for improvement planning. The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's performance and provides good support and sufficient challenge to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching by:
 - using the assessment data more effectively to plan work that is consistently matched to the abilities of all groups of pupils to move their learning forward
 - ensuring that marking always supports pupils in understanding how they can improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school. This is clearly reflected in their rate of attendance which is high. Pupils start school with attainment that is above average and leave at the end of Year 6 with attainment that is high. Assessment data and observations of lessons and pupils' work show that pupils learn, develop understanding and acquire new skills at a good rate. They listen carefully to their teachers and concentrate on the tasks they are set. They enjoy 'talk-partner' activities where they enthusiastically discuss their ideas in pairs before embarking on a continuous piece of writing on different topics and for different purposes. Pupils enjoy reading a variety of books, including fiction and non-fiction. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils were seen to be successfully engaged in a critical review of the story plots and the characters of the story they read. They review their own writing styles and learn to edit and improve their work, using correct punctuation and imaginative language. Pupils thoroughly enjoy challenges in mathematics lessons. They learn about probability and explore its relationship with fractions and decimals. They enjoy investigative work and apply their numeracy skills well to solve practical problems. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make equally good progress as others as a result of the good support that they receive.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They are confident that any concerns they raise will be dealt with effectively and

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immediately. They have a good understanding of how to keep healthy, and most take part in a range of sporting activities organized by the school and through its sports partnership, such as inter-school football competitions. They behave well and learn to respect others’ values and beliefs. Their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their consideration and support for others. Pupils enjoy taking on roles of responsibility within the class, through their ‘School Circle’ work and when arranging many activities to support school and local events. They raise funds for national and international charities and recognise the need to do so. High attainment in English and mathematics and good progress in key skills such as literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology prepare pupils extremely well for future life.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	1
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The good-quality teaching successfully promotes learning and enjoyment for pupils. The purpose of lessons is shared effectively with the class so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Interactive whiteboards are used well to illustrate key teaching and learning points. There are good opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning and work in groups and to investigate and solve problems. In most lessons, teachers make effective use of questions which engages pupils well in their learning. The teaching assistants support learning skilfully, especially that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In some lessons, teachers spend too long talking to the class so that pupils do not have enough time to engage effectively in their learning. Pupils are not set individual targets regularly. However, the recently

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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revised assessment system is beginning to address this issue.

The curriculum is well organised and contributes effectively to pupils’ personal development and well-being. The school has introduced a broader and more balanced programme to ensure stronger cross-curricular links. Pupils are given opportunity to take part in a range of inter-school sports activities which enrich their enjoyment of learning. A range of after-school clubs as well as special events, such as theatre, science and music workshops and visits to places of interest, enhance pupils’ learning experiences well.

The school provides a very happy and welcoming learning environment for all its pupils. The learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are assessed regularly and very efficiently. Intervention programmes are targeted very skilfully to provide excellent support for vulnerable groups. As a result, these pupils achieve as well as others. The school works efficiently with parents and carers and outside agencies to support the learning and the well-being of pupils. The arrangements for transferring children from nurseries to the Reception class, between the key stages within the school, as well as between Year 6 and the secondary schools, are excellent

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team, ably supported by other leaders and the governing body, is successfully driving improvement. Staff share a common ambition to build on what they have achieved so far. Leaders have a rigorous system in place for monitoring teaching by which they can develop the expertise of teachers. A revised assessment system is being used to ensure that the progress of individual pupils is more closely tracked so that intervention strategies can be applied more effectively. The governing body is effective and well organized in monitoring the work of the school. It challenges weaknesses and is actively involved in writing and reviewing the school’s improvement plans. Governors are frequent visitors to school and, paired with the subject leaders, hold specific responsibilities for checking the quality of provision in different areas of the curriculum.

The school is committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all its pupils. Statutory policies for equal opportunities are monitored and evaluated effectively. The school communicates regularly with parents and carers

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and they are involved well in their children’s learning, for example through the school website and Parents and Teachers Association. Safeguarding procedures illustrate good practice. Clear policies and strategies, ensuring that pupils are safe, are monitored regularly. Community cohesion operates well at the school and local level. Global links are developing well through pupils raising funds for local, national and international charities. These give pupils an opportunity to develop greater understanding of cultural diversity. The school is successful in liaising with outside agencies and local schools, including the contributory nurseries and secondary schools. It manages its budget efficiently and the outstanding outcomes demonstrate that the school achieves excellent value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start to their education in the Reception class as a result of a well-organised curriculum and good teaching. A welcoming and stimulating environment and a good range of resources support their learning and development well. Children greatly enjoy their learning and make good progress. By the end of Reception, a high proportion of children reach standards that are above the national average.

A wide range of practical activities are planned effectively to ensure that children learn through a balanced programme of child-initiated and adult-led activities and develop independence. Regular teaching of the sounds that letters make supports children well in rapidly developing their literacy skills. They are confident learners and develop good communication and language skills through whole-class and group discussions. For example, when shown the picture of a desert and asked what this meant, a child confidently replied, ‘Desert is a place where camels live.’ Children

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develop good coordination and personal skills as they explore the well-organised indoor and outdoor activities. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well integrated and benefit from good support from skilled teaching assistants.

The school works in close contact with families through an effective induction system and visits to the nurseries prior to children’s arrival to the school. As a result, children settle quickly into their daily routines and form very good relationships with adults and each other. Staff ensure that the children’s health, safety and well-being are always of utmost importance. Assessment of children’s progress is rigorous and the information gained is used very effectively to inform planning. Leadership is effective in providing children with an enjoyable, safe and secure learning environment.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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 of the parents and carers responding to the questionnaire report that their children enjoy school and that they are very pleased with their children’s experience in this school. They appreciate that the school keeps their children safe and ensures that pupils develop good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle. A very small minority of parents and carers are concerned that they are not well informed about their children’s progress. The inspectors looked into these concerns and found that the school has a good system in place to inform parents and carers of their children’s progress. Nevertheless, the school has decided to review this area of its work to investigate improving procedures further.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newberries 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 97 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 206 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	70	26	27	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	71	73	23	24	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	32	33	44	45	12	12	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	27	55	57	6	6	4	4
The teaching is good at this school	42	43	47	48	2	2	2	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	38	39	47	48	8	8	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	53	44	45	1	1	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)	42	43	39	40	5	5	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	37	38	47	48	4	4	3	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	51	53	40	41	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	35	45	46	8	8	4	4
The school is led and managed effectively	56	58	29	30	3	3	4	4
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	57	59	31	32	2	2	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



6 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newberries Primary School, Radlett, WD7 7EL

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly and helpful. We were pleased to see how much you enjoy school. This is clearly reflected in your high rate of attendance. We agree with you that your teachers take excellent care of you. You behave well and are always keen to help each other. You carry out your duties, including the special jobs as play group leaders and 'School Circle' representatives, willingly and responsibly. Thank you also for the questionnaires that you filled in for the inspection and for sharing your views with us.

Your school is providing you with a good education. As a result, you make good progress and most of you reach high standards in English and mathematics by the time you leave Year 6. To improve your school further, we have asked the headteacher and staff to:

- make sure that the work provided for you always matches your individual learning needs so that all of you learn even more quickly
- make sure that teachers help you to understand how you can improve your work.

I am sure that you and your teachers will work hard to make these improvements. You can help the school to get even better by continuing to work hard and attending regularly, so that your school remains a happy place.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Tusha Chakraborti
Lead inspector

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