

Newton Poppleford Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113103
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	289509
Inspection date	13 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Laurie Lewin

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	170
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Farrand
Headteacher	Staurt Vaughan
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2002
School address	School Lane Newton Poppleford Sidmouth EX10 0EL
Telephone number	01395 568300
Fax number	01395 568300

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	13 March 2007
Inspection number	289509

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school serves the local village and others close by. Nearly all of the pupils are White British. They come from a mixture of socio-economic backgrounds, with about half of the families living in private housing and about half in local authority and rented properties. The proportion of pupils in the school with learning difficulties or disabilities is lower than in most other schools nationally as is the proportion with statements of learning needs. When children start school, they generally show attainment that is slightly above that expected for their age. However, there is a wide range of attainment at this age group. At the end of the last academic year, both the headteacher and deputy headteacher retired. The new headteacher has been in post since September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is a school that is going from strength to strength and provides an outstanding quality of education for its pupils. It ensures that pupils of all abilities achieve excellent results. In particular, the top quality care, support and guidance provision results in pupils showing outstanding personal development. Pupils develop into well rounded and mature individuals, with an enthusiasm and thirst for learning. This happens because staff go the extra mile in terms of making lessons and activities as much fun as possible. As one parent put it: 'My child can't wait to get to school each morning and thoroughly enjoys all aspects of school life!'. Many other parents feel the same way and the great majority have a very high regard for the way in which the school is run. They pay credit to the way that strong leadership in the past has been carried through so efficiently into the present under the leadership of the new headteacher. This smooth transition is also reflected in the really good team atmosphere apparent amongst the staff, coupled with their enthusiasm to sustain the school's good pace of improvement.

Children in the Foundation Stage do very well as a result of the excellent provision. High quality teaching throughout the school ensures that from the Foundation Stage upwards, all individuals make excellent progress and reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6. In its drive for continual improvement, the school has correctly identified the need to improve pupils' writing skills even further and, in particular, to develop these skills to a greater extent across the curriculum. Teachers make very good use of systems to track pupils' progress and to set precise targets to support the progress of all individuals, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The school has excellent curriculum provision that includes an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. These activities are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils, who have had a strong say in the construction of the programme. Pupils have a full voice in school affairs. Through their school council, they have helped make some very effective improvements, such as the creation of new paths around the school and improved provision of play equipment at break times.

The school's outstanding leadership and management ensure that the evaluation of performance is rigorous and that high quality plans are laid to pave the way ahead. The school's evaluation of itself is too modest, reflecting a concern that its successes must not allow it to become complacent. The school has a strong capacity to succeed in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- improve still further pupils' writing skills and provide more opportunities for all pupils to extend these skills in other curriculum areas.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Strong liaison with the nearby playschool and excellent provision for the Foundation Stage ensure that children get off to a great start in school. They make excellent progress in all areas of learning, with most reaching the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1 and a significant number exceeding this level. This strong progress and achievement continue throughout the school, with above average standards at the end of Year 2 and well above average standards by the end of Year 6. All groups of pupils and individuals

progress equally well, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Progress of pupils by the end of Year 6 is better than that shown by the school's national results data which, although still reflecting a strong picture, is slightly skewed downwards due to the arrival of older age group pupils with learning difficulties into the school. The school rightly identifies that the quality of pupils' writing, whilst good overall, remains a relative weakness. Much good work has already been done to improve this area of work, but there remains further scope for bringing writing standards up to the same high level as achieved in reading, mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

'This is a really good school' ... 'I'm going to be really sad to leave here' ... 'We get on really well with the staff ... they are always friendly and helpful' ... 'We're going to be rich ... because they've bribed us to say these things!'. These comments, taken from a very lively discussion with Year 6 pupils, show the high level of warmth, humour, confidence and genuine fondness for school these individuals feel. In all class activities and in the playground, the same ethos is evident, with smiles and laughter equally apparent alongside purposeful activity and enthusiasm. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils take a lot of trouble to watch out for each other; for example, in the playground, many older pupils walk around hand in hand with younger children, showing them how to play different games. Through their school council, participation in local events and pursuing their own ideas for charity fundraising, pupils have a high level of involvement in contributing to the community. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy. Through business schemes such as the 'Year 6 fruit stall' - which is currently making a good profit - pupils gain excellent skills to help ensure their future economic well being. Pupils have outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, although the school rightly feels that even more could be done to expand pupils' understanding of living in a multicultural society. Attendance at school is very good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The high quality teaching throughout the school is firmly rooted in the strong relationships that exist between the staff and the pupils. There is a climate of mutual respect so that in all classes, pupils feel they are valued as individuals and are therefore keen to please and work hard for their teachers. Excellent planning by teachers, really clear objectives and strong support from teaching assistants translate into a buzzing, lively atmosphere in all lessons, with pupils enjoying being challenged by the work they are given. From the Foundation Stage class through to Year 6, teachers are especially good at engaging pupils in discussion to expand their understanding. This helps all individuals to become articulate and confident learners. The school has very good quality systems to regularly check on and record pupils' progress. The information gained is used very effectively to guide lesson planning and target setting for pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The excellent curriculum for the Foundation Stage makes sure that children have a very wide range of practical activities and experiences that heighten their enjoyment in learning and

broaden their understanding. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils study a full range of subjects. An outstanding emphasis is placed on personal, social and health education, which supports and thoroughly boosts pupils' personal development. Pupils' learning is very extensively enriched, with an excellent range of extra activities and a wide range of trips, visits and visitors. In its search for excellence in all areas, the school is rightly seeking to provide more opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills in different subject areas. Also, it is correctly seeking to increase the amount of outdoor space available for the children in the Foundation Stage.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school adopts a vigilant approach towards ensuring pupils' health and safety with all procedures, including those for child protection, rigorously followed through. The pastoral and academic support for all individuals is outstanding, with staff leaving no stone unturned in ensuring that pupils' individual needs are met. The strong relationships established throughout the school and the very well established links with parents and all outside agencies mean that pupils always feel fully supported. They have no qualms about seeking advice or help should they need it. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are very well supported so that they integrate thoroughly and confidently with their classmates. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously by teachers, and all individuals are given lots of clear guidance about how to improve their work in the future. Pupils have a very good understanding of the targets set to ensure they progress as well as they can.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

This is a school where top quality leadership and management, strong teamwork and excellent 'joined-up thinking' between the staff and governors ensure that the focus on all individuals reaching their full potential is held central at all times. The new headteacher has established himself very well in the school in a short space of time. His fresh perspective on the school is helping staff to build very effectively on current strengths. From the parents' view, the transition from the previous to the current regime of leadership has been seamless. As part of this transition the headteacher, working closely with the staff and governors, has set out clear plans for the future, including restructuring the staff roles and responsibilities. There is strong commitment and enthusiasm in the school to ensure these plans are driven forward energetically.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

- I am writing to let you know how much I enjoyed coming to visit your school. Thank you for making me so welcome and helping me during the school's inspection. The school is doing an outstanding job. In particular, the staff are especially good at making sure you enjoy your time in school. Here are some other things I noticed:
- as a result of the excellent work of your teachers and the teaching assistants, your achievement is outstanding and you reach well above average levels by the end of Year 6
- your behaviour is excellent and you work with lots of enthusiasm in lessons and get on really well with staff
- I was very impressed by how much those of you I spoke to know about the need to keep yourselves fit, healthy and safe
- you have an excellent curriculum and an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities
- the school does a top quality job of taking care of you
- your school has outstanding leadership and management so that it keeps improving and your headteacher and staff work really well together.

Your school does not have any big weaknesses. However, your teachers are right to keep focusing on ways to help you improve your writing even more.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when I came to see you.