

Newnham Croft Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110658
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number	302136
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Jackie Cousins

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	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jo Buffery
Headteacher	Mr Roger Marcon
Date of previous school inspection	15 January 2001
School address	Chedworth Street Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB3 9JF
Telephone number	01223 508737
Fax number	01223 508738

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. Half the pupils are from White British backgrounds and half are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or who have a statement of special educational need is significantly below the national average. A considerable proportion of pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. An above expected proportion of pupils join the school part way through the taught year. The school has Arts Mark Gold, The International School Award, The Health Promoting Schools Award, ECO Award silver, and is a Cambridge University Partner School.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Newnham Croft Primary is a good school and provides effective value for money. It has some outstanding features. The school's leadership ensures that pupils' learning and progress are at the heart of everything that is planned. As a result standards are significantly above average by the time pupils leave in Year 6 and their achievement is really good. This is because teaching and learning are effective. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and so they develop their basic and higher level skills well. The curriculum is outstanding. Staff plan adventurous and extremely exciting projects. Special weeks enrich the school day very well. 'Arts Week' gave pupils opportunities to develop their creative skills as well as their knowledge of famous authors. After-school and lunchtime clubs allow many pupils including those who are gifted and talented to develop effectively their sports, musical, linguistic and creative skills. Provision for pupils in Reception is good and they make effective progress. The school rightly plans to develop the use of outside learning areas for these pupils.

Pupils' personal development is a significant strength of the school and is outstanding. This is mostly as a result of the excellent pastoral care they receive from all staff. Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely well developed. Pupils are exceptionally happy in school and greatly enjoy all the activities available. 'Most of us come out of school with a smile on our face because we have had a great day.' This was the opinion of one pupil and it summed up the views of most. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They move very thoughtfully around the classrooms and outside areas. They adopt healthy lifestyles extremely well. They say they feel much fitter now that they are doing daily 'Buzz Fitness' sessions and eating more fruit. Pupils know very clearly about safe and dangerous drugs. Care, guidance and support are good and the school's use of assessment is effective. Academic support and guidance are good. Pupils' targets are not always used well and are not utilized effectively in teachers' marking. Teachers are beginning to use measurable objectives against which pupils can evaluate their success but they were not used effectively in a few lessons.

Leadership and management are effective and have brought about good improvement since the last inspection. For example, pupils' presentation and information, communication and technology (ICT) skills have developed significantly. A thoughtful leadership team is in place who drive change effectively. A very good team spirit unites the staff of the school together. This means that the school is in a good position to continue to improve in the future. The headteacher's leadership is particularly good and places a great importance on celebrating the different cultures of pupils who attend the school. Pupils from all backgrounds and abilities are welcomed and included exceptionally well in all school activities. One parent summed it up when they said, 'I think that Newnham Croft is a very special school. My 11 year old had been to five different schools in this country and abroad, but after his first term at Newnham Croft, aged 9 he begged us not to move again as he was so happy at school! The school celebrates its international character with the result that new pupils are immediately accepted into the fold.' The school's leadership and staff work really well to draw the community together. Many parents who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the school and have a good partnership with the leadership and staff. The partnership to promote pupils' well-being is effective.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop resources and the use of the outside learning areas for the youngest pupils.

- Improve the use of teachers' marking and pupils' targets so that they are clearer about how to improve their work.
- Develop further the use of measurable objectives which encourage pupils to evaluate their own successes in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. The school has a high proportion of pupils who join part way through the taught year and does well to ensure that most of these make really good progress. Many pupils start at school with levels of skill in key areas of learning which are below those expected for four year olds. Some are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. They achieve well in the Reception year and so standards are in line with expectations by the start of Year 1. This is because staff use effective teaching methods and practical activities well. Standards are considerably above average in the present Year 2 and these pupils have made good progress. Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language achieve effectively. In 2006 results in Year 2 were well above average, with more able pupils performing particularly well.

In the present Year 6 standards are significantly above average and their achievement is really good from an average starting point in Year 2. Last year in tests standards in Year 6 were well above average and achievement for these pupils was particularly good. In the previous year progress from Year 3 to 6 was in line with similar pupils in other schools. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make very good progress. Those with learning difficulties achieve well because they receive really effective support. Pupils are prepared very well for the next stage of education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils happily work together and support each other because staff manage them really effectively. Pupils' self-esteem is high as a result of the positive ways that staff speak to them and encourage them to have a go at new activities. They respect others' beliefs extremely well and celebrate festivals from other cultures such as the Chinese New Year. Pupils from different backgrounds work harmoniously together. They have very positive attitudes to their learning and attendance is good and allows pupils to make good progress. Pupils' independence is developed excellently and they are encouraged to use their skills and complete interesting homework projects. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community. A considerable proportion of pupils are involved in assisting the school to attain the 'Eco Award'. Pupils willingly sing for local people in the shopping centre to raise money for various charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching sets high expectations of pupils and this means they make particularly good progress in improving their basic skills and their personal development. Pupils learn to use their key skills effectively because staff use resources in lessons imaginatively. For example, pupils learnt to use their literacy skills really well when they planned films that they will make using ICT.

This session developed their language skills effectively because the teacher used open-ended questioning very well. Teachers use positive feedback with pupils to give them confidence. Every child is treated as an individual and those that find learning more difficult are really well supported. In one excellent lesson seen pupils' enthusiasm for their work was extremely strong. Planning for the session was exceptionally effective and challenged pupils to use their skills well. However, intended outcomes are not always clearly recorded so that pupils can return to them throughout the lesson, and they are not consistently used at the end of lessons to develop pupils' understanding of how well they have done.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding partly because it allows pupils to learn about our culturally diverse community. The International Schools Award has been given three times in recognition of the rich mixture of experiences from across the world to which pupils are exposed. Displays around the school celebrate pupils' achievements very well. There are very strong links made between subjects and many topics use pupils' literacy skills well. The art curriculum is a considerable strength. ICT provision has improved significantly since the last inspection and has been broadened to include the use of digital photography and control technology. The curriculum has yet to have a full effect on pupils' achievement. Visits and visitors and the exciting array of clubs and sporting activities provide outstanding curriculum enrichment. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are quickly identified and are really well supported. More able pupils' learning is extended well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are effective. Care for all pupils' personal development is extremely good. This is because all staff are highly committed to pupils' well-being. As a result pupils who join the school in Reception or in any other year group settle very quickly into school life. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are robust. Health and safety is given a high priority and is regularly checked by the school. This means that pupils work in a safe and secure environment. Pupils' attainment is closely monitored and evaluated in many areas of learning. Pupils' targets in a few classes are not used well and they do not receive effective information from marking on whether they have achieved them. This means that some pupils are not clear about how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Many pupils, often with little or no English, are quickly included into the school life. The leadership of the school is extremely committed to promoting equal opportunities for all pupils. The headteacher's leadership is very good and he is ably supported by the leadership team. This team gives clear direction and has successfully created a unifying drive for school improvement despite some changes in staffing. Alterations to leadership roles have allowed some inconsistencies to develop in teachers' practice and use of marking. The school's leadership uses self-evaluation effectively. Governance is good. Governors have good knowledge of the school and provide an effective level of challenge for the leadership team. Their recent action plan sets out their intentions succinctly. Planning to improve the

quality of education is in use for one year but a longer term plan is not in place. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good and is aware that resources for outside learning areas are rather basic. This means that pupils are not effectively using their skills learnt in the classroom in the outside areas.

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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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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	2
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	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	2

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?	2

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

27 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newnham Croft Primary School, Cambridge. CB3 9JF

Thank you for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed watching lessons and talking to you. You go to a really good school. Very effective things about your school include the fact that:

- your enjoyment of school activities is terrific
- your behaviour is amazing and you are really kind to each other
- your headteacher has very good ideas about how to improve the school
- teaching is effective and staff work hard to allow you to make really good progress
- teachers and staff care for you very well.

I have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better. The most important things are:

- improve the equipment in the outside areas for the youngest pupils
- make sure all teachers display clearly what they want you to learn so that you can think clearly about how successful you have been in each lesson
- improve the use of your targets and marking so that you are clearer about how to improve your work.

Keep working hard and enjoying the many things you do at Newnham Croft Primary School.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Cousins

Lead inspector