

Newton-on-Trent CofE Primary School

High Street, Newton-on-Trent, Lincoln, LN1 2JS

Inspection dates 18–19 September 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 headteacher has overseen a marked improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils’ achievement since the last inspection. Her strong leadership and positive support have been driving forces behind this.
- Teachers know their pupils well and usually challenge them to do their best.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive. Pupils try hard in lessons because they want to do well.
- There is a high morale among adults in the school because leaders successfully promote high expectations and strong aspirations.
- Leaders have an accurate overview of the standards being reached by pupils, and the good progress individual pupils are making over time. There is no underachievement.
- Pupils feel safe at all times. They say there is no bullying. This reflects the attention paid by adults to their care and well-being.
- Parents are strongly supportive of the school and have very positive views on how the school helps their children to progress.
- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are always well mannered and polite and are very welcoming to new pupils from other European countries.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to bring about outstanding achievement.
- Adults do not always identify unequivocally what pupils have failed to grasp. This limits their ability to plan accurately for what pupils need to do next to improve.
- Teachers do not always match learning activities precisely to pupils’ different levels of attainment to ensure that they learn as much as they might.
- Though the governing body is well informed and meets all statutory requirements, it relies a great deal on the work of a small number of hard-working and well-informed individuals.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons, two jointly with the headteacher.
- He listened to pupils read.
- He met with senior staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- He looked at a range of other evidence which included: the school's website; pupils' assessment information; the school improvement plan; records of the governing body, its committees, and headteacher's reports to the governing body; summary reports from the local authority's education adviser and the school's view of itself. He also looked at pupils' workbooks; school policies; and documents relating to the curriculum, pupils' behaviour and safeguarding.
- The inspector considered seven responses from the staff questionnaire.
- He considered 30 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents (Parent View).

Inspection team

Terry McDermott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a small school. It has two classes. Class one caters for children from Reception Year, and pupils from Years 1 and 2 (and currently contains 13 pupils). Class 2 caters for pupils from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 (and currently contains 20 pupils).
- Almost all pupils are of White British origin. A small number are from Eastern Europe.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is an additional sum of money provided by the government to support children in the care of the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is currently below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is currently above average. These proportions can fluctuate widely from one year to the next due to small, and sometimes very small, cohort sizes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, so that pupils make even better progress by defining and recording, crisply and clearly, information on what pupils have not understood, so that learning activities can be more precisely planned to meet the specific learning needs of all pupils.
- Ensure that all governors have the necessary skills and understanding to be able to carry out their responsibilities in holding the school to account for its work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils of all ages, abilities and backgrounds make good progress over time in reading, writing and mathematics. This is an improvement since the last inspection. They do not make outstanding progress because work set in the mixed-age classes does not always stretch some individuals as much as it might.
- Children join the Reception group with skills that are normally about those expected for their age, though this can vary markedly from one year to the next due to the often very small numbers who arrive in school.
- They settle very quickly into routines and make good progress when they are taught early literacy and numeracy skills. Their personal confidence also grows rapidly because the older pupils in the class welcome them so openly and help them so readily, even when an adult is not directly supervising them.
- Reading skills are taught well and pupils have plenty of opportunities, in both classes, for regular reading to improve their skills.
- Dedicated and skilful in-class support enables those pupils who have special educational needs or who are new to English, to achieve as well as other pupils.
- The school's easy-to-understand and accurate tracking system shows that pupils continue to make good progress through Year 1 until the end of Year 2, from whatever point they start. Most reach the expected levels for their age by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Between Year 3 and Year 6, all pupils continue to achieve well, even though their standards of attainment can fluctuate a great deal from one year to another. In 2012, all four pupils in Year 6 reached the expected national standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013, all three pupils in Year 6 reached standards almost a year in advance of that normally expected in reading.
- Pupil premium funds are used effectively to ensure that the achievement of pupils for whom it is intended matches that of other pupils. The school invests more money than it receives from the grant to ensure that these pupils are able to access every opportunity the school has to offer, or receives the support they need. The attainment of pupils eligible for this funding was about one year in advance of that of other pupils in reading, and broadly similar to other pupils in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because of the consistently good role modelling they receive on a daily basis from adults and older pupils.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education when they leave.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is now ensuring that pupils' progress over time is consistently good. Teachers' enthusiasm and passion often spark pupils' interest and

motivation. This leads to good learning.

- Teachers make good use of resources to enhance pupils' learning. For example, a theme developed from caring for the school's pet guinea pigs enabled pupils in class 1 to extend their speaking and listening skills, their writing skills, their art work, and fed directly into their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by considering the effects of their actions on others and the environment.
- Very good relationships between adults and pupils are a strong feature of all lessons. Pupils respond quickly to very low-key guidance or instruction, and this markedly reduces the amount of time adults have to spend on managing behaviour.
- Probing questions that adults ask, to make pupils think things through for themselves, are a key feature of stronger lessons. Pupils readily and seriously engage with this way of working. Learning accelerates.
- Teachers' written advice is given regularly. The best written marking requires that pupils respond to their teacher's comments. This develops good communication skills as well ensuring that pupils move forward quickly into the next stage of their learning.
- Teaching assistants often provide effective support for groups and individuals, including those for whom the pupil premium funding provides support, because they are well briefed by teachers. However, in some instances, they intervene too soon, and do not demand enough of their charges, having a tendency to 'spoon feed' unnecessarily.
- Planning is good overall. However, there are times when pupils' progress is not as rapid as it might be because the tasks set are not based firmly enough on what pupils have yet to fully understand. Learning sometimes slows as additional explanations have to be given to clarify or redefine learning objectives more accurately for individuals of widely differing ages and abilities.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are aware of their personal short-term targets for literacy and numeracy, but do not always relate these targets to the levels pupils are reaching or aiming for.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are proud of their school and the part they play in making it the way it is. Their politeness and good manners help to make the school an orderly, clean and happy environment. Teachers are consistent in their expectations of good behaviour.
- Pupils are safe in school. They are insistent that there is no bullying, and seemed surprised that anyone would doubt this. Nonetheless, they are fully aware of where dangers might lie, including on the internet, and they know what to do should such instances occur. Their parents unanimously support these views.
- They say that adults in school look after them well. They know they can approach any adult to help them deal with any problems they may have.
- Pupils respond openly to questions asked in class, because they know that their views and thoughts will be listened to sympathetically. They enjoy working collaboratively, sharing their ideas with others during discussions. They say they enjoy coming to school and taking part in a wide range of musical, sporting and adventurous activities as well as class work. This is reflected

in their above-average individual attendance rates.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's calm demeanour and clear vision have ensured that necessary changes have taken place with minimal disruption to the effective functioning of the school. Her high expectations are based firmly on always doing what is required to gain the best possible outcomes for the pupils.
- The strong partnership the school has with home is based on understanding the circumstances of pupils' families. Wide variations in pupils' skills and understanding are not used as an excuse by the school for either slow progress or weak attendance. This is why both of these measures are above average.
- The headteacher's evaluation of the school's effectiveness, which is shared openly with staff and governors, is accurate. Plans for the next stage of the school's development lack some precision because the areas which the school needs to address in order to move forward towards being outstanding are not precisely defined.
- The school is rapidly developing its links with other local schools in order to widen its horizons and to overcome the barriers to progress imposed by its geographical isolation and small size. This includes firm plans to utilise primary sports funding for shared coaching, transport to venues, and the review and evaluation of this initiative.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school in helping it to move strongly forward from its previous difficulties. It has not helped the school enough in identifying what is preventing it from being any better than it is now.
- The management of teachers' performance takes place as it should, and is tied closely to improving standards and accelerating progress for all pupils.
- The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is strengthened by a good range of extra-curricular activities including trips, residential visits and visitors into school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is relatively new and inexperienced in its current configuration. It relies heavily on the educational expertise and drive of the experienced Chair, who is clear that governors have yet to develop the skills to enable them to carry through rigorous and objective reviews.
 - Nonetheless, records show that governors do undertake activities which enable them to fulfil their statutory duties for safeguarding children, managing teachers' performance, ensuring financial probity and holding the school to account for the progress made by those pupils for whom it receives the pupil premium.
 - Governors understand that the successful actions undertaken by the headteacher have got the school to where it is now. They understand their role in shaping future developments.

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	120578
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	425006

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	33
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Hewins
Headteacher	Alyson Bristow
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 October 2011
Telephone number	01777 228365
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