

New Whittington Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112668
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378534
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2012
Lead inspector	Susan Lewis

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	306
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Johnson
Headteacher	Steven Horsley
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Lewis	Additional Inspector
Lenford White	Additional Inspector
Sue Rath	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 19 lessons led by 14 different teachers and were accompanied for part of the inspection by a sign language interpreter. They heard pupils read and talked with them about their work. Inspectors held meetings with senior staff, teaching assistants, the head of the enhanced resourced facility for pupils who are deaf and members of the governing body, including parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including the data the school holds about pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation and development planning and its safeguarding documents and practices. Inspectors scrutinised 81 parental questionnaires and those returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school which is located on two sites approximately half a mile apart. The large majority of pupils are of White British origin, with a small proportion from a wide range of mixed heritage or other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average, as is that of those who are disabled or with special educational needs. There are nine pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school has specialist resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This provides currently for five pupils who are deaf.

Since its previous inspection, there has been considerable change in the leadership team and in staffing. The current headteacher took up post in April 2011.

The school meets the current floor standard, whereby the government sets 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

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory but improving school. The school is not yet good because teaching, though rapidly improving, is not yet consistently good and progress in mathematics has not accelerated as fast as in English. Pupils' behaviour is not yet consistently good. Middle managers have only just begun to monitor standards and progress in their subjects. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory, though improving for all groups whatever their starting points, backgrounds or needs, because of the rigorous ways in which the leadership monitors pupil progress and the quality of teaching. Achievement is consistently good in reading. In mathematics, progress is only satisfactory because some teachers are not confident about planning the next steps for the different groups and opportunities to apply mathematical skills are not capitalised on in different subjects. Pupils who are deaf also make satisfactory and sometimes better progress. They are generally included well in lessons and are pleased that staff use the new radio aid systems effectively.
- Behaviour is satisfactory. It is consistently good in lessons but more variable at playtimes, when incidents can occur. Pupils themselves say they feel very safe in school.
- Teaching is satisfactory, but rapidly improving. New staff have been supported well by mentors and leaders. Occasionally, pupils are not challenged to think enough in all parts of lessons and not all teachers ensure activities and lesson pace are sufficiently well matched to pupil's needs.
- The headteacher and the governing body have managed staff changes and addressed previous weaknesses in school performance well. They and other senior leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development well and have clear plans to bring about further significant improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By May 2013, improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good at each key stage by ensuring that:
 - the pace, challenge and activities in all parts of lessons meet the needs of all learners
 - teachers' questioning probes and checks on pupils' learning and the information gained leads to teachers adapting work to meet all pupils' needs
 - all available support, for example from teaching assistants, is used effectively in all parts of lessons.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics by:
 - improving teachers' skills in using the information that they have about pupils' mathematical skills to plan and deliver their numeracy lessons
 - ensuring pupils have more opportunities for using and applying their mathematical skills in the different subjects of the curriculum.
- Improve pupils' behaviour so that it is consistently good by making provision for more clubs and more activities at playtimes and lunchtimes and by ensuring that behaviour and sanctions policy is consistently applied by all staff.
- Develop further the role of middle managers in monitoring standards and teaching in their subjects

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with skills broadly in line with those typical for their age, but their attainment in areas such as language and personal and social development varies widely. These children make best progress in communication, language and literacy and in their personal development in the reception classes because of the careful deployment of adults and the good continuous support they provide. When they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, children, including those who are deaf, have made good progress in these areas whatever their starting points. Their learning and development is similar to others of their age and is better in early reading skills because of the systematic ways in which their understanding of books, stories, letters and sounds is supported

Pupils' progress faltered in 2010 and early 2011, particularly in writing and mathematics, because of the many challenges the school faced. Since then, however, rigorous checking on progress and new approaches to the curriculum and to writing, as well as effective management of classroom behaviour, have led to rapid improvement. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are making accelerated progress. In

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Year 2, standards are already at those expected nationally in literacy and mathematics. Year 2 pupils' demonstrate their good progress in their reading as they read instructions about how to design their castles. In Key Stage 2 pupils show real confidence in their 'have a go' writing in their use of adjectives and settings for their stories.

Parents and carers are pleased that their children have made more progress recently and inspection findings endorsed these improvements. Year 6 pupils are in line to reach the national average in mathematics and writing and to exceed it in reading, by the end of Key Stage 2. Writing has improved because teachers confidently share 'next steps' with pupils and generally seek out good opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in different subjects. This more themed approach enthuses pupils, who say they enjoy their lessons and are clear about what they need to do to improve their reading and writing. Pupils' progress in mathematics is accelerating, but some of the more ambitious work on problem-solving and mental mathematics is too recent to have yet paid off.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those who are deaf, make satisfactory and sometimes better progress. This is because their needs are generally identified early and appropriate support put into place. However the support is not always used to best effect, particularly in the whole-class part of lessons. Pupils who are deaf make good progress in their communication skills and reading skills. Their progress in writing and mathematics and personal development is satisfactory. Sometimes adults are too quick to provide answers for them or to tell them what to write rather than offer the further cues that enable these pupils to work things out more independently. All other groups also make at least satisfactory progress, including those known to be eligible for free school meals.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory but rapidly improving as new staff gain more experience. Pupils, parents and carers are very positive about the quality of teaching and the ways in which the curriculum has improved and enthuses pupils more. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils, although occasionally they do not plan work for all parts of their lessons that challenges all groups. The new key-stage teams are working well and ensure that pupils receive consistent messages both about their behaviour and about how they can achieve even more. Marking schemes are used well in writing and offer evidence of clear improvement as a result, although inspectors agree with parents and carers that homework is not set as systematically as it should be. There is good attention to the needs of pupils who are deaf through the use of specialist technology such as radio aids and support for their communication needs. However, occasionally these pupils are not challenged enough to do things for themselves, because the support is too quick to tell them the answers or to explain something that they could have worked out for themselves. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching is satisfactory. Children sometimes spend too much time sitting in large groups on the carpet with only limited opportunities to contribute themselves. However teachers nurture each child's confidence and

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disposition to learn well and provide systematic support for their early numeracy and literacy skills.

Teachers use the newly reviewed curriculum to develop themes such as castles and mini-beasts which excite and absorb pupils who say they enjoy coming to school much more now. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures and beliefs, and the consistent emphasis on teamwork, shared learning and personal responsibility support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The leadership has worked well with staff, pupils and parents and carers to deal with the behavioural issues that previously interrupted learning in classrooms. A new behaviour policy, including rewards and sanctions, improvements to the learning environment and the curriculum have all contributed to improve pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance. Attendance is now average and continuing to improve. Inspectors' discussions with pupils, including those who are deaf, show that pupils are clear as to what is or is not acceptable. Behaviour in lessons is consistently good or better and rarely disrupts learning. In their questionnaire responses, a few parents and carers indicated that they had concerns about behaviour, although the very large majority felt behaviour was good. Inspectors explored these issues and identified behaviour in the playground to be less good. This is sometimes because the school's policies are less consistently applied there and because pupils have too few purposeful activities to join in.

The school's practices for supporting good behaviour and behaviour and safety overall were judged satisfactory. Incidents of bullying are now rare. They have occurred in the past but pupils are swift to say they are dealt with quickly and fairly. Pupils have a good understanding of the risks they might face and as to how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet. Almost all say they feel safe in the school and their parents and carers agree.

Leadership and management

The impact of leadership and management over time has been satisfactory but is now improving. The head teacher and governing body have acted swiftly so that the school has recovered from a previous period of instability well. Their strong leadership, together with that of senior leaders, has already improved the percentage of good teaching and eradicated unsatisfactory teaching. Whole-school mentoring, performance management and monitoring systems support improvements in teaching well. The school is well placed to move on strongly. Standards are rising because of the improved teaching, much of which is now good or better. The newness of some staff means that elements of middle-management are still developing. The governing body fully understands the school's development needs and holds it to account, although some members are still very new.

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Parents and carers recognise this improvement and the ways in which the school buildings and learning environment has been transformed. They are unanimous in their praise for teachers and for the progress they feel their children are now making

There are effective systems, including progress meetings with staff, for securing equality and preventing discrimination and for tackling any underachievement. The school works well with external agencies to ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs or whose circumstances make them vulnerable are provided for appropriately. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. The school works well with parents, carers and outside agencies to secure the safety and well-being of the pupils in their care. Regular staff-training and recent improvements in monitoring the impact of this on provision mean that staff generally take good account of the needs of the pupils who are deaf in their class. Occasionally support staff are seated in the wrong place for these pupils to be able to look at the class teacher and benefit easily from the support. The newly revised curriculum is already exciting and engaging pupils more. It is well supported by visits and visitors and supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. However there are few clubs, particularly at lunchtime, to enrich these experiences further and parents and pupils rightly would like to see more.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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).

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.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



14 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of New Whittington Community Primary School, Chesterfield, S43 2AQ

Thank you being so welcoming when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you. We are particularly grateful to those of you who read to us and showed us your work. It was very pleasing to hear how much you liked your school and felt you were improving your work. It was good to hear about all the different subjects that you enjoyed. We found that your school is satisfactory. However it is improving quickly because the governors, your headteacher and staff check very carefully on how well you are being taught and how your learning is improving. These are some of the other things we found out about your school.

- You like the changes your school has made, such as the interesting topics you study and the improvements in the school buildings.
- Your behaviour is satisfactory overall but good in lessons. You do not have enough to do at playtimes and so sometimes some of you misbehave or are over boisterous. However, you are confident that if anyone does misbehave or is unkind, your teachers will quickly sort it out.
- You work well together in groups and pairs and try very hard to work things out for yourselves when asked to.

We have asked your headteacher and the governing body to do the following things to make your school even better:

- make the teaching even better by making sure you have work that is always at the right level for each of you and by giving you more opportunities to join in lessons
- provide you with more opportunities to practise your mathematical skills in other subjects
- make sure teachers who are responsible for different subjects check up on how everyone is doing
- provide you with more things to do at playtimes so that you can play together more purposefully.

You can help too by continuing to improve your behaviour and if the few of you who do not attend school every day do so – unless you are ill.

Yours sincerely
Susan Lewis
Lead inspector

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