

# New Road School and Nursery Unit

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118320
<b>Local Authority</b>	Medway
<b>Inspection number</b>	379593
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lindsey Diamond

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	340
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Snowdon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jan Perry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17–18 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Bryant Street Chatham ME4 5QN
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<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@newroad.medway.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed, taught by 10 teachers. Assembly, playtimes and lunchtimes were also observed. Meetings were held with two members of the governing body, as well as senior and middle managers. A telephone discussion took place with a local authority representative. The team observed the school's work, and looked at the school's data on attainment and progress for all year groups. The school development plan, self-evaluation documentation and lesson plans were also scrutinised. The inspection team analysed 191 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as talking informally to groups of parents and carers. Additionally, questionnaires returned by 150 pupils and 33 staff were analysed. The school's safeguarding procedures were investigated and evaluated.

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

- How well all children, especially those in Key Stage 1, learn and make progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- How well the curriculum allows pupils to make choices and develop their investigative skills.
- The use of assessment, tracking and target setting as tools to support learning to ensure all learners' needs are met well.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers, at all levels, in analysing need and driving improvements across the school.

## Information about the school

New Road is a larger than average sized primary school with a maintained nursery unit. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than found nationally, although the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs, which includes those with learning, behavioural and emotional needs, is in line with national figures. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Pupils are from a wide range of ethnic and religious backgrounds. Thirty-one per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. This is significantly higher than the national average.

After a period of significant turbulence, followed by the promotion of the deputy headteacher, the school has reorganised the leadership structure and has been successful in appointing a high number of new staff, including two assistant headteachers. These new staff have been in post since September 2011.

**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?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**4**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but this progress slows appreciably in Years 1 and 2 so that learning and progress are inadequate at Key Stage 1. Progress has been variable over time in Years 3 and 4, but accelerates significantly in Years 5 and 6 due to good teaching and appropriate interventions. Consequently, attainment by the time pupils leave Year 6 is broadly average. However, because there are extended periods of pupils' schooling where learning is too slow, achievement is inadequate overall. The school has not ensured that there is a high enough pace of work and level of challenge, particularly for pupils in Key Stage 1. Hence, teaching and assessment are inadequate, and as a result, the standard of education is judged inadequate.

There has not been enough improvement in pupils' achievement since the last inspection. Senior staff and subject leaders have not focused with sufficient rigour on monitoring and evaluating how well individual pupils and groups are making progress or on the quality of their learning. School leaders have recently embarked on new strategies to do this but the impact thus far is limited. Over time, they have not identified underperformance by pupils and so have missed opportunities to provide challenge and support to bring these pupils back on track.

Senior leaders and the governing body are not working together effectively as a partnership. Governors have not always been provided with timely information and are insufficiently analytical of the school's performance. Leaders at all levels are not monitoring teaching rigorously enough and, as a result, senior leaders are unable to identify what works well and what needs improvement in order to accelerate learning. The school's self-evaluation is weak and has not involved all stakeholders. In some instances it is too generous, for example in its view of the school's capacity to improve and how well equal opportunities are promoted. Given the track record of inadequate learning and progress at Key Stage 1, and the lack of improvement, the school's capacity to improve is inadequate.

Despite these significant shortcomings, there is much that the school does well. The

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children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' personal development is good. There is a strong sense of community within the school and the school safeguards its learners well. Parents and carers generally have a positive view of the school. Some praise the school for what it has done for their children, although others express a mixture of concerns. Most pupils have positive views and state that they enjoy school, although a few express concerns about behaviour. Behaviour was seen to be good during the inspection.

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

- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
  - ensuring that senior leaders provide relevant and timely information to the governing body so that governors are better prepared to challenge and interrogate performance, and so make informed decisions
  - making sure that middle managers are proactive and rigorous in their roles, have a clear focus on pupils' progress and are held more to account by senior leaders
  - ensuring that the senior team maintains an overview of all that happens in the school and a much sharper insight into pupils' learning and progress.
- Enhance the rate of pupils' progress, especially in Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - improving the systems for tracking pupils' learning so that underachieving individuals and groups are identified quickly
  - intervening promptly to support pupils who are falling behind in order to raise attainment.
- Raise the quality of teaching to 75% good or better by July 2012 by:
  - providing a pace of teaching that is rapid enough to secure a good pace of learning for pupils in each class
  - making sure that teachers use assessment information effectively to pitch work at the right level to challenge all pupils in their class
  - improving the consistency of good marking and use of targets in order to ensure that all learners know how they can improve.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****4**

Children start school with standards that are below those expected for their age. There has been a long record of inadequate learning and progress. This has resulted in low attainment at Key Stage 1 over the last five years compared with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Where the school has focused its efforts, such as in mathematics, some improvement can be seen, although attainment remains low. This underachievement applies to all groups of pupils. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers.

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Most pupils feel safe in school. Behaviour in class and when at play is good. In lessons, pupils enjoy contributing their ideas when they are given the opportunity. They did so to good effect in a Year 2 literacy lesson, where learning progressed well because the teacher quickly developed their ideas into a structure that facilitated learning. Pupils also demonstrate good social skills when they are allowed to discuss ideas. However, despite a few exceptions, the pace of learning is inadequate overall. It is slow when teachers do not involve pupils actively enough in the lesson, or when they allow them too much time to do work that is comparatively undemanding.

Pupils understand healthy lifestyles and their engagement in physical activity is good. They know which foods are healthy. Pupils raise funds for a range of charities, and their involvement in, and contribution to, the local community is very positive. Their spiritual and moral development is promoted well through good quality assemblies. Pupils are happy to be members of the school council, and talk proudly of their duties, such as ensuring no one is lonely at playtimes. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future education because, while not always making the progress they should, they have gained adequate basic skills by the time they leave, mainly due to the acceleration of learning in Years 5 and 6. Additionally, their personal qualities are well developed.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
<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>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>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

The quality of teaching is inadequate overall. There is too little good teaching, especially at Key Stage 1. Systems for assessing pupils’ progress are weak and

<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

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consequently expectations are too low. As a result, too often, pupils are given insufficiently challenging work, and the pace of learning is inadequate. In the best lessons, teachers prepare their material well and sustain a good pace. During the inspection some good lessons, in both key stages as well as the Early Years Foundation Stage, were observed. For instance, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson on investigation, the teacher used questions effectively to move pupils’ learning on quickly. Marking is too variable in the guidance that it gives to pupils. The best practice was seen where the teachers made suggestions that helped the pupils understand how to improve. Target setting is used but pupils are unsure about the role that it plays in helping them work towards their next steps in learning.

The curriculum is satisfactory and provides an appropriate range of learning opportunities for pupils: visits and visitors add extra interest. The school makes satisfactory links across the curriculum and information and communication technology is used well, both in the classroom and the computer suite. The provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. The school has worked hard to establish connections with other communities, and has created good links with a school in China which are built into the curriculum. The breakfast club provides further opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills and gives them a nourishing start to the day.

New arrivals are helped to settle quickly. Learning mentors are effective in dealing with pupils’ emotional difficulties and enabling them to settle to work. The school’s attendance officer contacts families at an early stage if there are specific concerns about attendance. Most pupils say they feel cared for and their parents and carers agree that this care is a strength of the school. Staff know pupils well and are aware of groups whose circumstances may lead to them becoming vulnerable. The school therefore works well with families and outside agencies to support these learners.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<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>3</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Until very recently, the school has not given enough attention to improving pupils’ achievement through a thorough analysis of their learning. Use of tracking data has not been effective enough in identifying strengths and weaknesses in pupils’ progress. Consequently, underachievement has not been tackled, especially at Key Stage 1. Subject leaders are not proactive enough in ensuring progress in their areas, and senior leaders have not held them sufficiently to account. There has not been a culture of driving the school forward based on detailed evaluation of

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strengths and weaknesses. The school development plan identifies areas for improvement but these are not linked robustly enough to pupils’ outcomes and current weaknesses. For example, the school recognises that learning and progress is slow in Years 1 and 2 but addressing this is not prioritised in the plan. As a result, the school has not improved in this key area. Although two assistant headteachers have now been appointed to tackle these issues and improve capacity, it is too early to measure the impact of their roles.

Governance is inadequate. The governing body is keen to support and challenge the school but its members do not get sufficient information at the right time to ask pertinent questions and the school does not always present information clearly. The school does not involve the governing body sufficiently in strategic planning.

Safeguarding procedures are good and checks on staff and visitors are robust. Satisfactory links with support agencies are especially effective in supporting groups, whose circumstances make them vulnerable, keeping them safe and enabling them to take advantage of what the curriculum offers. The school has established positive links with external partners in order to improve the quality of learning for all, but it is too early to measure the impact of this work. The promotion of community cohesion is a strength of the school. Discussions with pupils show a good awareness of the different communities to which they belong, both locally and much further afield. Equality of opportunity is inadequate because the school has failed to analyse its data sufficiently well and, as a result, key groups of learners have not been offered an adequate standard of education. Links with parents and carers are good and they are actively encouraged to take part in school life.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<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>4</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>4</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>4</b>



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are below those expected for their age, especially in their use of communication, language and literacy and in their personal development. The children make good progress during their time in the Early Years Unit, with especially accelerated progress in Reception Year when they are given many opportunities to build on their previously acquired skills. Opportunities for learning are based around themes and activities which children are helped to explore in a safe and secure environment. Both indoor and outdoor areas are used well to support all areas of learning; for example, when outside, children were given the opportunity to play counting games including ‘What’s the time Mr Wolf?’ to develop their understanding of number. The school has appropriate plans to develop the outside area further in order to offer a wider range of learning opportunities.

Adults are well briefed and, as a result, know the children well and are responsive to individual needs and opportunities to extend learning. The school’s knowledge of its children is further enhanced by effective home-school links. Language is modelled well by adults: this is particularly beneficial for those with speech and language difficulties as well as those who speak English as an additional language. Children in this unit benefit from the rigorous assessment and careful tracking of their learning. This informs teachers’ planning to support the next steps in learning. The unit is very well led by the Early Years coordinator. She ensures that strengths and areas for development are accurately identified and is proactive in driving improvement. Safeguarding arrangements are robust.

*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

Just under 60% of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is a higher than average response rate for primary schools. The responses are generally supportive of the school. Most concerns refer to individual rather than generic problems. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about the their children’s learning and progress, the way in which the school deals with unacceptable behaviour, while others felt that their suggestions are not taken into account. Evidence during this inspection showed that pupils do not make adequate progress. During the inspection, behaviour and the strategies for managing it were good. The inspectors also found a good range of evidence to show that the school is interested in, and acts on, the views of parents and carers.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at New Road School and Nursery Unit 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 received inspection team received 191 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 340 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	109	57	76	40	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	107	56	81	42	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	92	48	83	43	9	5	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	89	47	85	45	10	5	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	94	49	89	47	5	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	84	44	88	46	16	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	85	45	94	49	6	3	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)	66	35	105	55	9	5	2	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	71	37	109	57	5	3	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	69	36	98	51	15	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	49	26	116	61	13	7	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	77	40	101	53	5	3	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	96	50	87	46	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	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](http://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"> <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.**



16 September 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of New Road School and Nursery Unit, Chatham ME4 5QN**

Thank you for your help when we visited your school, for talking to us about your work and giving your views. We found this very useful. You told us that you like meeting your friends at school and that you have fun. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing you at work in lessons. We were very impressed by your behaviour in lessons and around the school, and by the way you work together to help your local community. We also enjoyed seeing the interest that you show in communities further afield, and especially hearing about your links with China.

Despite these good things, a number of you, especially in Years 1 and 2, do not make as much progress as you should or reach high enough standards. We decided that the school needs 'special measures' so that it gets extra help to ensure that you can make good progress and reach higher standards. There are three areas that we have asked the headteacher and others to work on are:

- to help all of you to make better progress and reach higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics, especially in Years 1 and 2
- to make sure that the school's leaders and managers keep a watchful eye on your progress and all other aspects of the school's work
- to improve the quality of teaching so that your learning gets better.

You can all help by telling the teachers if your work is too easy or too hard.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Lindsey Diamond  
Lead inspector

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