

Newlyn School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111987
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	289131
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Ian Knight

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 on roll	
School	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Lambourn
Headteacher	Angela O'Connor
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001
School address	Carne Road Newlyn Penzance TR18 5QA
Telephone number	01736 363509
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school serves the picturesque fishing village of Newlyn in western Cornwall, an area that suffers some socio-economic disadvantage as reflected in the above average entitlement to free school meals. Almost all the pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average. The school has received a number of awards: it has been recognised as an Investor in People since 2003, has Healthy School status, holds the Sport Activemark and, most recently, received Dyslexia Friendly School status in January 2007. Most children join the school's Reception class from the privately run nursery that shares the school's site. On entry, they have broadly the expected levels of knowledge, skills and understanding.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Newlyn School offers a satisfactory education to its pupils. Parents rightly praise the school's welcoming and positive ethos. As one said, 'My children have only been at the school for a short time but the headteacher and her staff have made us feel very welcome'. This comes about because all staff share a vision in which pupils are valued and listened to. In lessons, pupils are supportive of one another so that they grow in confidence and share their thoughts without worrying whether their answer is 'right' or not. This growth of pupils into confident, mature, articulate individuals starts in the Reception class. Although overall provision here is satisfactory leading to standards that are in line with expectations overall, children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. In other years, pupils' good personal development is also supported by the good curriculum. This covers all the required areas and is enhanced by, for example, extensive provision for music and sport, areas in which the school has had considerable success in competitions. As a result, despite there being some pupils who find behaving well difficult, pupils' attitudes and behaviour overall are good and they really enjoy coming to school. They gain a thorough understanding of how to live healthily and have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The school has a variety of methods to evaluate its own performance, including regular observations of teaching and analyses of data that track pupils' progress. Through this good self-evaluation, it identified that pupils, especially boys, did not make as much progress in writing as in the other subjects and that the most capable pupils were not being consistently challenged enough, especially in science. The school has focused on these areas with particular success in improving the progress in writing, especially in Years 3 to 6. Progress in all aspects of English in Years 3 to 6 is now good. Whilst there are also signs of improved challenge for the most capable, teachers do not routinely ensure that lesson planning includes tasks that really challenge these pupils beyond their comfort zone. As a result, teaching and learning overall are satisfactory and pupils reach average standards, reflecting satisfactory achievement overall. Although the school makes some use of target setting for whole classes, pupils do not always know exactly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve through the use of personalised targets or guidance through marking. This has a particular impact on the progress of the most capable. As a result, academic guidance and the school's provision overall for pupils' care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Satisfactory leadership and management have supported a gentle rising trend in standards in Years 1 and 2 and the steady improvements in pupils' progress in writing in Years 3 to 6. Staff are used effectively. For example, teaching assistants are deployed well and contribute to ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same progress as their peers. In addition, staff work in a collegiate way to analyse data which is raising awareness of the needs of the most capable. The quality of the school's self-evaluation and the improvements gained over the last year or so indicate the school's satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress by ensuring that teachers' planning always includes tasks that challenge all in the class, including the most capable.
- Ensure that all pupils know how well they are doing by making sure that the marking of completed work consistently gives advice for improvement and that targets set in every class are based on the needs of individuals, referred to in planning and teaching, and reviewed regularly. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory

but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter Reception with the knowledge and skills expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress overall through the school so that standards in Year 6, although they have varied from year to year, are now about average. This reflects pupils' satisfactory achievement. However, this overall picture masks some variations. The school noted that progress in writing was slower than in reading and mathematics, especially for boys. A review led to a number of themes being introduced in Years 1 and 2 to interest boys more. In Years 3 to 6, a renewed focus on writing has led to much more rapid progress over the last year in most classes, so that progress in English overall in Years 3 to 6 is good. The school is also aware that the most capable pupils are not always stretched enough and the numbers reaching the higher levels is lower than it should be, especially in mathematics and science. Some work has been done to improve matters here, but there is still work to do to make sure that these pupils always experience challenging lessons and consistently make the progress of which they are capable.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Staff have developed an atmosphere in the school in which there is no fear of failure and pupils are encouraged to 'have a go' and learn through their mistakes. As a result, pupils grow in confidence and maturity as they move through the school. Pupils' skills of collaborative working are promoted effectively, ensuring, alongside their average standards in basic skills, that they are satisfactorily prepared for the world of work. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their cultural development is supported well by, for example, annual residential visits to London so that pupils can experience western and other cultures, and, more locally, by their study of painters from the Newlyn School of Art. Attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is satisfactory, although some parents do not bring their children to school on time. The school council enables pupils to make a satisfactory contribution to the school community through the opportunities provided to discuss improvements to school life. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to take responsibility for leading and managing such changes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy lessons because they take place in a relaxed atmosphere of mutual respect. They are happy to answer questions or think out loud, safe in the positive atmosphere that teachers and the school as a whole strive to maintain. Many lessons have a brisk pace and pupils are fully engaged. Teaching assistants are used well to lead groups, paraphrase the teacher's words and offer encouragement to diffident pupils. As a result, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or who need a little extra help, are enabled to make satisfactory progress towards their targets. However, teachers' planning does not always include specific tasks to really challenge the most capable, and this leads to them not always reaching the standards they should. Planning focuses on the needs of the middle attainers in a group, with extension work

available. However, the most capable are usually expected to complete the same tasks before graduating to more challenging work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned and responsive to the needs of the pupils, as shown by the school's reaction to the slower progress pupils make in writing. Learning is reinforced by themes and developing links between subjects. For example, science, mathematics and personal, social and health education came together in a piece of work about exercise and healthy living when pupils used their graphing skills to show the results of exercise on their pulse rate. The curriculum also has a very positive impact on pupils' personal development, partly because of the school's emphasis on this and partly through the extensive enhancements offered. French is taught throughout the school, for example, as is surfing. Residential trips to London or to 'camp' help promote pupils' independence. A wide range of musical and sporting activities has led to an impressive array of trophies. However, planning does not consistently meet the needs of the most capable pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school is rightly proud of its reputation in providing high levels of care and concern for pupils. Parents particularly praise the way the school responds to pupils' social and emotional needs. Enhancing this are the school's good links with a number of outside agencies that help support pupils with particular needs or who are especially vulnerable. The school's procedures for child protection and for safeguarding its pupils are thorough and robust, with pupils saying they know that they can turn to adults in school should they feel worried or upset. The school's procedures for welcoming pupils who join the school midstream are effective and appreciated by parents. However, academic guidance is at an earlier stage of development and is satisfactory. Although targets are set for pupils, in some classes these are identical for all and do not provide each pupil with the right level of challenge. They are not referred to enough in lessons, and the marking of completed work often lacks guidance as to how pupils might improve further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

All in the school share in its vision of an inclusive school that caters for all. The focus on producing well rounded individuals is clear in the curricular planning and in the very positive atmosphere in the school. Almost all parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire praised the school's welcoming atmosphere and all felt that leadership and management were effective, one saying that the headteacher runs a 'tight ship'. This is certainly true in the day-to-day running of the school, which is very smooth. Standards have been modestly rising in Years 1 and 2 for some time as the result of satisfactory leadership and management of the school. However, the picture in Years 3 to 6 has been less consistent, with standards varying year on year. All staff share in analysing data on pupils' progress and this has led to a shared understanding of what needs to improve. This is supplemented by regular and accurate monitoring and evaluation. As a result, the school knows its strengths and areas that need further development and has taken effective action, for example improving the progress in writing, especially in Years 3 to 6. However, there is still work to do in ensuring that the most

capable are always challenged enough. The school has been rather generous when making judgements about its overall performance, for example satisfactory progress has been judged as good within the school. A sound improvement plan underpins the school's future development. The governing body has undergone change recently, but nevertheless fulfils its roles satisfactorily.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

29 June 2007 Dear Pupils Inspection of Newlyn School, Penzance, TR18 5QA Thank you very much for being so welcoming and polite when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you at work and chatting with some of you in lessons. A special thank you is due to those pupils who gave up part of their lunchtime to talk to us. Your school is satisfactory. The teachers and teaching assistants are doing a sound job. They work well together to make sure that those of you who find learning hard are helped and that all of you get sound advice and support. This helps you to achieve satisfactorily and by the end of Year 6, you reach standards that are about the same as in most schools. The people in charge of the school are also working satisfactorily to make it even better. Some things are good – these include how the school really cares for you and helps you to feel safe and secure, the work it does to help you understand about other cultures, for example, when you go to London, and the way that the curriculum includes lots of things to help you grow up into good citizens. The school knows that some things could be better. For example, the headteacher and staff could see that not all of you were learning fast enough in writing and quite a bit has been done to make this better. In the juniors, you are now making good progress in English – well done! However, those of you who find learning easy do not always have work that is hard enough in every lesson, so we have asked the school to try to make sure that this always happens. You can help by always trying hard in lessons and doing your best. You have targets to aim for, but in some classes these are the same for everyone. We have asked the school to make sure that you all have targets of your own that will help you to learn and to make sure that all marking is as helpful as the best is now. Some of you will soon be leaving to go to a secondary school. I wish you, and everyone else, every success in the future. Yours faithfully Ian Knight Lead inspector