

# Newton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112194
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	310809
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Onyon

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	37
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Colin Hewson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Jackie Dower
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 2005
<b>School address</b>	Newton Road Newton-in-Furness Barrow-in-Furness Cumbria LA13 0LT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01229 897927
<b>Fax number</b>	01229 897927

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a very small rural school serving the village of Newton and the surrounding area. All pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The proportion identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities varies but is currently above average. The school is part of the Furness federation and shares its headteacher and governing body with Croftlands Junior School.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school. It has successfully steered its way through a period of unavoidable disruption involving the federation of two schools and associated changes in staff. It is now well placed to move on further and to focus on raising standards to ensure that pupils are sufficiently challenged to achieve as well as they should. The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate although it is too modest in its assessment of pupils' personal development which is of good quality. The school's strong values ensure that pupils feel valued and safe, and get the personal help that they need. Parents are highly supportive of the school and it is held in high regard within the community. One parent's comment was typical of others: 'The school has many good attributes.'

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. Because of the small numbers admitted each year, standards on entry vary. However, most children start in the Reception with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. The majority move into Year 1 having reached the levels expected in all the areas of learning. By the end of Year 2, the 2007 unvalidated assessment results show standards to be above the national average. Taking these pupils' starting points into account, this represents satisfactory progress. Achievement in Key Stage 2 continues to be satisfactory. The 2007 test results for Year 6 pupils show broadly average standards in English and science and above average standards in mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory across the school. The classes are managed well and a strong feature is the good relationships between staff and pupils. Support provided by skilled teaching assistants ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Although teachers know their pupils well, whole school formal assessment procedures have only recently become established. The staff have begun to use the information gathered about pupils' progress to support pupils' learning more effectively.

Pupils enjoy their lessons, try hard and behave well both in class and outdoors. They talk with understanding about the importance of healthy eating and are very aware of how to maintain their own safety and protect that of others. Appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place. Although the curriculum is satisfactory, it is not always adapted well to meet the challenge of providing for a wide range of ages and abilities. This reduces pupils' achievement, particularly in the early years in Key Stage 2. Good links with the local organisations and the use of educational visits extend pupils' experiences effectively.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has led the school successfully through a period of change and successfully shares the leadership of the federated schools. With the support of the governors, the assistant headteacher, subject leaders from the partner school and all other staff, she is firmly focused on raising standards further. The school provides satisfactory value for money and has good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Purposeful leadership by the classteacher ensures that children's achievement is satisfactory, both personally and academically. Most children make satisfactory progress to reach the expected level by the time their year in Reception is completed. The environment is warm, caring and supportive. Teaching is satisfactory. The classroom is colourful and well-resourced, and provides a wide range of activities. However, there are occasions when activities are not suitably adapted

to meet the differing needs of children of differing ages and stages of development. The children feel safe and secure. 'My child attends happily each day; this speaks volumes,' was a comment echoed by a number of parents.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Use assessment information consistently and effectively to enable all pupils to achieve well.
- Adapt the curriculum, where necessary, to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.

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**

Standards are broadly average in English and science by the time pupils leave Year 6. They are above average in mathematics. This represents satisfactory achievement overall with good achievement in mathematics. The achievement of pupils in these three subjects, and particularly in writing, has been identified by the school as a weakness and is now the major focus for school improvement. The small number of pupils in each cohort means that national comparisons are difficult but the unvalidated outcomes of the 2007 tests at Year 2 show results above the 2006 national average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are currently average at Year 2. The unvalidated 2007 Year 6 results were average in English and science but above average in mathematics. School records and inspection evidence show that there are average standards for the current Year 6 in all subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from well planned support which ensures they make satisfactory progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils work hard, co-operate well with each other, and are enthusiastic. They enjoy having visitors and approach adults confidently to talk about how proud they are of their school. Behaviour in lessons and around school is good with children showing respect and consideration for others. Since the last inspection the school has moved forward well to provide a range of opportunities to enable pupils to take on responsibilities and to show initiative. They willingly accept responsibility by, for example, acting as play leaders and caring for younger children. School council members represent their classmates conscientiously. Pupils clearly enjoy school and this is reflected in their above average attendance. Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. The school celebrates pupils' achievements in lessons and assemblies. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of being safe and of having a healthy lifestyle. They make a good contribution to life outside school, for example by enjoying joint activities with their federated school partner. The broadly average skills pupils gain in English, mathematics and science prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory although there is more good teaching than at the time of the last inspection. Good relationships that help pupils become keen learners lie at

the heart of the teaching. Teachers and support staff are successful in managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive well planned support and make satisfactory progress. The school's assessment procedures are not yet used consistently enough to help all pupils make better progress. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss their work with each other and this contributes well to their speaking and listening skills. However, teachers do not always use questioning effectively enough in the final part of lessons to give pupils opportunities to evaluate their learning. Teachers' marking makes pupils increasingly aware of their own attainment and explains how they can improve their work, but there is inconsistent emphasis placed on seeking the views of pupils.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development but less so to their academic progress. A carefully planned rolling programme of activities provides a satisfactory framework for engaging pupils' interest and developing their basic skills. However, progress year on year is not as effective as it could be because the curriculum does not always build upon the pupils' previous learning. It is not always adapted well to meet the needs of the wide range of ages and abilities in each class. This reduces pupils' achievement, particularly in the early years of Key Stage 2. A detailed and effective programme promotes pupils' personal development. Extra-curricular activities link well with the local and extended communities through, for example, a Year 6 residential visit to Keswick. These successfully bring the curriculum to life. Pupils are given clear information about how to keep safe, to be healthy and to accept responsibility. This is helping them to become young citizens, enabling them to cope with changes and dangers in their lives.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school takes its responsibilities for safeguarding pupils seriously and meets all current requirements. The care and support for pupils' pastoral needs are good. Teachers and other adults know the pupils well, and are deeply committed to their individual safety and happiness. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to work harmoniously together as a result of the school's strong values of tolerance, respect, and consideration. Academic guidance is only satisfactory. There are accurate records of pupils' progress but they are not always used effectively to set challenging targets for the school or for individual pupils. Many pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of what they must do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. Despite the challenge of federating and leading two schools, the headteacher has ensured the school has a very caring and nurturing ethos based on clear values. She is well supported by the assistant headteacher, based in the school. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and their personal development is of a good quality. Good links exist with the federated school and with the local community. The school is now firmly focused on driving forward pupils' academic performance. Having initiated a progress tracking system, the leadership team recognises that assessment data needs to be used more effectively to raise standards. Subject leaders from the partner school are becoming

more involved in evaluating their subjects but will need more time to become fully effective. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well, and its judgements on its performance are mostly accurate. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection despite the demands of organising the federation, Issues have been tackled successfully. Given the strength of the school leadership and the improvements they have made the school has a good capacity to continue to improve. Satisfactory achievement and good personal development have been maintained through a period of significant change. An effective system for tracking pupils' progress is now in place. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and take initiative have improved.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	3
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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

16 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Newton Primary School, Cumbria, LA13 0LT

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you all gave me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed my time with you and seeing you in lessons. It was good to see how much you enjoyed the 'Dare Dance' workshop and to share your excitement as you looked forward to your 'Children in Need' activities. I promised the children I spoke to that I would let you know what I thought. I am pleased to tell you that I agree with your school that you have a satisfactory standard of education.

Your behaviour is good and I was very impressed with how polite you are. You told me that you feel safe in school and that if a problem occurs an adult will sort it out quickly when you tell them about it. The school council is busy on your behalf and members enjoy being able to take new things forward to make life better for you. Keep on working hard so you can continue to play a big part in ensuring that your school continues to improve.

Everybody at your school is going to use the information about your progress to help you all to achieve as well as you can. They are also going to make sure the work in your classes is suitable for all of you.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Onyon

Lead inspector