



The Newton Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110717
LEA CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278495
Inspection dates 1 November 2005 to 2 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs. Marina Gough LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Caxton End
School category	Community		PE19 6TL
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01480 880215
Number on roll	99	Fax number	01480 880138
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Silvia McSweeney
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Rosemary Irvin

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector over a period of two days.

Description of the school

This small rural primary school caters for children from the immediate area and from several surrounding villages. The home circumstances of the children are mixed, but generally favourable, and few children are known to be eligible for free school meals. The children's ability when they start school is broadly average, although there are children working at both extremes of the ability range. Only a small number of children have special educational needs or English as an additional language. Levels of mobility are high, and this factor affects, sometimes quite significantly, the end of Year 2 and Year 6 test results.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that caters well for children of all ages and abilities. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement, especially in developing the building and the provision for information and communication technology. The school's evaluation of its strengths and relative weaknesses is accurate, and closely matches the inspection findings. The good leadership of the headteacher, and the commitment and enthusiasm of the staff means that the school is well placed for continued improvement. Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science, and children of all ages make good progress as they move through the school. The provision for the reception children is good. The school caters well for children with special educational needs and those who have particular talents. Teaching is good throughout the school. However, there are areas for development, including the use of ongoing assessment to help the children to see clearly the next steps in their learning. The school provides a good and broad range of activities for all children, and extensively enriches the children's learning through a very wide range of additional activities and experiences. The school is well led and managed, and there is a clear focus on raising standards. Monitoring of teaching and learning by governors and staff is at the early stages of development and is not yet having its maximum impact.

What the school should do to improve further

In line with its own priorities for improvement, the school should:-

- Develop the monitoring skills of staff and governors to raise standards further and to further improve teaching and learning.
- Share assessment information with children of all abilities so that they can be more involved in setting their own targets and measuring their progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The children's attainment when they start school is broadly average. Reception children make good progress and attain the levels expected across all areas of learning. Their language and mathematics skills are well developed for their age by the time they transfer to Year 1. As they move through the infant and junior classes, children of all abilities make good progress. The school supports children with special educational needs well so that they are able to take a full part in all activities and make similar progress to their classmates. More able children are suitably challenged and extended, and thrive especially well where teaching is exciting, demanding, and takes them to their limits. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average at the end of Year 6. Children of all ages are avid readers who read with fluency, expression and good levels of understanding. The children's writing by the end of Year 6 is well crafted and shows high levels of maturity. In both science and

mathematics, children of all ages show a good capacity for solving problems and for using and applying their knowledge in a range of different contexts.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The children's personal development is outstanding. Children make significant gains in terms of their confidence and maturity as they move through the school. All children show high levels of enthusiasm for learning, especially where teaching is stimulating and exciting. They get on well with one another, and there is a real family atmosphere, with older children willingly supporting younger children. The school celebrates individuality and children are not afraid of making mistakes. During the inspection three new children were given very friendly and helpful support from their classmates so that they quickly slotted into the routines of the school. Behaviour is excellent, and the vast majority of children are polite, sociable and considerate. The small number of children who have difficulty in managing their behaviour at times are very well supported. Children enjoy coming to school and levels of attendance are high. The school places a strong emphasis on teaching the children how to stay safe and healthy, and does much to promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Children are encouraged to learn how to work in teams, to make choices and decisions, and understand the importance of taking responsibility for their own actions. They have a powerful collective voice, through membership of the School Council, and are confident that their views are heard and considered. The school makes very good provision for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and as a result children are thoughtful, reflective and fully aware of the difference between right and wrong.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are well prepared and have a good subject knowledge. They present activities in an exciting way that captures the children's attention and interest, and gives them a thirst for learning. Teaching assistants are well briefed and thoughtfully deployed so that they have the most impact on the children's learning. The newly introduced interactive whiteboards are used very well to enhance teaching and learning. Where teaching is outstanding, teachers use a range of additional resources to bring learning to life and to fully engage children of all abilities. They use questions very skilfully to check the children's understanding and to extend their learning. Their teaching is animated, pacy and demanding, and the children respond with exceptionally high levels of enthusiasm and commitment. Teachers throughout the school provide good opportunities for children to practise basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and encourage children to solve problems and to find things out for themselves. Teachers help the children to become independent learners and celebrate achievement so that children of all abilities have high levels of self-esteem. The assessment of the children's learning is satisfactory. Teachers have

a good understanding of the children's capabilities, but do not always communicate this to the children. As a result children are not able to take some responsibility for setting themselves targets and meeting them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good quality curriculum that meets the needs of all children. In the reception class there is a good balance of structured play activities that enable the children to fully explore their learning environment, and adult-led tasks that enable the children to learn key skills in a systematic way. The curriculum for the infants and juniors takes good account of the mixed age classes, and the changes in class groupings that occur from year to year. The school provides an outstanding range of enrichment activities which has a very positive impact on the children's personal and social development. The children's learning is significantly enhanced by the input of visitors and by the range of educational visits that the school organises. Residential visits are very popular, and very effectively support the social development of the Year 5 and Year 6 children. The school has a very good programme to support the children's personal, social and health education that includes comprehensive units about sex and drugs education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has good arrangements in place for ensuring the health and safety of all children. Child protection procedures are in place and are understood by all staff. Staff know the children and their families very well, and the children say that they are confident about approaching any adult within the school community for help. Good relationships exist with local agencies, and the school draws well on their expertise, especially to support children with special educational needs and those who may be vulnerable. The children themselves are fully conversant with the arrangements for first-aid, and talk with high levels of confidence about the merits and expertise of the 'school doctor' who is one of the teaching assistants.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. Since her appointment nearly three years ago, the headteacher, with the support of the governing body, has done an outstanding job of improving the children's learning environment and improving the provision for information and communication technology. The school now boasts a splendid hall which is well used to support community events, as well as the school's own work, and classrooms are bright, attractive and spacious. All of the issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed. The school is well placed to address its own priorities for improvement, which include those identified by the inspection, and to bring about continued improvement. There has been a complete change of teaching

staff since the last inspection with the junior teachers having joined the school in the last year. Staff work together very well as a team, and are committed to bringing about further improvement. Co-ordinating roles have been fairly distributed, but although co-ordinators provide good support to colleagues, they have not yet started to monitor teaching and learning through classroom observation and the sampling of children's work. This is an identified area for development and staff are keen to make a start. Governors are very supportive of the school and many are regular visitors. Although they monitor the school's work well in a general way, their monitoring is not always sufficiently focused. They monitor the budget well so that fluctuations in the number of children on roll can be efficiently managed. Although the current contingency amount is high, there are firm plans for its expenditure. The school gives good value for money. The school has made a good analysis of its strengths and weaknesses which is honest and open and which shows it knows itself well. The school's evaluation matches the findings of the inspection. The school effectively works in partnership with parents and seeks their views in a variety of ways. There are high levels of parental satisfaction.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

You may remember that I visited your school a little while ago. I really enjoyed my visit and would like to thank you for making me feel so welcome and for talking to me about your work and about how you feel about school. You will be pleased to hear that I think that Newton is a good school. Your teachers work hard to make lessons exciting and interesting and because of this many of you are enthusiastic in lessons and keen to do your work. You learn a great deal during your time in school and make good progress. You do very well in the tests that you take at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and most of you really enjoy learning new facts, finding things out for yourselves, and solving problems. I was very pleased with your behaviour, and the way in which you care for others. I know that some of you are not very keen on the new 'buddy groups' but think that you are being really grown up in the way that you are trying to make them work, even though you'd rather play with your own friends at lunchtimes. You are all very happy to come to school, and know that if you are in any trouble, or if you have some happy news to share, that you can go to any adult in the school. I am pleased with the way in which Mrs Irvin, the teachers and governors encourage you to be healthy and make sure you are safe. Mrs Irvin is a good headteacher and she works hard to make the school a happy place where you can all learn well. However, although the school is good, there are some things that could be improved. I have asked Mrs Irvin and the teachers to make sure that you have targets for numeracy and science as well as English, so that you know what you have to do next to make your work even better. It would be great if you could help to write these targets. I have also asked the teachers and the governors to come into class more to watch how you learn and how your teachers teach. This will help them to know what works really well and what needs to be improved.