

Newnham Primary School

School Hill, Newnham, Daventry, NN11 3HG

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teachers have not planned sufficiently challenging work for pupils, particularly the most able, to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils do not achieve as well as they could because assessment information on the progress of different groups of pupils has not been used to identify gaps in their learning and raise standards.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2015 are not as high as they should be, particularly in writing.
- Pupils' progress is not fast enough to make up for some weak learning since the school became an academy.
- Teaching assistants and other adults are not always used efficiently to support individuals and groups of pupils.
- Senior leaders have not ensured that the good teaching practice in the school has been shared sufficiently well between teachers.
- Leaders' and governors' checking of teaching has not provided an accurate picture of its quality.
- Although senior leaders recognise what needs to be done to improve the school, staff are not always applying new policies and improvement strategies consistently and some initiatives are too recent to have made a significant difference.

The school has the following strengths

- Although the school requires improvement, it is improving in key areas because new senior leaders are beginning to have an impact on improving the quality of education.
- The quality of teaching in early years is good. As a result, children make good progress in the Reception class.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils feel safe in school and also know how to stay safe.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and this contributes well to their positive attitudes and good behaviour.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five lessons jointly with senior leaders. He also listened to several pupils read and looked at samples of recent work.
- The inspector held meetings with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, members of the governing body and a representative from the David Ross Education Trust. Discussions also took place with a mixed-ability group of pupils.
- The inspector took account of the views of 30 parents as noted on Ofsted's on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View). He also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. He noted the nine responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring information, and minutes of meetings of the governing body. He scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Steven Cartlidge, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Newnham Primary School became an academy school on 1 September 2013. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good. The sponsor, David Ross Education Trust, is responsible for governance and fulfilling statutory duties and provides non-statutory challenge and support.
- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes, except for children in Reception who attend full-time and are taught in their own class.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, which provides additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils who are looked after by the local authority, is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for primary schools, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been changes to the staffing recently. A permanent executive headteacher and an interim headteacher took up post in April 2015.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement throughout the school by:
 - using information about pupils' attainment to plan suitably challenging work for pupils of different abilities, particularly the most-able pupils, so that more achieve higher standards, especially in writing
 - sharing the best practice that exists in the school more widely between teachers.
- Improve the effectiveness and impact of leadership and management by:
 - making full use of assessment information, with a sharp focus on the progress of different groups of pupils, to identify gaps in pupils' learning and raise standards
 - fully applying the procedures for checking on the quality of teaching to gain an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses
 - ensuring that all staff consistently apply the new school policies and improvement strategies
 - deploying teaching assistants more efficiently to ensure good or better progress for targeted groups and individual pupils.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not yet done enough to ensure that teaching and the progress of different groups of pupils across all subjects and age groups are consistently good.
- The policies and strategies introduced by the executive headteacher and interim headteacher have not yet had sufficient time to improve pupils' attainment.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils achieve as well as they could because assessment information on the progress of different groups of pupils has not been used to identify gaps in their learning and raise standards.
- Staff are not consistently applying the new systems and policies to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement. The use of assessment data to focus on progress of different groups of pupils and plan suitably challenging work for pupils of different abilities have not been fully implemented.
- The school's view of itself is now accurate. School improvement plans reflect the correct priorities.
- The executive headteacher and interim headteacher know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have introduced systems to bring about improvements, including systems for checking on the quality of teaching. Senior leaders and the David Ross Academies Trust have provided training for staff and this is bringing about some improvements in the quality of teaching. However, best practice is not shared well enough between classes to bring about rapid improvement.
- The funding for the small number of disadvantaged pupils has not assured they make adequate progress. The school evaluates its expenditure on the support provided through data showing how well pupils achieve. This shows that all groups, including disadvantaged pupils, are making similar progress to that of their classmates.
- Senior leaders have not ensured a consistently good standard of teaching across the school. The leadership of the executive headteacher and interim headteacher is now helping to strengthen the quality of teaching. Performance management is now more rigorous and links the quality of teaching to salary progression. The majority of staff who responded to the questionnaire were positive about leaders' work bringing about change for the better.
- The range of subjects and topics covered in all years is good. The curriculum recognises local, regional and global differences, including different cultures and beliefs, and it promotes an understanding of others' points of view. Planning promotes fundamental British values of democracy, liberty, and respect and tolerance of faiths and beliefs. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Information about what is taught in the school is published on the school website and meets statutory requirements.
- The school is developing a new assessment system that takes full account of the changes to the National Curriculum. Pupils take part in a 'learning dialogue' with their teacher and are encouraged to think about their understanding of what they are studying. Pupils' books show that teachers explain what pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. In the majority of books, pupils have followed teachers' advice and made some comments, helping them to deepen their understanding.
- Carefully structured plans are in place for staff professional development and work is in progress to develop the leadership skills of staff to support the work of the senior leadership team. In the past, middle leaders have not had an accurate view about how well pupils are doing in their areas of responsibility, leading to an inaccurate view of the performance of the school. Only very recently have middle leaders become more effective and begun playing a greater role in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Some teaching assistants have not yet been trained sufficiently to support more fully individuals or groups of pupils so teachers have to manage larger groups, which slows down progress.

- School leaders have not always ensured that different groups of pupils have an equal chance to succeed, particularly the most able. School leaders do tackle effectively any instances of discrimination.
- The school has allocated the primary school sport funding to good effect. There has been a particular focus on improving the playground environment, providing transport for pupils to attend a tennis club, focusing upon increasing participation in sporting activities of upper school girls and encouraging pupils to attend the Change for Life Club. This has led to greater participation in sport activities and pupils talk enthusiastically about sports clubs and events available after school, which are already having a positive impact on many pupils' lifestyles and physical well-being.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a wide range of cultural experiences. Moral and social development is strong and pupils have good opportunities to develop a social dimension through considering others. This small school emphasises social responsibility and helping others who are less fortunate. For example, the school raises money for various charities.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure the safety of the pupils is paramount. The school has an approach to safeguarding that is meticulous and caring at all times. As a result, the arrangements for safeguarding meet all statutory requirements
- The parents who responded to Parent View were very positive about the work of the school.
- Leadership and management in the early years are good. The good achievement, which the small number of children have made and maintained during this academic year and which is evidenced in their learning journals, demonstrates this.
- The school effectively commissions the support it needs. The academy trust has provided well-targeted support for school leaders, including the appointment of an executive headteacher and interim headteacher to lead the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have not historically used information presented to them successfully to hold the school to account or had the knowledge and skills to do so. However, due to the support of the executive headteacher, interim headteacher and the David Ross Academies Trust, they are better placed to make decisions about what happens in school.
 - Governors are ambitious for the school to do well and are clear about its strengths and weaknesses. They have become better informed by being more actively involved in visiting the school, talking to staff and pupils. Governors are able to compare the performance of the school with that locally and nationally and are increasingly challenging leaders and managers to play their part in ensuring that standards are improving.
 - Governors are also clear about their role in challenging weaker teaching. They have worked with the executive and interim headteachers to set exacting targets for the performance of staff and are increasingly involved in making sure that teachers' pay is closely linked to pupils' achievement.
 - Governors manage the finances of the school well. They look closely at how additional government funding is spent and have a good overview of the impact this has on the achievement of the small number of disadvantaged pupils. The governing body makes sure all statutory child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures meet current national requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils and parents hold positive views about the behaviour in the school, and these reflect the findings of the inspection.
- Pupils show respect for their teachers, for each other and for the school environment. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as that of assembly monitor whose task is to organise invited parents and other pupils in the school hall for celebration assemblies.

- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good in lessons. This is particularly the case when teaching is highly stimulating and engaging. The school's clear records of incidents indicate that pupils' behaviour is typically good over time.
- Attendance is above average and there is no persistent absence.
- Some pupils' work is not neatly presented, but the vast majority of pupils take pride in themselves, their school uniform and their school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders and staff take effective measures to ensure that all pupils are well cared for and protected. All members of staff have had recent training in child protection and safeguarding.
- The school has developed effective systems for checking and recording safety matters and ensuring that any concerns are dealt with promptly. All staff are appropriately checked before being appointed.
- Older pupils are particularly knowledgeable about the dangers of cyber-bullying and understand the importance of not sharing personal details online. Pupils also report, and records show, that on the rare occasions bullying occurs, staff deal with it effectively. Parents also believe that pupils are very secure in school.
- The pupils say they feel safe and have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, they have a thorough understanding of how to keep themselves safe outside school. They have a clear sense of road safety and are very aware of the dangers of talking to strangers.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving, there are still too many inconsistencies in the quality of teaching which are limiting pupils' progress. Teachers have not planned sufficiently challenging work for pupils, particularly the most able, to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Too many teachers do not show high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. They do not use the information about what pupils already know to set work at the right level for different abilities. The most-able pupils are not always challenged enough because the work is too easy for them, while others are sometimes held back in their learning because work is too hard and they need more help and guidance.
- Although teaching in the past did not have a positive impact on pupils' achievement, recent improvements are resulting in better attainment and progress for most pupils and they are now receiving more effective additional support from teachers and teaching assistants.
- Over time, some teaching assistants have not always been well deployed leading to those pupils identified as needing extra support not making the progress of which they are capable. However, as a result of recent improvements in targeting teaching assistants' support for disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils supported by the pupil premium, indications are that these pupils are now making at least similar progress to, and sometimes better, progress than their peers.
- Until recently, the teaching of writing has been poor. Too many pupils have not had opportunities to practise their writing skills. Evidence seen in pupils' books, however, demonstrates pupils' writing skills are now improving.
- Pupils receive good encouragement to read, both in and out of school, and this is helping them to improve their reading in all years. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is effective, and there are arrangements to give additional support to pupils who are identified as not having made sufficiently good progress.

- Pupils' homework prepares them well for the following lesson. Parents who expressed a view are very supportive of the progress that homework helps their children to make.
- Teaching is improving and is having an increasingly positive effect on pupils' achievement. In some lessons, teachers plan demanding and interesting work, which fully engages pupils' interest. In a topic lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 focusing upon similarities and differences in European dance, the teacher gave pupils the opportunity to investigate and discuss their ideas together and provided additional support when necessary. The pupils responded well to the teacher's high expectations and deep questioning, and the pupils made excellent progress.
- Adults in Reception accurately assess children's knowledge, skills and understanding. They use the information well to carefully match activities to individuals, so that each makes good progress in their learning. In the activities they choose for themselves, children quickly learn to practise and extend the skills that they have already begun to develop in previous lessons.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- With small numbers in each year group, results vary from one year to the next in reading, writing and mathematics. However, pupils leave with standards that are broadly average. Progress is not good because pupils, particularly the most able in Years 1 to 6, make slower progress than they should.
- Pupils do not make good progress in writing because, until recently, they have not had sufficient opportunities to practise their writing skills in class. Some pupils do not take enough care when presenting work in their books. In 2014, standards in writing were not as high as the school had expected. Leaders have investigated this. As a result, they have recently introduced initiatives aimed at developing pupils' ability to write more challenging and structured tasks in class. It is too early to measure any impact of this initiative. However, work seen in pupils' books indicates a stronger picture, with some pupils achieving well.
- Pupils benefit from effective teaching of phonics and use their developing skills to read unfamiliar words. The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who reached the expected standard in the national phonics screening check was above average in 2014, and results have improved further in 2015.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Pupils enjoy reading and develop their reading skills as they progress through the school. Pupils also gain confidence using their mathematical skills. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 class pupils were using their mathematical knowledge to measure perimeters. They were able to explain what they were doing accurately and the vast majority arrived at the correct answers.
- The few disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. More recently, better targeted support is ensuring that none fall behind.
- The school has not always used its pupil premium funding effectively. The small number of disadvantaged pupils have extra support including one-to-one support where it is needed. Last year, there were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to comment on their progress in English and mathematics without risk of identifying individuals. However, throughout the school they make the same progress as their classmates.
- Children in Reception sit quietly when listening to stories and follow simple instructions. They recognise some letters and know some numbers. They build on these skills so, by the time they begin Year 1, they are ready to start the National Curriculum.

The early years provision

is good

- Children's levels of skills and understanding on joining Reception vary from year to year. Usually, they start with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. Many listen well to stories, follow simple instructions and say some number names in order. They make good progress, including the most able,

and are well prepared for Key Stage 1.

- Staff in Reception accurately assess children’s knowledge, skills and understanding. They use the information well to carefully match activities to individuals, so that each makes good progress in their learning. Children are given opportunities to demonstrate their developing confidence and enthusiasm in the classroom and outside area. When left alone to explore, many make their own discoveries and solve problems.
- All adults in Reception work together to create a strong and effective team. They model language well for children and, by continually challenging them to express themselves and extend their use of new words, children’s vocabulary and confidence develop quickly.
- The small number of disabled children and those who have special educational needs are identified early and are given appropriate support so that they make similar progress to that of their classmates.
- The close partnership with parents ensures that children form secure bonds and develop confidence. They learn to share, take turns and care for one another’s feelings. They behave well in class and move around the school sensibly.
- Arrangements for keeping children safe are effective because teachers and teaching assistants are conscientious monitoring at all times to ensure children are kept safe.
- Leadership of the early years is good. Staff work well together. They have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development and use this knowledge to plan for improvement.

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	140060
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	450365

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	101
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Rookledge
Headteacher	Kim Cresswell
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01327 705053
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