

# Newton Hill Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108164
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	377706
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	John Rutherford HMI

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>	173
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joanne Currell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachel Hall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	Leeds Road Newton Hill Wakefield WF1 2HR
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

John Rutherford  
Lyn Field

Her Majesty's Inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors spent nine hours observing 15 lessons and seven learning support sessions taught by nine teachers, a higher level teaching assistant and three teaching assistants. They held meetings with senior and middle leaders, the parent support adviser, groups of pupils, the Chair and a member of the governing body. Inspectors looked at the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They listened to pupils reading and discussed their books with them. They also looked at a range of documents including those relating to pupils' progress, school self-evaluation, improvement planning and safeguarding. Inspectors considered questionnaires returned from pupils, staff and 80 parents and carers.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils from minority-ethnic backgrounds is above average as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average and this includes a small number with a statement of special educational needs for profound and multiple learning disabilities. The headteacher was appointed in 2011 and staff absence required the school to make significant changes to the senior leadership structure just before the inspection. The school has met the government's current floor standard, which sets out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- The school provides a good quality of education. It has the full support of the very large majority of parents and carers who returned an inspection questionnaire, many of whom commented on the considerable improvement since the previous inspection. The inspection findings agree with this view. Under new and very effective leadership, the staff have worked very hard and have improved teaching and pupils' achievement from satisfactory to good during the last year.
- Pupils' progress is outstanding in the Early Years Foundation Stage and it is good in English and mathematics when they are in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils who have a disability and/or special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make progress at the same good rate as other pupils. Most pupils rapidly develop their reading skills; however, their handwriting skills are not nearly so strong.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding in the Early Years Foundation Stage and good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Lessons keep all pupils enthusiastically involved in activities that are well matched to their learning needs. In a small minority of lessons these activities do not always extend pupils' learning because they are not sufficiently matched to their needs and teachers' questioning does not deepen their understanding.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is above average. They are very keen to learn and their behaviour is good. They feel safe in school and have no significant concerns about bullying.
- The good guidance and professional development provided by the headteacher helps all staff to provide a consistently high quality of teaching and additional support for pupils. This is at the root of the school's recent improvement. The headteacher also enables teachers at all levels to develop their leadership skills, with the result that the school has the capacity to manage the recent changes in senior leadership without significant disruption to teaching and learning.

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

- Raise pupils' achievement from good to outstanding by:
  - improving pupils' handwriting skills
  - ensuring there is greater consistency in providing tasks that extend pupils' learning by combining tasks with questions that are probing enough to help pupils to deepen their understanding
  - planning every English lesson to be as good as the best in including tasks at the right level of challenge for all groups of pupils.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils start school with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. The most recent published data, lesson observations and school records show that they make good progress and by the end of Year 6 attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average. In recent years, children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved to outstanding because staff have high expectations and plan challenging learning activities, especially when teaching letters and their sounds.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs throughout the school achieve well because they receive carefully planned support which is frequently reviewed and updated. Those with profound and multiple learning difficulties make good progress because very effective support enables them to be fully included in lessons and to receive the same work as other pupils at an appropriate level of challenge. Pupils who have recently arrived in this country speaking little or no English are soon able to achieve well in mainstream lessons. This is because they receive very effective additional teaching that helps them to rapidly develop their skills in using and understanding the English language.

School leaders maintain detailed information on the progress of pupils at all ability levels. If this reveals any pupil beginning to fall behind, teachers intervene quickly with programmes of work that help them to catch up without delay. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in learning about letters and their sounds and by the end of Year 2, the large majority can read and understand books that are suitable for their age range or higher. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to write for different purposes, but the progress of many is slowed by weak handwriting skills. Pupils increase their achievement in literacy and numeracy through well planned opportunities to apply their skills in a range of subjects, for example, when they use musical instruments as an aid to learning letters and their sounds and when they collect and analyse data on the effects of exercise in physical education lessons. In the inspection questionnaire, almost all parents and carers agree with the inspection evidence that pupils' progress is good and pupils express a similar opinion in their responses.

## Quality of teaching

Pupils make good progress because there is consistently good teaching and some that is outstanding. All pupils and almost all parents and carers who returned an inspection questionnaire have the same view as inspectors that teaching is good. Lessons have a sharp focus and pupils do not have to take on too many new ideas at once. New skills are taught in a context that motivates pupils to learn, often by linking them to interesting work in other subjects, for example, mathematical calculation methods were learned as part of research on religion in a foreign country. Pupils are constantly kept busy with challenging problems to solve or new ideas to discuss. Discussion is used well to prepare pupils for their writing tasks, for example, they quickly showed good skills in writing a balanced argument because they had developed their ideas in a very well organised debate on school uniform. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding because adults skilfully observe and record each child's achievements as a basis for planning suitably challenging and interesting learning activities. This helps children to make exceptional progress, especially in their language, mathematics and personal and social skills.

Most of the time, teachers use assessment information to plan lessons that enable all groups of pupils to accelerate their progress. However, in a small number of English lessons, teachers' planning shows more focus on what each group of pupils will produce than on how tasks will be adapted to provide them with the right level of challenge. Therefore, some groups do not always achieve as much as they can. Teachers skilfully assess pupils' progress while they are working and change the rest of the lesson when they see that some groups need more support or challenge. Occasionally, when teachers are questioning pupils, their questions are not probing enough or too little time is given for pupils to develop a full response, therefore pupils are not prompted to extend their understanding. The well planned support provided by teaching assistants helps pupils to accelerate their progress, especially those who need extra help with basic literacy and numeracy skills and those who speak English as an additional language.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour was good during the inspection and, according to the very large majority of questionnaire responses from parents and carers, teachers and pupils, it is generally good. A small minority of pupils find it difficult to settle to their work but, overall, pupils respond well to the school's clear and consistent behaviour policy. This policy starts in the Early Years Foundation Stage with very well established routines for the children when they are changing activities or managing their equipment. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and they get on with their work when adults are teaching groups other than their own. This makes a significant contribution to their learning progress.

Almost all pupils, parents and carers who completed an inspection questionnaire agree that school is a safe place. In discussions and assemblies, pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of cyber-bullying and racist bullying. They say that instances of these or any other form of bullying are extremely rare and school records confirm this and they are dealt with swiftly and effectively if they occur.

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## Leadership and management

The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body work together very well in providing clear direction to move the school above the satisfactory level of effectiveness at which it has been operating for many years. As a result of strong but supportive leadership, staff morale is high and they are fully committed to improving the school. All staff who completed an inspection questionnaire agree that the school is well led and managed and that the correct approaches are being used for all aspects of its work. While the work of the leadership team and staff is still at an early stage, they have already improved pupils' achievement from satisfactory to good and this demonstrates their strong capacity to raise attainment in the future.

Senior and middle leaders are very thorough in their monitoring of the school's work, which enables them to make detailed and accurate judgements of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and pupils' progress. Their judgements inform an improvement plan which is sharply focused on the most important areas for improving pupils' achievement and this has been a key driver for the improvement so far. The governing body makes a strong contribution to improvement planning, for example, by allocating a budget for it and reviewing school leaders' evaluation of the extent to which it yields value for money through better pupil outcomes. The governing body and school leaders also work effectively together to ensure safeguarding requirements are met.

School leaders are currently re-organising the curriculum to make it more relevant to pupils' learning needs and interests. Pupils already talk with enthusiasm about some of their new cross-curricular topics, for example, in using computers to research the history of pirates and, as part of their art and English work, to present their information in a very attractive way. The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example when they learn about people who have fought against the injustices of racism. A very well managed extra-curricular programme provides a wide range of art, craft, leisure, sporting and academic activities that enable over two-thirds of the pupils to extend their personal interests and skills.

A significant number of parents and carers noted that this is an inclusive school which gives pupils with a wide range of learning needs an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of school life and to achieve well. The inspection findings support this view. The school's 'golden rules' are based on fairness and equality of opportunity for all. School leaders and staff put this into practice by ensuring that no group or individual has unnecessary barriers to their learning. Pupils play their part too, for example, by encouraging their classmates with profound and multiple learning difficulties to contribute to their group activities.

The school has worked hard to forge a better partnership with parents and carers since this was identified as an area for improvement in the previous inspection. A 'parents' forum' has contributed significantly to the growing partnership by bringing about improvements in the way parents and carers are kept informed through the school website and through written reports. In their questionnaire responses, most parents and carers say that the school keeps them well informed and helps them to support their children's learning.

## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



28 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Newton Hill Community School, Wakefield, WF1 2HR**

Thank you very much indeed for your help when I came with my colleague to inspect your school. We found our discussion with you very useful in helping us to make the judgement that your school provides you with a good quality of education. Thank you also for filling in our questionnaires which showed that you are all happy with the quality of teaching and that you enjoy school.

Your teachers plan very interesting lessons for you which help you to make good progress. You are becoming particularly skilful in using computers to help you learn. You are also very good at discussing new ideas in groups, which is helping you to understand your work more clearly. When you are faced with really complicated problems you persevere until you get the better of them. Your behaviour in lessons and during break times is good and this makes your school a very pleasant place to visit. You all get on well with each other and you feel very safe from all forms of bullying. We were especially pleased to see that you have a good understanding of how to use computers safely.

Even though your school is good, the headteacher and staff are keen to keep on improving your education, so we have agreed with them some areas to work on to:

- help you improve your handwriting
- make sure that work is at the right level for all pupils in English lessons
- ensure that questions and tasks always help you to increase your learning.

This means that some of you will have even more challenges in your work but I am confident that you will rise to them.

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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