

Newberries Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117303
Local Authority	HERTFORDSHIRE
Inspection number	290793
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Paul Cosway

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	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Chris Wilkins
Headteacher	Mrs Sandra Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002
School address	Newberries Avenue Radlett Hertfordshire WD7 7EL
Telephone number	01923857180
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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

Newberries Primary School is of average size. The school population represents a wide mix of social backgrounds. Attainment on entry is above average, overall. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is close to the national average and there are three pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is close to the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges itself to be good and improving, and the inspection confirms this. Some aspects of the school's work are outstanding. Almost all parents are pleased with the quality of education provided. Many describe the school as 'excellent' and 'delightful'.

In recent years, overall standards have been well above the national average. The attainment of most children on entry is above national expectations. The quality of provision and standards reached in the Reception class are outstanding. Pupils make good progress through the rest of the school and at the end of Year 2 standards are well above the national average. In 2006, standards fell slightly in science in the national tests for Year 6 pupils, and boys did less well than expected in the English writing paper. The school is now working hard to improve boys' writing skills. Currently, pupils are achieving well. More time is being given to pupils for extended writing tasks and Year 6 pupils are again reaching standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent and they have very positive attitudes to school. They concentrate and work hard in all their lessons. Attendance is good because pupils very much enjoy coming to school and the school is quick to follow up any absences. Pupils are made to feel valued and the well-planned curriculum and the excellent support and guidance systems in the school ensure that all have equal chances to succeed. Outstanding provision for welfare, health and safety ensures that pupils fully understand how to lead healthy lives. They are confident that there is no bullying and feel safe in school. They have excellent preparation for their future, partly from the great emphasis the school places on the teaching of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). The school council is effective and the pupils learn to care for each other. All adults in the school are excellent role models, showing pupils the importance of respect, consideration and trust. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

The curriculum is outstanding. The varied and rich range of activities that the school provides includes theme weeks, visits and visitors. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers manage their classes well and plan interesting, challenging lessons. Pupils' academic progress is tracked well, ensuring that support is available if they fall behind their targets. The headteacher is leading and managing the school well, with excellent support from her deputy, all staff and governors. Her wisdom, vision and drive have brought about good improvement since the last inspection and the school is well placed to continue to improve. It provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve boys' writing skills by developing their ability to express their ideas clearly and well in written form, whilst ensuring that their spelling and sentence structure are accurate.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Results in the national tests have been well above the national average and traditionally pupils have achieved well. Most pupils at the end of Reception reach the standards expected for their age, and many exceed them, because of excellent teaching coupled with their natural abilities. In Years 2 and 6, standards are currently well above average overall and pupils are achieving

well. Almost all Year 6 pupils are at least reaching the standards expected for their age and many attain higher levels in the national tests. Pupils make very good progress in developing their reading skills throughout the school.

In 2006, the school reached most of its challenging targets. In recent years, girls have regularly outperformed boys in English; in 2006, some boys failed to reach their potential in the English writing paper. The school analysed the reasons for this and put in place professional development to counter them. There has been an increased focus on boys' writing skills and this has led to clear improvements. Boys are writing in a wide range of styles and matching their style to the task very well, using formal language in writing letters, for example. However, some boys still make too many technical errors in their written work.

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and the gifted and talented, achieve well. The richness of the curriculum helps to ensure that pupils reach high standards in many areas, including history, design and technology, ICT, art and modern foreign languages.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They have an excellent understanding of the need to stay healthy, through healthy eating and participation in physical education activities. Pupils feel very safe in school and know that there is someone they can turn to if in difficulty. They make an outstanding contribution to the school community through their work on the school council, and to the wider community through raising money for charity. They acquire excellent team skills through various activities, clubs and community events, which gives them excellent grounding for the next stage of schooling and adult life. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall. Moral and social development is outstanding. They show great care and consideration for others and have an excellent understanding of right and wrong. They have a very good understanding of their own culture, through music, art and literature. There is consideration of the multi-cultural nature of our society, but some opportunities are missed for developing a full appreciation of world faiths. Pupils are confident, have very positive attitudes, and behave exceptionally well both in lessons and around school. Attendance is above average, reflecting the fact that pupils enjoy school immensely.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and this helps to explain the good progress that pupils make. There are examples of outstanding teaching throughout the school and it is excellent in the Foundation Stage. Teachers' expectations are high and the pace of teaching means that pupils learn quickly. Lessons are planned well, with different challenges to meet pupils' individual needs. Extra support for those who need it is given by the teaching assistants, who are very effective. There is a good learning ethos, because the management of pupils is excellent and relationships are very good. Pupils learn to concentrate and work hard because the lessons are interesting and enjoyable. They are encouraged to think for themselves. In many lessons, pupils are able to discuss their work, which helps their understanding. Teachers use ICT very well as a teaching aid to make lessons exciting. The marking of pupils' written work does not always pick up the errors they make. However, teachers often discuss their pupils' work with them and give good opportunities for peer and self evaluation. Pupils are set short-term targets to show them how

to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English are given the support they need to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding and provides a wide range of interesting learning opportunities that stimulate pupils' interest and imagination. The enrichment weeks, for example 'World Arts Week', and lessons in Spanish and French bring much variety to learning. Personal development is promoted extremely well as are the basic skills in several subjects. The curriculum is very well planned and teachers' weekly lesson planning takes full account of the need to set challenging but appropriate tasks for all. Programmes to support pupils with learning difficulties or to extend gifted and talented pupils are carefully planned. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well catered for. A very good range of popular clubs, activities, visits and visitors add another dimension and offer additional opportunities for pupils to exercise and to develop their personal and creative skills. In the Reception class, the activities meet the needs of young children extremely well, giving them a stimulating and thoroughly enjoyable start to their education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care and welfare of the pupils is outstanding and central to the school's work. Effective systems are in place and rigorously applied to cover health and safety, child protection and safeguarding everyone. The needs of pupils who are vulnerable or who have difficulties with their learning or behaviour are carefully identified and provided for. They receive excellent support in several ways, from the very experienced support staff. Highly productive links with a wide range of agencies support pupils with learning difficulties. All children in the school are known well by all adults who work there, and class teachers maintain very good, supportive contacts with their families. Systems for checking what pupils have achieved and setting learning targets are well established. Pupils understand how well they are doing in literacy and mathematics and know what is needed to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads and manages the school well. Her monitoring of the work of the school is outstanding. She quickly identified the areas which needed improvement and caused the slight drop in results last year, such as the development of boys' writing skills. With the help of the leadership team, she has used professional development very effectively to improve staff's skills in teaching, and widened the range of teaching strategies that are used, including the use of ICT. Results are improving in the targeted areas, without the traditional strengths of the school, such as the teaching of reading skills, suffering. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and detailed and one reason why it is in a good position to continue to improve.

The governing body's support and monitoring are good. The core coordinators for English, mathematics and science have a clear understanding of how to take their subjects forward and provide effective leadership. All teachers take part in the process of school improvement planning and review. New staff are growing into their roles as subject leaders. They are beginning

to develop the necessary skills, partly because the leadership team has a commitment to developing the skills and expertise of all who work in the school, including support staff. The school has excellent partnerships with other organisations that help to meet the needs of all pupils. Parents value the leadership of the headteacher; they and the pupils recognise their opinions are taken into account in the running of the school.

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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?	2
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
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?	2
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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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	1
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	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

24 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newberries Primary School, Radlett, WD7 7EL

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful to us when we visited your school. You all told us that you like your school. We liked it too. It gives you a good education and there are some excellent things about it. For example, we were impressed with how helpful and kind you are to each other, so that the school feels like one large family. We enjoyed the lessons that we shared with you and saw how well you work. These are some more of the good and outstanding things about your school.

- Your behaviour is excellent and you work very hard.
- Your work in English, mathematics and science is better than in most other schools.
- Teachers make lessons enjoyable.
- Teachers, teaching assistants and all adults care for you very well indeed.
- You have lots of interesting visits and visitors.

We have asked your school to try to make things even better. The most important thing is this.

- When teachers mark your written work, they need to give you even more help to make sure that you spell, punctuate and build your sentences accurately. This is especially important for some of you boys, who sometimes write too quickly and make careless mistakes!

Keep working hard and make the most of your time at this lovely school.

Paul Cosway

Lead Inspector