

Newton Primary School

Kingsway West, Newton, Chester, Cheshire, CH2 2LA

Inspection dates 26–27 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The vast majority of pupils make good progress at all stages throughout the school.
- Since the previous inspection the quality of teaching has improved. This is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics and reading.
- Pupils say they are well looked after. Pupils feel very safe in school and parents overwhelmingly support this view.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered to each other and to visitors. Their behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good.
- Attendance has improved over recent years and is above national averages.
- The curriculum provides pupils with an interesting range of subjects and topics that ensures that they enjoy school. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education and also effectively supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quality of leadership and management from senior leaders and governors is good. They have a clear view of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small minority of teaching requires improvement and more needs to be outstanding.
- Teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to take an active part in their learning to help them develop as independent learners.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils follow up on marking comments.
- Pupils, especially the more-able pupils, are not always given work that will help them to make more rapid progress.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities for them to develop their writing skills, especially the presentation of their work, in all subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons taught by 14 teachers. Three observations were conducted jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors looked closely at the school’s work, including the school’s analysis of how well it is doing and its improvement plan, documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding, minutes of governors’ meetings, the school’s data on pupils’ progress and work in pupils’ books.
- The inspectors held meetings with three groups of pupils, staff, three members of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 73 responses from parents recorded in Parent View, together with the 76 responses to a parental survey carried out by the school in July and September 2012, letters received from parents and informal conversations with parents.

Inspection team

Alan Parkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Diane Buckle

Additional Inspector

Sheila O’Keefe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Newton Primary is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children of service families and those children that are looked after.)
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language have increased over recent years but are below the national averages.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion of those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school accommodates a before-school and after-school childcare club and a pre-school nursery. These are not managed by the governing body and were not part of this inspection.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has achieved the Bike It Gold award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is always at least good and much more of it is outstanding by:
 - creating more opportunities for pupils to be more actively engaged in their learning to enable them to develop as independent learners
 - setting tasks and activities that ensure that all pupils are challenged and make rapid progress, in particular the more-able pupils
 - ensuring that pupils always respond to teachers' comments from marking their work
 - ensuring that pupils produce consistently high standards of presentation in their written work across all subject areas.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Overall, children join the Reception class with skills and abilities that are similar to those typically expected for their age but are below this for some children, especially in language and physical development. Effective planning of activities and tasks meet the developing needs of the children well. This good provision in all areas of learning enables them to make good progress. By the end of Reception their skills are slightly above that typically expected for their age across all areas of learning.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics declined in 2012. However, the school has tackled this by introducing effective strategies to develop pupils' basic skills in literacy and mathematics. Consequently, attainment in reading and mathematics has begun to improve. Pupils make the most progress in reading, but achievement in writing is not as strong.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in English and mathematics. In 2012 pupils made good progress in English and mathematics and attainment was above the national average by the end of Year 6. The proportion of pupils making more than expected progress from their varying starting points was above the national average.
- The whole-school reading programme is very effective and is helping to develop pupils' literacy skills well. This is helping to support pupils' learning across a range of subjects and topics.
- However, the overall presentation of written work across a range of subjects does not contribute well to the development of pupils' writing skills.
- Current school data show that the gaps in attainment between those pupils supported by the pupil premium funding and others are closing. In 2012, the average point scores for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were above the national figure in reading, writing and mathematics and above all other pupils in this school in writing. The funding is used effectively to provide additional teaching resources, one-to-one tuition and small group work to support the development of literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, those from minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled pupils, and those who have special educational needs achieve at least as well as other pupils and sometimes make better progress than their classmates.
- Lesson observations, hearing pupils read and scrutiny of work confirm that current pupils are making good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- In Reception there is a clear focus on improving basic communication and numeracy skills. As a result of good teaching, children make good progress. Teachers use the outside provision and structured play to support learning well. There is a good mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. This provides children with exciting activities that stimulate them so they are attentive and enjoy learning.
- In the best lessons, teaching is very well organised and planned. Good teaching provides children with many opportunities to become actively involved in lessons and work is set at the right level for all pupils. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to explain well and extend pupils' understanding. Pupils respond well to effective questioning that encourages them to think for themselves.
- In a few lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers do not provide work that enables all pupils to learn well enough. This is because the work is too easy for some pupils, particularly the more-able. As a result, they do not make enough progress.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to contribute to their own learning to enable them to develop their independent learning skills.

- The recently introduced writing programme is beginning to have a positive effect on developing pupils' writing skills. Although the impact of this is at an early stage, more still needs to be done to improve the presentation of written work across all subjects.
- Displays of pupils' work in classrooms and general learning areas stimulate their learning and encourage them to develop their creative skills.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked with written comments using praise to encourage and, in most cases, giving guidance on what they need to do to improve. However, teachers do not always ensure that their comments are followed up or impact on pupils' progress.
- Teaching assistants are used very effectively in lessons and make a significant contribution to the learning and progress of lower-ability pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress, particularly in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. This supports the school's aims of providing equal opportunities for learning and success for all pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and well mannered and are welcoming towards visitors. The relationships between pupils of all abilities and backgrounds and between pupils and adults are very good.
- Pupils say they feel safe because they are well cared for by teachers and other adults. They understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, all pupils learn about internet safety. 'Road Safety Officers' raise parents' and pupils' awareness about car parking near to the school gates. Pupils also learn about what to do in an emergency and all pupils have had 'heart start' training.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying, for example, on the internet and by mobile telephone and say that it is dealt with effectively on the few occasions that it does happen. They feel confident to talk to an adult if they have any concerns.
- The responses to the parental survey carried out by the school are positive. They indicate that a very large majority of parents agree that pupils behave well in school, that they are not bullied and that they are well cared for at school.
- In the vast majority of lessons pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They say they enjoy their lessons and are taught and learn well. This view is supported by the vast majority of parents.
- The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop as responsible individuals. For example, as members of the school council, they have suggested improvements to the outdoor areas such as the new adventure play activity trail area. The eco-committee has raised pupils' awareness about re-cycling and the 'Bike-It' crew have also played a significant role in promoting safe cycling to and from school.
- Attendance has been improving steadily over the last four years to slightly above the national average in 2012. Due to a period of illness it has fallen slightly this year and is currently in line with the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders and governors clearly know the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve further. As a result, they have accurately identified the right priorities in the school improvement plan to raise standards further. Progress towards its goals is regularly checked by senior leaders and the governing body. Although recent actions to further improve the quality of teaching are working well, it is too soon to show sustained improvement across all year groups and in all subject areas.
- Regular lesson observations and accurate feedback to teachers on their performance ensure that teaching and achievement continue to improve. The headteacher uses information about the quality of teaching well when developing the training programme for staff. This is also used

when advising the governing body about teachers' promotion and movement up the salary scale.

- The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of skills in a stimulating learning environment that has a positive impact on pupils' progress. A variety of school trips and visitors to the school help to enrich pupils' learning experiences. For example, the Year 3 visit to Roman Chester helped them with their history topic work. The school also offers pupils a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include activities such as gymnastics, gardening, street dance, drama and football. These activities also help them to extend their range of academic and social skills and contribute significantly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school has effective procedures in place to protect pupils, especially those pupils whose circumstances make them most vulnerable. This is strengthened by the effective partnership the school has with parents and the support it receives from the local authority.
- The school has benefited from the effective and valuable support provided by the local authority. Since the previous inspection, advice and support have been given to further develop the quality of teaching and the use of pupil progress and attainment data to help inform further improvements in literacy and numeracy.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school well. Governors regularly check the school's performance, including the quality of teaching, and use performance-management systems to set appropriate and challenging targets to tackle any underperformance. As a result, they know the strengths of the school and have an accurate understanding of school data regarding pupil progress and what needs to be done to improve the school further. They have a good understanding of the school's finances. This includes allocating the pupil premium funding to provide one-to-one support and additional resources to improve the literacy and mathematical skills of pupils known to be eligible who are at risk of falling behind. Safeguarding procedures and policies meet statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	110976
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	405312

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	357
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Williams
Headteacher	Mark Griffiths
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2011
Telephone number	01244 981155
Email address	admin@newtonprimary.cheshire.sch.uk

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